Please pardon the interruption: The last issue of Candler Connection was published in late summer of 2015. A lot has happened since then! In this issue, we’ve sought to update our alumni & friends with the most significant happenings that have shaped our Candler community. For a more detailed look at all Candler news, visit us online at www.candler.emory.edu/news/releases, where news articles are archived by year.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @CandlerTheology.

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Cover photo: Roger G. Erickson

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This issue may be viewed online at www.candler.emory.edu/news/connection
Dear Friends,

It’s been far too long since we’ve communicated with you via Candler magazine, and we’re excited to be back in touch this way. Life at Candler continues to flourish, and we hope that many of you have been able to plug into what’s been going on—by reading our monthly e-newsletter, visiting campus, attending an event, meeting up with friends and professors, worshiping with us via live stream, or following us on social media. Wherever you are, you are an important part of our Candler community.

The theme of this issue is “Rethink.” With their blessing, we borrowed the idea from The United Methodist Church’s “Rethink Church” campaign, right down to the image of the iconic red church door. But there’s something unusual about the church door in our cover photo: There’s a vine growing across it! How long has it been since this particular door has been opened, ushering people into a sacred space? Fortunately, in this case, the photographer assures us that the door is a rarely used side entrance. But with two-thirds of millennials reporting church attendance of a few times a year or less—and 40 percent of those saying that they seldom or never go!—a vine soon might consider the main entrance fair game as well.

As influential author and speaker Brian McLaren told a group of Christian educators at a conference in 2018, “In the world of organised religion, we’re in a time of great upheaval. We don’t face mere technical challenges—we face adaptive challenges. This isn’t just a matter of slight tweaks; this is a matter of rethinking the entire system of what we’re doing from scratch.”

And so we ask: How might we think again about so many concepts we thought were settled? How we connect, how we serve, how we teach, how we transform our communities, how we share and share the gospel in our own lives? And finally, the most important question: Why does this act of reconsidering even matter?

Unsurprisingly, many Candler alumni have been rethinking church since their seminary days; in this issue, we’ll share a few of their stories with you. We’ll also celebrate faculty emeriti, who have taught us to see God and the world in new ways, and we’ll tap into the wisdom of current professors, whose scholarship and reading recommendations remind us that it’s possible to have a fresh take on a familiar subject.

After you read this issue, I hope you will find something on your own journey of life and faith to rethink—and then, by God’s grace, put those new thoughts into action.

Grace and peace,

Jan Love
Mary Lee Harden Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

Candler has welcomed a host of top scholars, talented teachers, and committed church leaders to our ranks since 2015. Take a moment to meet these newest members of the Candler family.

01. Deanna Ferree Womack joined the faculty in fall 2015 as the school’s first assistant professor of history of religions and multifaith relations. She is ordained in the PCUSA.

02. Letitia Campbell ’17G was hired in fall 2015 as director of Contextual Education I and Clinical Pastoral Education and senior program coordinator for the Laney Program in Moral Leadership, and has since been named assistant professor in the practice of ethics and society. She is ordained in the PCUSA.

03. Ellen Shepard was appointed in fall 2015 as director of the Women, Theology, and Ministry Program and assistant professor in the practice of practical theology. She is also senior pastor of Stone Mountain First UMC.

04. Lang Lowrey III ’04T, an Episcopal priest and canon for Christian enterprise for the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, is director of the Episcopal and Anglican Studies Program and professor in the practice of church leadership. He joined the faculty in fall 2015.

05. David Daniel began in fall 2016 as director of chapel music and assistant professor in the practice of music ministry.

06. Larry Goodpasture ’73T ’82T, retired United Methodist bishop, joined as bishop-in-residence in fall 2016.

07. Kendall Soulen ’86T came (back) to Candler in fall 2016 as professor of systematic theology. He is an ordained elder in the Virginia Conference of the UMC.

08. Khalia Williams came to Candler in fall 2016 as assistant dean of worship and music and assistant professor in the practice of worship, and was named co-director of the Baptist Studies Program in fall 2018. She is ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and American Baptist Churches USA.

09. Helen Jin Kim joined the faculty in fall 2017 as assistant professor of American religious history.

10. Richard Manly (“Bo”) Adams, Jr. ’05T ’12G was appointed in fall 2017 as director of the Baptist Studies Program and as assistant professor in the practice of practical theology. He is also senior pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta.

11. Antonio Eduardo Alonso ’17G joined the faculty in fall 2018 as assistant professor of theology and culture and director of Candler’s new Catholic Studies Program.

12. Alison Collis Greene came to Candler in fall 2018 as associate professor of American religious history.

13. Susan Bigelow Reynolds joined the faculty in fall 2018 as assistant professor of Catholic studies.

14. Damon Williams was appointed in fall 2018 as assistant professor of theology and culture and director of Candler’s new Catholic Studies Program.

15. Ian A. McFarland returned to Candler in fall 2019 as the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Theology. He previously served on Candler’s faculty from 2005 to 2015 and then as Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge.

16. Ryan Bonfiglio ’14G was named in spring 2019 as the inaugural director of public theological education and assistant professor in the practice of Old Testament.

17. Marla Frederick joined the faculty in fall 2019 as the Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Religion and Culture. She comes to us from Harvard University, where she was professor of African and African American studies and the study of religion.

18. Helen Green came to Candler in fall 2019 as the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Theology. She previously served on Candler’s faculty from 2005 to 2015 and then as Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge.

Candler News

New(ish) to the Neighborhood

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Moral Leadership in Global Contexts

Students in Robert M. Franklin, Jr.’s travel seminars have journeyed to Haiti (01) and South Africa in the last two years to learn firsthand from noted moral leaders how they work for positive change in their specific locales. Franklin, the James E. and Berta R. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership, leads those international seminars to challenge students to extend the concept and understand the complexities of moral leadership in contexts and cultures outside the United States. The groups visited with artists, academics, and spiritual and political leaders who have responded to both persistent and emergent crises—public and private corruption, stabilizing society after rapid changes in government, and rebuilding after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and poverty, the lingering legacy of apartheid, and stark inequality in South Africa. Highlights of the trips were meetings with Haitian literary giant-artist Frantz Fanon and South African anti-apartheid activist and Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Widening the Circle

Long considered dry ground for Roman Catholicism, the South is now home to 27 percent of the nation’s self-identified Catholic population, according to a 2014 study by the Pew Research Center. Today, the Archdiocese of Atlanta is one of the most diverse Catholic contexts in the country, comprising 1.2 million Catholics, more than half of whom are black or Latinx. In response to these shifts, Candler has launched a Catholic Studies Program and begun a formal affiliation with the Aquinas Center of Theology to prepare leaders for lay ministry in the Catholic Church and scholars for research in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Both developments have already increased Candler’s engagement with the Catholic community in Atlanta and beyond and promise to build on that footing at a rapid pace. The new program, led by scholar and composer Tony Alonso, features a master of divinity concentration in Catholic Studies. The Aquinas Center, established at Emory in 1987, provides a Catholic scholarly presence, ecumenical in spirit, for the benefit of the university, the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and the region. The two entities collaborate closely, bringing relevant programming and prominent Catholic scholars and speakers to campus to address issues ranging from spiritual formation to politics to conservation to reform in the Catholic Church.

Double the Honor

Two Candler faculty members received honorary doctorates in 2018. Emmanuel V. Lantey received a doctor of divinity, honoris causa, from the University of Pretoria in South Africa (02), and Lang Lowrey III 09T, director of Candler’s Episcopal and Anglican Studies Program and professor in the practice of church leadership, received the same degree from the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church (GTS) in New York. Lantey was nominated by the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria in recognition of his “unique and important contributions” in developing an African practical theology, which argues that African spiritual heritages should
be embraced and built upon using an inter-cultural and cross-cultural approach. Lowrey was tapped for his active engagement in diverse, meaningful ministry. He served as president of GTS from 2010 to 2013, leading the financially challenged institution through a period of broad-based restructuring and the development of new revenue streams.

**Small but Mighty**

Though only about an inch in diameter, the Haskins Medal is among the most prestigious awards in medieval studies—and this year, Candler’s own Philip Reynolds has won it. Given annually by the Medieval Academy of America for a distinguished book in the field of medieval studies, the medal was awarded to Reynolds for his 2016 book, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent (Cambridge University Press).* Marveling at the book’s enormous scope and extensive bibliography, the judges praised Reynolds’s “1,051 pages of cogent analysis” of “extraordinary depth and lucidity,” and his “rich and magisterial treatment” of the material. They predict that the book will be the standard work on the subject for the foreseeable future.

**Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care**

McFarland as Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Theology, and Wilson as Charles Howard Candler Professor of New Testament.

**Something about that Name**

Names are important in the Bible—and in the academy! Congratulations to Teresa Fry Brown, Philip L. Reynolds, Jan Love, Emmanuel Lartey, Ian McFarland, and Walter T. Wilson, all of whom were installed into named positions in recent years. In fall 2015, Fry Brown became the Bandy Professor of Preaching, the first woman and African American to hold the post, considered by many to be the academy’s preeminent chair in homiletics. Reynolds, already Aquinas Professor of Historical Theology, added a second named title to his signature block in fall 2016, becoming Charles Howard Candler Professor of Medieval Christianity. In fall of 2017, Love (03), Candler’s dean, was installed as the school’s inaugural Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean, an event made possible by a gift from the estate of Mary Lee Hardin Willard of Gadsden, Alabama, which created a permanently funded endowment to support the Candler deanship. And in fall 2019, Lartey was installed as Charles Howard Candler Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care, McFarland as Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Theology, and Wilson as Charles Howard Candler Professor of New Testament.
Twin Peaks

As their nearly identical titles suggest, Carol Newsom and Carl Holladay, the Charles Howard Candler Professors Emeriti of Old and New Testament, respectively, have a few things in common: an interest in ancient sacred texts, sterling reputations as distinguished scholars in their fields, a gift for guild leadership (president of the Society of Biblical Literature for Newsom, president of the Society of New Testament Scholars for Holladay), and almost 40-year careers on Candler’s faculty. But in the realm of professional accomplishments, perhaps one shared trait rises above them all: Both Newsom and Holladay have been elected fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation’s oldest and most prestigious honorary societies. Newsom signed the AAAS membership book in 2016 (05) and Holladay in 2017 (06). They now join the leading “thinkers and doers” from each generation, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the 18th century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the 19th, Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill in the 20th...and Candler’s own E. Brooks Halfield, Charles Howard Candler Professor Emeritus of American Church History, who was inducted in 2012.

Magna Cum Laude

Several members of the faculty have received external recognition for their scholarship, leadership, and teaching. Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship James Abingdon was selected as a fellow of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, the highest honor the organization bestows. • Professor of Theology and Ethics Noel L. Erskine received the Atlanta Jamaica Association’s 2018 Black History Month Award. • Associate Professor of the History of Early Christianity Anthony Braggman won a student-selected 2018 Crystal Apple Award at Emory for excellence in graduate education/instruction. • Associate Professor of New Testament Susan L. Helyn received the 2017 “Women of Excellence” Excellence in Teaching and Pedagogy Award from the Center for Women at Emory and the Emory Alumni Association for her use of teaching methods, syllabi, and course design that address women’s issues or matters of feminist importance with innovation and success. • Associate Professor of Religious Education Jennifer R. Ayres and Walter Wilson were the Presidential Fellow and the Senior Theology Fellow, respectively, at Emory’s Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry during 2017-2018. • Robert Franklin was named a 2018 Peter J. Gomes Memorial Honoree by Harvard Divinity School for his public voice for moral leadership. He also was recently appointed by Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms to the city’s Task Force for the Promotion of Public Trust, created in part of multiple reforms to improve transparency and accountability in government. • Professor of Historical and Philosophical Theology David Pacini won a 2019 Eleanor M. Mann Award for excellence in mentoring at Emory’s Laney Graduate School. • Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture Nichole R. Phillips was inducted into the Martin Luther King Jr. Colloquium of Scholars at Morehouse College in 2019. • Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Conflict Transformation Ellen Otis Marshall was awarded the Provost’s Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Education for the Laney Graduate School in 2019. • Dan and Lillian Hankel Associate Professor of World Evangelism Arun W. Jones was elected president of the American Society of Missiology for 2019-2020. • Tony Alonso won the 2019 Catherine Money LaCugna Award from the Catholic Theological Society of America.
COURTESY OF KHALFANI LAWSON

H. Runyon, Jr.

in the university’s Great Hall

include anecdotes, remembrances and knowledge. The exchange has made its mark on more than a generation of global leaders in the church and the academy, and will continue to do so for years to come. See a video-enhanced story, remembrances from exchange participants (and a photo of Ted Runyon on his first trip to Germany) in the news section of candler emo vy.ada,

Photo: Khalifani Lawson 18T in front of the German university’s Great Hall. (07)

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG SPEAKERS

A boy of big-time speakers has visited campus in the past few years, illuminating students and members of the broader community with their insights, anecdotes, and advice. Some of the most memorable include eminent theologian Jurgen Moltmann, who attended the “Unfinished Worlds” conference Can-\ndler hosted in honor of his 90th birthday, atheist-turned-Episcopal-priest and food activist Sara Miles, pastor and social justice activist William J. Barber II, the presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, Michael Curry, the first African American to be elected to the post; popular speaker and award-winning author Joan Chittister; the Vatican’s Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, syndicated columnist and political commentator E.J. Dionne, Jr., Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, and author, aca-
demic, and civil rights activist Angela Davis (08). Videos of most of these speakers are available at vimeo.com/candler.

PAYING IT FORWARD

With $6.3 million in financial aid distributed in 2018-2019, Candler is already known for one of the most robust scholarship programs in theological education. Now that program is even stronger. In fall 2019, Candler announced major expansions to its scholarship offerings for students admitted to master of divinity, master of theological studies, and master of religious leadership degree programs. Available to incoming students beginning in fall 2020, the new program features full-tuition scholar-
ships for all certified candidates for ordination in the UMC, new merit scholarships covering 75 percent of tuition for non-denominational, pan-Wesleyan, Latinx, and chaplaincy-track MDiv students, ad-
ditional full-tuition scholarships for qualified MTS students, and awards of at least 50 percent of tuition...
to all MDiv, MTS, and MLL students. The revamped program is designed to advance Candler’s long-standing commitments to reduce student debt and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. “We’re eliminating part of the financial obstacle that can prevent folks from pursuing graduate theological education,” says Sam Martin, assistant dean of admissions and financial aid. “Removing this obstacle at the beginning of the journey translates to more diverse and inclusive leadership in the church, the academy, and society in the future.”

Accolades for Alumni
Candler alumni serve all around the world, garnering honors and awards as they go. David Greene 49T, R. Lawson Bryan 53T, and Sue Haupert-Johnson 93T were elected bishops of The United Methodist Church at the Southeastern Jurisdictional meeting in 2016. Graves serves the Alabama-West Florida Episcopal Area, Bryan, South Georgia, and Haupert-Johnson, North Georgia. • Pamela A. Calhoun 77T and Marshall L. (Jack) Meadors 58T received Candler’s 2015 Distinguished Alumni Awards, Calhoun in recognition of 56 years as executive director of CROS Ministries in Palm Beach County, Florida, and Meadors for five decades of service as a UMC pastor, district superintendent, bishop, and bishop-in-residence who was especially active in issues around children and poverty. • Robert (Bob) N. Clarke 58T and Allan Sandlin 91T were the 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award honorees. Clarke for more than six decades of service through music and education ministries, and Sandlin for 24 years of ministry in Episcopal parishes from Maine to Germany. • Timothy McDonald III 72T and Sarah Greig-Moore 99T won the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Awards, McDonald for lifetime achievement in service to the church, university, and larger society, and Greig-Moore for faithful and creative leadership in the community. • R. Lawson Bryan 53T B’57 received the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award for Lifetime Achievement in recognition of his 40+ years of service to the church, first in the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference and currently as bishop in South Georgia. • Carolyn Abrams 94T, Robert Lee Abrams 94T, and Michael Zdorow 95T received the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Awards, the Abramses for lifetime achievement in the Mississippi Annual Conference of the UMC, and Zdorow for faithful and creative leadership while serving as pastor of the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy through the General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC. • Eight alumni have been chosen for Emory’s “Forty Under 40” list across the last three years: Jeanie Rae Moore 15T, Austin Dickson 15T, Kevin Murphy 11T, Nancy Smith-Mather 83T, Shelia Smith-Mather 86T 15T, Sarah Toering 06T, Alisha Gordon 15T, and Kimberly Jackson 95T. Meet two new scholars below.

New Scholarships Salute Trailblazers
Candler has established two new scholarships honoring three individuals who played key roles in the school’s history. The Bishop Woodie W. White Scholarship, named for Candler’s longtime bishop-in-residence, and the Ducree–Turner Scholarship, named for Candler’s first black graduate, Edward Ducree 69T, and first black student, Otis Turner 69T, were announced in fall 2018. The three hono- rees also received the prestigious Dean’s Medal, an award reserved for persons whose efforts on behalf of the school have had a transformative effect. The two scholarships will be awarded to selected master of divinity students who have demonstrated a vocational call to ministries of racial justice, inclusiveness, and reconciliation, and to those who are called to serve in historically black denominations.
Kudos for Candler, Courtesy of Con Ed

Candler recently earned high praise from outside organizations including Auburn Seminary and the Center for Faith and Service. We were featured as a case study for “innovation” in Auburn’s 2016 report “Bright Spots in Theological Education,” which focused on our immersion-based Contextual Education (Con Ed) program, then tapped a second time in their 2018 study, “Making Theology Matter: Field Education as the Practical-Prophetic Heart of Effective Ministry Preparation,” which highlighted Con Ed’s integration of classroom and experiential learning. In fall 2018, Candler was named for the sixth consecutive time to the Center for Faith and Service’s annual list of “Seminaries That Change the World” (STCTW). We were among 11 institutions honored in the original STCTW list in 2013, and have been included every year since. A big reason for our perennial inclusion? You guessed it: Con Ed, for helping students connect the dots between faith and justice in both nonprofit and church settings.

Expanding the Possibilities

Several new concentrations have added depth and breadth to the MDiv program, expanding possibilities for students as they more closely align their coursework with their academic and vocational interests. The Chaplaincy concentration introduces students to the range of contexts in caring for and providing depth in the practices of spiritual care. The World Christianity concentration allows students to gain competency in the study of Christianity as a global phenomenon and helps equip them for ministry and church leadership in culturally and internationally diverse Christian communities. The Catholic Studies concentration prepares students for leadership in Catholic parishes, schools, nonprofits, and other contexts, as well as for further academic research in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The concentration in Criminal Justice Ministries (10) shapes religious leaders who are equipped to constructively engage issues and people connected to the criminal justice system through work in both congregations and communities, including ministry in prisons, mentoring of youth in juvenile facilities, congregational support for reentering citizens, educational offerings in prison, jails, and detention centers, and policy advocacy. The Justice, Peacebuilding, and Conflict Transformation concentration equips students to constructively engage within their congregations and communities by providing a structure for theological reflection on violence, justice and peacebuilding, studying nonviolent alternatives, and practicing skills in conflict transformation. Candler now offers 14 MDiv concentrations ranging from 22 to 18 credit hours.

TheoEd: Brief Talks, Big Ideas

As part of a new initiative in public theological education, Candler is partnering with First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta to sponsor TheoEd Talks, an ecumenical speaker series where leaders in the church and the academic world “share the talk of their lives” in 20 minutes or less, aimed at sparking conversations that change the way people think about God, religion, and the power of faith to change lives. Speakers at the fall 2019 TheoEd Talks (11) were Austin Channing Brown, author of I’m Still Here: Blk Dqty in a Wld Mde for Whitnes, on “The Double-Sided Pursuit of Racial Justice”; Mihee Kim-Kort, Presbyterian minister and author, on how learning her “Mother Tongue” (Korean) opened up new ways of understanding God, culture, and her own vocation; noted journalist Jonathan Morris on “The Death and Resurrection of Sacred Speech”; and Candler’s own Ted A. Smith 04G, professor of preaching and ethics, on “Rckless Love: Living for Things That Die.” Next up: Womanist Episcopal priest and Hebrew Bible scholar Wil Gafney, “Love or Work” podcast hosts Jeff and André Shimaburah, Hillary McBride, therapist, author, and host of the podcast “The Liturgists”; and Bryan Massingale, Catholic priest and Fordham University Christian ethics professor. Watch their talks at theoed.com.
Passing the Torch

The past few years have seen the retirement of some Candler icons, celebrated both for their individual gifts and their collective impact on the school. Here, we look back on their accomplishments as they pass the torch to a new crop of teacher-scholars.

BARRBARA DAY MILLER
Creating Space for Everyone’s Song

For nearly two decades, Barbara Day Miller BHT was a fixture in a worship space known for creativity and excellence. She retired from her position as associate dean of worship and music in 2016, but she has made an indelible mark on the worship life at Candler.

Throughout her career, Day Miller combined the skills of a superb worship leader, talented musician, and consummate hostess to create worship experiences that exuded a spirit of welcome to all.

“One of my goals was to be sure that we had—metaphorically speaking—space for everybody’s song, that there were opportunities for everyone’s own true liturgical style,” she explains. “That’s what I worked very hard to do for 20 years.”

Making space for different songs and traditions is Day Miller’s way of rolling out the welcome mat, and it’s an effort that has been widely noticed.

“Everybody is welcome, everybody has a part, and everybody can have a voice,” says Toni Belin Ingram ’07, who worked with Day Miller in the Office of Worship as a student. “It’s just who she is.”

The desire to extend welcome is reflected in what Day Miller describes as one of her primary tasks: “Helping students to become liturgically literate and articulate in their tradition and others.” Former students attest to her success, naming liturgical literacy as one of her enduring gifts to them.

“We should have well-designed liturgy that is accessible and linguistically rich,” says Meredith Mc Nab 07Y, who served on the chapel planning staff during her student days and worked for Day Miller over the summers. She now leads clergy and congregational trainings around the country in her role as associate director of educational programming at Lake Institute for Faith & Giving.

One of Day Miller’s signal achievements is designing a model for planning worship that has been implemented in settings far beyond Cannon Chapel. Called the POWR model—Planning, Ordering, Worshiping and Reflecting—it has empowered laity to assist in worship planning, becoming a model in churches and conferences. McNabb took the model into her first appointment, where she says it transformed the church’s worship.

The POWR model reflects both Day Miller’s innate desire to design and lead worship in a manner that encourages excellence, and her commitment to excellence in general. “It’s a passion praised by students and colleagues alike.

“Whatever she puts her hands to, it’s simply off the charts,” notes David Pacini, professor of historical and philosophical theology. “She’s one of the most tenacious, hard-working persons I know.”

Her former students echo that description.

“Barbara has this gracious insistence on excellence,” McNabb explains. “I think that comes from her commitment to the church and to the faith. If this is the work of the kingdom of God, this must be done right. She’s not a task master, but she knows what your best is, and she expects it.”

Perhaps Day Miller’s insistence on excellence was most visible in the Candler lounges. Under her leadership, the group of auditional choristers toured throughout the Southeast and sang four times at the General Conference of The United Methodist Church. She also directed worship for North Georgia’s Annual Conference for several years, and served as music director of the 2014 General Conference in Pittsburgh, working with nearly 100 musical groups to coordinate all the music for the 12-day meeting.

Day Miller asserts that retirement isn’t the end of her desire to create. “I’m just turning a corner and doing a new thing. I’m a believer in resurrection and new things,” she says. Now she has time to pursue writing, teach occasionally, and resume making pottery. And in one nod to her childhood growing up on a farm, she and her brother are starting a cattle business together.

Even though there is much to anticipate, Day Miller sounds a little wistful when describing what she will miss most: “Students who come in the door with some new thought or idea. I’ve got to find ways to keep that conversation going with young minds and young people,” she says determinately.

There’s no doubt that she will. — VL

By Molly Edmonds, Claire Lennox, and Valerie Lover 10T
M. PATRICK GRAHAM
The Librarian Turns the Page

No food or beverages are allowed in the Special Collections reading room of Pitt’s Theological Library, but despite that restriction, you might find yourself at a feast. That’s how Prof. Graham, Librarian and Margaret A. Pitts Professor Emeritus of Theological Bibliography, sees the work of the library.

“it’s like hosting a banquet, where you introduce your guests to the greatest scholars and authors of all times and places, provide a hospitable surround-
ing for their engagement, and then admire the great things that come from their time together,” he says.

Graham, who retired in 2017, was a guest at this banquet when he was a student in Emory’s Graduate Division of Religion, where he earned a Ph.D in Old Testament in 1983. He returned to Pitt in 1988, serving two years as a cataloger of non-English language materials and four years as a reference librarian.

While working at Pitt, he earned a master’s degree in library and information science from the University of Texas at Austin and further perfected the intricacies of academic librarianship under Chan-
ing Jelishe, the influential librarian who catapulted Pitts to stardom by tripling its holdings through the acquisition of the Hartford Seminary collection.

Carl Holladay, Charles Howard Candler Professor Professor Emeritus of New Testament, says that Jelishe and Graham were alike in many ways. “Each possessed a persona of quiet dignity that masked a powerful Protestant work ethic driven by an expansive intellectual vision and a disciplined creativity, gifts enhanced by stunning organizational and administra-
tive skills.”

When Jelishe retired in 1994, Graham became director of the library—“the librarian,” in library parlance—and continued the work of growing the Pitts collections. During his 23-year tenure, the library expanded from 400,000 to 600,000 volumes, a 52.6 percent increase. Graham also took the lead on making the library’s resources more widely avail-
able by creating the Digital Image Archive, an online catalogue of 50,000 downloadable images scanned from Pitt’s Special Collections.

Just as Pitts was growing, so too was Candler. Graham spent a decade as chair or co-chair of the committee that oversaw construction of the 126,500-square-foot Rita Anne Rollins Building for Candler. “He spent untold hours consulting and working with faculty, Emory’s Campus Services staff, architects, and the design and construction specialists,” says Holladay. “Through all of this, he faithfully represented Candler’s interests and priori-
ties and advocated effectively on our behalf. His foot-
print and fingerprints are everywhere to be seen.”

Graham’s legacy also includes the remarkable staff at Pitts. Holladay notes that Dennis Norlin, former executive director of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA), once called Pitts “the finishing school for theological librarians.” While Candler professors sent their students from the classroom to Pitts, Pitts was Graham’s classroom, and his former students served theological libraries across the country.

Graham counts the cultivation of the extraordinary staff at Pitts as one of his greatest accomplishments. “The quality of service and professionalism among Pitts staff impresses visitors or newcomers who have come from other academic institutions,” he says. “They tell me how impressed they are with the com-
petence of Pitts staff, their commitment to service, and their intellectual engagement with those who come to them.

Such excellence does not just happen but is the product of a shared work, mutual encouragement, and thinking together about our profession, and helping one another to go beyond what is the baseline for performance,” he says. Graham takes great pride that this level of excellence is now considered the norm for Pitts.

Graham says he will miss his favorite tradition—“the opportunity to welcome new students, call their attention to the wonderful resources that have been assembled for their benefit, and then offer them en-
couragement for one of the most important periods in their lives”—but he knows he has built a staff that can ably handle the task.

“There are strong currents in higher education today that push libraries to treat students and faculty as customers,” Graham says. “My hope is that the staff of Pitts’ Theology Library will continue to resist this impulse, see themselves as educators, and offer the very best professional expertise to Candler and the university as a whole.”

In his retirement, Graham looks forward to spend-
ing more time with his children and grandchildren, developing his gardening and photography skills, and completing his own research projects. He also plans to volunteer for a “good theological library in the area.” After all, how can you pass up such a lar-
ish banjo? — ME

CARL R. HOLLADAY
Consummate Scholar, Wise Mentor

True to scholarly form, Carl Holladay has given good thought to what his 35 years on the Candler faculty mean in their value: “Almost half the school’s life,” he says. In those nearly four decades, Holladay, who retired as the Charles Howard Can-
der Professor of New Testament in 2016, has made his mark on Candler, generations of students, and the broader field of New Testament studies. Holladay recalls coming to Candler in 1980 and the “generative context” that the school and his fellow faculty members provided from the start. “I found myself surrounded by a circle of dancing colleagues, talented and energetic, from whom I learned so much,” he says. “I found myself having to stand on tiptoe, just to see over the ledge what was going on— high-order scholarship that stretched my own intel-
lectual horizons, people doing field-defining research and writing influential articles and books that became referential in their respective fields and beyond.”

In the years since, Holladay has joined the ranks of Candler faculty whose scholarly influence is felt far and wide. He has authored eight books, including A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ (Abingdon, 2005), which is used extensively by seminaries and ministers. He has received prominent fellowships and honors, including a Fulbright Senior Scholar Award, a Lewis Fellowship, and a Frommell titled Scripture and Traditions: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Carl R. Holladay (Brill, 2018).

A member of the Society of Biblical Literature, he has also served on editorial boards for multiple scholarly journals, and as the 2016-17 president of the Society for New Testament Studies. And in a career spanning five decades, he was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation’s oldest and most prestigious honorary societies.

No matter how far his scholarly work has taken him, Holladay has given time and talents to Emory as well, including as a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, a faculty member in the Laney Graduate School’s Graduate Division of Religion (where he served as co-director from 2010 to 2014), and as Candler’s associate dean of academic affairs from 1983 to 1991, and dean of the faculty and academic affairs from 1993 to 1994.

Former Candler students think of Holladay first as a mentor who provided immeasurable support in seminary and after, helping them to find their voice, whether it was in the world of ministry or academia.

Christy Bennet ’77 got to know Holladay as her academic advisor, Con Ed professor, and New Testa-
ment professor. She describes him as an engaging teacher who took the time and energy to invest in his students, from their papers to their vocations, and says he was integral in helping her discern her next steps after graduation.

“The feedback and support Dr. Holladay offered as we considered the many possibilities regarding my particular future in ministry were invaluable. I am grateful to him for encouraging me to continue my education beyond Candler by pursuing a PhD in depth,” she says. “I am only one of many who have
been impacted by his wisdom, teaching skills, and encouragement. I hope he knows what a difference he has made in my life, and in the lives of so many students.”

Erich Pracht ’75 also credits Holladay with guiding him through a pivotal time of vocational discernment. “I knew I wanted to pursue a career in New Testament studies, but needed help understanding how to adequately prepare and a great deal of direction in refining my research interests,” he says.

Holladay’s conviction that students should take ownership of their reading of biblical texts—“that we should be creative, take risks, and develop interpretations that are ours”—was especially helpful, says Pracht.

Faculty colleagues appreciate his approach as well. Steven J. Kraftschik, professor in the practice of New Testament interpretation, borrows one of Holladay’s favorite quotations from Ralph Waldo Emerson to describe a defining trait of his longtime friend and colleague: “The first rule of writing is not to omit the thing you mean to say.” Kraftschik considers the line a watchword for Holladay’s writing, from his academic work to sermons and lectures. He then quotes directly from Evilk Eupene: A Layman’s Handbook (Westminster John Knox, ed., 1982), co-authored by Holladay: “Test criticism is ‘based on common sense and ingenuity.’ To do that work well requires tireless attention to specifics and an expansive imagination. In a nutshell, that has defined Carl’s careful and consistent work on the New Testament. There are scholars who give us the data, but too often nothing about the ‘so what.’” There are scholars who are happy to provide an ingenuous interpretation, but often at the expense of the texts themselves. Carl never succumbed to either, but rather his work combines both: a keen eye for every detail and interpretive sentences that, in the words of Emerson, do not ‘omit the thing’ one meant to say.”

Holladay has high praise for fellow faculty members as well. “One of the greatest benefits I have enjoyed at Candler has been the company of friends,” he says. “We are scholars—colleagues not only willing to listen to my ideas, to read my work, but to critique it,” he says. “Caring colleagues to keep you honest and make you better—what a rarity!”

“My debt of gratitude to Emory and to Candler is huge. No one said it better than Lou Gehrig: ‘I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth.’ ” — CL

DAVID O. JENKINS
Community Beyond the Classroom

During his 18 years at Candler, David Jenkins made an impact beyond the classroom as he focused on serving neighbors, whether near or far.

When asked to consider his most meaningful experiences at Candler, the associate professor emeritus in the practice of practical theology, who retired in 2017, immediately turns to the many ways he has been active in teaching—and doing—hands-on ministry alongside his students, from revitalizing the Contextual Education curriculum and designing new degrees to expanding Candler’s international partnerships and modeling experiential learning.

Jenkins was director of Con Ed I and Classical Pastoral Education from 2005 to 2014, working alongside then-director of Con Ed II and Teaching Zinah F. Alice Rogers to revitalize the Con Ed curriculum, including the development of new sites centered around refugees and immigrants. The pair visited 16 theology schools to determine best practices, hosted a national conference to discuss them, and co-authored a book on their findings, Equipping the Saints: Best Practices in Contextual Educations (Ferligien Press, 2010).

Not only has Jenkins shaped opportunities for Candler students to pursue experiential learning outside the classroom and theology and disability, especially, have shown seminars how to engage effectively and compassionately with their communities, in ministry or otherwise. He has been deeply involved in the Atlanta disability community, inspired by his years serving and living with the L’Arche community in London in the 1980s. He helped establish L’Arche Atlanta, served as president of L’Arche USA, and chaired the organization’s first national capital campaign, as well as the L’Arche USA National Task Force on Spirituality and Religious Identity. He brought this passion to various academic communities, organizing Candler’s first Nancy Eiselend Lecture on Theology and Disability Studies in 2005, deferring the 2019 Boston College Lyne Lectures on the practical theology of L’Arche, and presenting at Emory’s Disability Studies Initiative Scholar Showcase. He designed and taught courses on the church and disability, so that students would encounter a gifted world of disabilities, newologies of vulnerability, and authentic friendships with those who are differently abled.

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Johnson witnessed senior idiocies result was trained. Erickson, we’d stand in the pulpit, I hope I’m doing justice to the time he put into me.

Johnson’s enthusiasm for Scripture is apparent in his writing, which has won acclaim from both academic and general audiences, from the Eco, no Grammaway Award in Religion for the scholarly Among the Gentiles to the Catholic Book Award for Prophecy now, Prophecy Church.

“One of the hallmarks of Luke’s academic work is a belief that biblical scholarship has a place in the public square, that it can and should serve the greater good of humanity,” Smith says.

To Erickson, the accessibility of Johnson’s work further marks him as a great thinker. “I have no doubt that Luke could muck your brain with 12- syllable words all day long, but his work is meant to be used in the real world.”

Scholarly accolades aside, Johnson leaves a tremendous example of blending inspired teaching and servant leadership. He has an impressive record of commit- tee service, most notably chairing both Candler’s Centennial committee and the committee that renamed Candler’s distinctive Contextual Education program.

Among the youngest Woodruff professors ever hired, Johnson says he was determined to use his time wisely. “I was resolved...to change the world,” he explains. “I tried to be a good citizen of the university and of the School of Theology.”

Erickson agrees. “You always felt like you were playing with fire,” he recalls. “Something might happen! This was dangerous, sacred, holy stuff we were dealing with.”

Johnson has published three books (with three more under contract), 75 journal articles, 120 popular articles, 130 book reviews, and 275 academic lectures. And that doesn’t include the hundreds of presentations he’s given at churches over the years.

A former Benedictine monk and Catholic priest, Johnson will tell you that he is “precociously gifted with energy” and that his mind-boggling productivity is the result of his passion for Scripture and teaching—a passion fueled by both love and anger.

“I’m passionately in love with the subject matter,” he explains. “I’m constantly energized by the Scripture itself—its significance, its beauty and, but I’m energized by anger, too, because biblical scholarship also has its idiosyncrasies and misbegotten theses.”

Johnson has trained countless pastors in the study of Scripture and has helped produce no small num-

ber of academics who now teach students of their own. One former student who is now a professor describes Johnson’s passion for studying Scripture as “infectious.”

“He reminds students repeatedly that scholarship requires courage, that researching, writing up your findings, and thinking through their impact on church and the world is a courageous act,” notes Shively Smith ’95, one of Johnson’s doctoral stu-

dents and now assistant professor of New Testament at Boston University’s School of Theology.

Erickson’s student says he also embodied the model of caring professor. Erickson recalls occasions after class when Johnson would walk with him and his classmates to Everybody’s Pizza across from campus. “It was like a Dial P for Society moment,” Erickson says. “He didn’t just want to teach and escape. He cared about who we were and where we were coming from.”

Johnson’s dedication to his students was recognized by both Candler and Emory. He received the “On the Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award from Candler’s graduating class in 1999 and 1999, was named Candler Outstanding Faculty Person of the Year in 2009, and received the Emory Williams Dis-
tinguished Teaching Award, the university’s highest award for teaching, in 2012.

Smith notes that Johnson’s signature passion and compassion have worked together to heighten his students’ educational experience. “He cares about his students’ overall well-being as well as their criti-

cal intellectual development,” she says. “In that way he’s very pastoral.”

“For him, the task of teaching is also a discipline of compassion. That compels students to work hard and take seriously their studies. You’re learning from someone who not only cares about the material and its significance in the world, but cares about you and your role in the world. That’s a real gift in higher education.” — VI

REX D. MATTHEWS
The Man Who Knew John Wesley

Stories extolling the professorial prowess of Rex Mat-

thews abound at Candler. One in particular stands out to Thomas W. Elliott, Jr. ’87, ’97, associate professor in the practice of practical theology and Methodist studies, who came across a group of students talking about how much they enjoyed Matthews’s classes. Out of curiosity, Elliott asked them, “What makes Dr. Matthews such a great teacher?” They said, “We think he knows the man John Wesley!”

Matthews, who retired in 2017 as professor in the practice of historical theology and Wesleyan stud-

es, introduced hundreds of students to a deeper understanding of Wesley and Methodist history. His research on the life and thought of John Wesley, and the historical and theological development of Meth-

odism in both Britain and America has enriched students’ theological imaginations. His natural gift for teaching—combining extensive knowledge, re-

markable communication skills, and a deep concern 

for his students—has made him among Candler’s most beloved professors.

Matthews first came to Candler in 1981 alongside his wife, Carol Newsom, who was joining the faculty. His significant talents and Harvard Ph.D degree were noted, and he was recruited to teach classes even as he managed the on-campus Cokesbury bookstore, undertook part-time editorial work for Abingdon Press, and completed his doctorate of theology at Harvard, which was awarded in 1986. In 1989, he moved to the world of academic publishing, where among his notable accomplishments was est-

ablishing the Kingwood Books series for scholarly works in Wesleyan and Methodist studies.

Matthews returned to Candler’s faculty in 2004, and his work in the classroom has been lauded. He re-

ceived the “On the Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teach-
ing Award in 2010 and 2016, the Exemplary Teaching Award from the General Board of Higher Education and ministry of The United Methodist Church in 2012, and the Emory Williams Distinguished Teach-
ing Award from Emory University in 2017.

Matthews’s scholarly pursuits have garnered recog-
nition throughout the century. As a young scholar, dean emeritus and William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church History, says that Matthews has been “the greatest facilitator and pro-

motore of Wesley studies and Methodica for at least the last half-century” through his work in academic publishing and his role as managing editor of the Methodist Review: A Journal of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, an online academic journal launched in 2009. Additionally, Matthews was a co-founder of the Wesleyan Studies Group of the American Academy of Religion from 2007 to 2013, was a Luce Exchange Fellow and visiting professor at the Methodist University of São Paulo in 2013, and a fellow of the Summer Wesley Seminars at Duke Divinity School in 2009 and 2014. He received the Florence A. Bell Scholar Award from Drew University Theological School Library in 2014.

Matthews recently had more than a delicious meal – A Journey of Transformation; a book of sermons, essays, and theology. He recently co-authored the book "The Voyage of Theology: Journeys in the Religion of Reason and Revolution," which was published in 2018. He has also edited numerous books, including "Classical and Contemporary Theology," which was published in 2017.

Matthews is a respected scholar and is known for his insightful analysis of Wesley's and Methodist thought, his ability to connect with students, and his commitment to scholarship and teaching. He is a well-respected figure in the academic and theological communities, and his influence is evident in the many students and colleagues who have benefited from his teachings and mentorship.

Elliot notes that Matthews has been an incredible resource both inside and outside Candler. “He once heard Rex say that it is important to find your role or niche in life, which for him was supporting theological education and the work of others in the field,” he says. “This he has done faithfully through his roles as teacher, advisor, editor, researcher, author, Wesleyan historian and theologian, and consultant for UM Boards of Ordained Ministry, to name a few. Many have benefited and been blessed by his vocational clarity.”

In retirement, Matthews is spending time with his mother, who is in her 90s. He says he also hopes to “improve my photographic skills, create still images and video, spend more time on the water using some of those files, and teach myself how to read again for pleasure—something I’ve almost forgotten how to do.” And he hints that at some point, he may return to the classroom for a “limited engagement.” Future students will be grateful to spend time with the man who know John Wesley. — All

CAROL A. NEWSOM
The Biblical Matchmaker

During Carol Newsom’s 35-year career at Candler, she has amassed honorary doctorates, prestigious fellowships, and multiple awards for outstanding teaching. She’s co-authored or edited 13 books, scores of essays and book chapters, encyclopedia entries, translations, and reviews. She’s made history as the second woman to hold a tenured position at the institution, and the first to be appointed to a chaired professorship.

Despite this remarkable career, Newsom, who retired in 2019 as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Old Testament, still thinks of her vocation in simpler terms: as that of a biblical matchmaker.

“I have those students, and I know those great texts, and I am positive that they will fall in love with each other if I introduce them,” she says. “Watching students make connections with the texts is what makes teaching worthwhile.”

According to Amy Chelatane ZT, Newsom’s teaching style helps students make meaningful connections with the text. “Through the final course of her teaching career, Dr. Newsom approached biblical studies with the same inescapable sense of wonder, curiosity, and delight as one who was encountering the material for the first time. Her enthusiasm is contagious, and opens her learning partners to anticipate new revelations from both the biblical texts and people we assume we have ‘figured out.’”

Described by Associate Professor of Old Testament Joel Lefbon as “the most consequential scholar of her generation,” Newsom is a widely respected expert who has been recognized numerous times for her scholarship. She has published 76 articles and book chapters, dozens upon dozens of reference works, and ten books as author and five as editor, including co-edited the acclaimed Women’s Bible Commentary, now in its third edition. She has received honorary doctorates from Virginia Theological Seminary, the University of Copenhagen, and Keimingham-Southern College, and her research fellowships include grants from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Henry Luce Foundation. In 2015, she was presented with two Festschriften from former students. And in 2012, she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Apart from her own scholarship, Newsom has served the church in many ways, most notably as president of the Society of Biblical Literature, an honorary member of Great Britain’s Society for Old Testament Study, and a member of a dozen editorial boards. At Emory, she was a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, director of the Graduate Division of Religion from 2012 to 2014, and a member of the search committee that brought Emory its first woman president.

Along with her impressive status as a scholar and leader, Newsom is known for her dedication to her students, as evidenced by honors including the 1998 “On Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award given by Candler’s senior class, and the 2019 Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award given by Emory University.

According to Lefbon, Newsom’s students often mention the same trait when describing her: “They say that Carol made them feel that she had all the time in the world for them. Her commitment to each conversation reinforced the value of who they are and what they thought.”

Evan Bassett ’47, who served as Newsom’s research assistant, seconds this sentiment: “To me, one of Carol’s most important qualities is her ability to listen well. She listens to her students with undivided attention and answering curiosity, as if we might say something worth hearing. And indeed, that is the effect: When you have Carol’s attention, it makes you want to say something worthwhile saying. Her voice of wisdom has been a gift to the Emory community, but as her student, her listening ear has taught me just as much.”

Newsom has applied that same focused attention when working with Carson College for the past 17 years, “I’ve been struck by Carol’s steadfast commitment to those around her,” says LeMon. “Having her read and respond to your work is to feel the full range of emotions. You know you are in the presence of a person who has extraordinary skills of perception. Like the prophets of old, she is able to see what others cannot see. She can read the world through a unique lens, she is able to observe phenomena and find the hidden structure therein. She is critical and kind, someone who loves you and your ideas, and wants to make you a better thinker.”

While Newsom says it’s hard to pick a favorite moment from her Candler career, she does have a special affinity for Carson Chapel, where she describes as both a “challenging” and an “inspiring” space. “I have always liked the fact that it is a space that only fully comes alive when it is filled with people. When the congregation is there and you look up from the floor, you see people’s heads and shoulders—and they look just like the medieval paintings of the ranks of angels in the heavenly choir.”

In her retirement, Newsom will continue to write—she has three books under contract—but she also looks forward to having more time to indulge her lifelong love of making things. “She has been learning to spin, weave, and dye yarn, and plans to spend more time in her vegetable garden. Moving beyond biblical matchmaking in the classroom, she is now free to be a maker of a different kind.” — ME

STEWEN M. TIPTON
Intelligenst Curiosity for the Common Good

If you’re about to meet with the president of the United States and you need to check some facts in your presentation, who would you call?

For Candler professor Robert Franklin, this was an actual scenario, the real-life version of phoning a friend on a high-stakes game show. In 1998, Franklin, now the James T. and Berta R. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership, was about to meet with then-President Bill Clinton. He needed to verify some information, so he called one of the most remarkable scholars he knows: Steve Tipton.

Tipton came through, and Franklin’s meeting went well. That’s par for the course with Tipton, who came to Candler in 1974 as he was completing his doctoral studies and retired at the end of the spring 2016 term as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Sociology of Religion. His vast knowledge impresses both his accomplished colleagues and his students.

“We’ve all benefited from his overflowing fountain of curiosities,” Franklin says, laughing. “He would open his mouth at faculty meetings, and we’d all sort of sit in awe about how much he knows about so many things. He’s a mix of Aristotle and Thomas Jefferson.”

A noted expert on the work of eminent sociologist Robert Bellah, Tipton authored the monographs Getting Served from the Stairs (1982) and Public Puritan (2007) as well as a number of collaborative publica-
tions with fellow scholars, including Bellah. His work has been sponsored by such institutions as the Guggenheim Foundation, Lilly Endowment Inc., the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Louisville Institute, and the Ford, Rockefeller, Luce, Danforth, and Sloan Foundations, among others.

But Tipson is more than a renowned scholar; he’s also passionate about pursuing social justice. In his early working years, he served as a murder investigator for an indigent defendants’ fund in Harlem.

“He has the heart of a social justice clergyman,” asserts Franklin, who has been a friend of Tipson’s for almost three decades. “Think along the lines of John Wesley and William Wilberforce. He’s a sociologist and a moral philosopher. It’s quite rare to have one scholar bring these together in such a creative and vital way.”

Tipson is eloquent in lobbying for “justice across generations,” making the world more just for future generations. That desire to pay it forward is evident in the way he engages and inspires his students.

“Dr. Tipson is not just an advisor,” Pearson explains. “He’s more of a coach. He’s really invested in your professional development as well as your growth as a student. If you think about how basketball coach so Phil Jackson developed Michael Jordan, that’s Dr. Tipson developing his students. He wants to get the best out of you.”

Campbell references Tipson’s academic coaching as well, recalling a conversation she had with him at the beginning of her doctoral work. She went into his office to talk about a research idea and left with a list of potential conversation partners and resources to assist in engaging the idea.

Tipson, who directed Emory’s Graduate Division of Religion from 1990-2003, has retired from full-time teaching but not from being a scholar. His most recent book is a case of life imitating art: He researched and wrote about retirement in The Life to Come: Re-Creating Retirement (Welsey’s Foundary Books, 2018). Tipson interviewed retirees in Atlanta and Silicon Valley about their plans for and realizations about retirement, and found that the pursuits of those he interviewed range widely: some are getting in shape; others are falling in love. A few are working to check items off their bucket lists.

“This is a book of dreams and doubts,” Tipson explains, noting that retirement is less secure and certain today that it was for the immediately preceding generations.

One thing is certain for this retiree: He’s not done yet. He says his plan for retirement is typical of many professors: “I’m retiring so I can get more work done.”

Tipson says he has been “graced” to call Candler home for the entirety of his academic career, an arrangement that has paid healthy dividends to the school as well, Franklin observes.

“He’s a friend to the institution who gives his best for the common good.” — H.

BISHOP WOODIE W. WHITE
A Priest with Peaceful Prayers

Bishop Woodye White is far too humble to tell you himself, but he is a pioneer. That’s how his colleague Anne Burkholder describes White, who served as Candler’s bishop-in-residence from 2004 to 2010. Burkholder, associate dean of Methodist studies, is amazed by White’s humility and his accomplishments.

His first pastorate was a cross-racial appointment in Detroit in the 1970s. He served as a delegate to five General Conferences, including the 1988 gathering that birthed the United Methodist Church. He worked tirelessly to integrate the church, becoming the first General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race in 1989. Elected bishop in 1984, he led the Indiana Conference in building four dormitories at African University in Zimbabwe. Both a dormitory and a bridge are named in his honor there. And even in his (second) retirement, he is still active in the field of social justice, serving as chairman of the mission board of The Joseph and Evelyn Lowery Institute for Justice and Human Rights at Clark Atlanta University.

When White retired from the episcopacy, he accepted the post of bishop-in-residence at Candler expecting to stay four years. Instead, he stayed 12, witnessing several milestones in the school, including new leadership, curriculum, and facilities.

“It’s been amazing,” he reflected as he retired. “It’s been a very decade at a school for me. I’ve enjoyed every minute of it.”

Given his trademark humility, White isn’t prone to being proudful, but he is proud that one of his Candler classes—The Methodist Church and Race—has been transformative for many students.

Several years ago, he added a civil rights heritage tour to the class. The tour takes students to 12 Alabama sites significant to the civil rights movement. Among the most memorable is 16th Street Baptist Church, where four young girls were killed in 1963 when a bomb exploded there. The tour culminates in a march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in commemoration of Bloody Sunday.

“The students have overwhelmingly expressed appreciation for what they have called a transformational experience,” the bishop shares. “If anything gives me pride, that does.”

One of those transformed students is Natalie Wilson Faulkner of, who describes the tour as “life-changing.”

“I have an entirely new appreciation for the civil rights movement after this experience, and now I feel empowered to serve as an activist,” she says.

Faulkner also praises White’s teaching style and compassionate nature, which cultivated an atmosphere of trust in his classrooms.

“Bishop White gives students his personal perspective, knowledge, and experience in his classes,” she says. “He is one of the most compassionate people I have ever met. He teaches difficult topics that many people address with anger, but instead he teaches us with love and compassion, recognizing that we all come from different experiences.

“He addressed really tough questions in his class, but he did it in a way that valued my questions and opinions,” she recalls. “I felt that he encouraged us to address our own family history and past experiences as part of the class.”

White’s tenure at Candler was notable for other contributions as well, particularly his moving and theologically rich prayers in chapel, at ceremonial occasions, and at the end of each of his classes.

“That’s probably the most moving thing about Bishop White,” Brian Tillman ’87 says. “His prayers get right to the heart of the matter.”

The manner in which the Candler community embraced his prayers surprised White.

“That was something I did not expect,” he says. “I never associated my prayers with other people per se. I was what I did. The Candler community’s response to my prayers has made me more conscious of the importance of public prayer. That’s been a gift the Candler community has given to me.”

Former student like Tillman can talk at length about White’s given to them. Tillman first met White during his time as bishop of the Indiana Conference. Tillman, then a teacher, was wrestling with a call to ministry, and the two met to talk. Tillman continued to teach school and later moved to Atlanta, where he reconnected with White at church. It wasn’t long before Tillman decided to follow his call and enrolled at Candler. He is effusive in praise White for his guidance and compassion.

“He’s the real deal,” says Tillman, now associate pastor of Ben Hill UMC in Atlanta. “People love him across racial lines, across theological lines. He’s honest, he’s wise.”

White continues to mentor Tillman and other former students, and Tillman’s emotions come to the surface when he describes the experience.

“That’s what it is. I never understood what it was when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples,” Tillman says, his voice breaking as he recalls a Maundy Thursday service during his time as a Candler student. “Bishop White was washing feet. I never felt that Scripture like that before. Bishop White washes our feet! No!”

“It was humbling,” he continues. “I will never, never, never forget that. Ever.”

As for White, he says he will never forget the zest that Candler students have for ministry and their genuine excitement in serving.

White and his wife, Kim, continue to make metro Atlanta home, along with their three children and seven of their eight grandchildren. Perhaps that’s close enough for him to offer a prayer at a Candler gathering once in a while. — VL

Passing the Torch 29

CANDLER CONNECTION | SPRING 2020

28
Required Reading

If you’re looking for great titles to add to your reading list, check out these recommendations from members of Candler’s faculty.

The graphic novel Mr. Marvel Volume 1: St. Normal by G. Willow Wilson looked Assistant Professor in the Practice of History of Religion and Multicultural Relations Diana K. Womack from the start. The story’s sharp-shing superhero is teenage Kamala Khan, who struggles with her Pakistani Muslim heritage and the desire to transform into the blond, furti-skinned original Ms. Marvel. Training Adrian Alphonso’s captivating illustrations and Wilson’s sharp and relevant storyline, Womack says, “The overarching message resonated with me most: When it comes to American identity, there should be no imposed paradigm of normalcy.”

Scholar-on-Residence Marie M. Marquardt recommends Cristina Henriquez’s novel The Book of Unknown Americans, which also addresses identity in the United States. It’s the story of the Ríos family, immigrants who come to America to get help for their teenage daughter, who has sustained a traumatic brain injury. The Ríoses’ connection with other immigrant families and their struggle to find belonging while also yearning for the place they call home makes it, Marquardt says, “an important story for our time that brings a depth and richness to the idea of being American.”

Gregory C. Ellison II, associate professor of pastoral care and counseling, delved even farther back through the annals of history and race with his pick, The Coming. Daniel Black’s novel that, Ellison says, “practically chronicles the unifying spirit of enslaved Africans in the Middle Passage.” Black, a professor in the department of African-American Studies and History at Clark Atlanta University, weaves a powerful story of the horrific capture and sea voyage of thousands of Africans in the voices of those who lived it.

Assistant Professor in the Practice of Practical Theology and Director of Candler’s Women, Theology, and Ministry Program Ellen Shepherd had high praise for Amy Greene’s novel Long Way. It’s the story of a woman in the fictitious town of Yunehar, fighting the Tennessee Valley Authority to save a river and its surrounding land for her toddler daughter. “This book reminds the reader of the beauty, strength, and passion that lies within people and creation,” Shepherd says.

Thomas W. Elliott, Jr., associate professor in the practice of practical theology and Methodist studies, often returns to Henri Nouwen’s In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership for spiritual inspiration. According to Nouwen, leadership cannot function apart from community, a concept contradictory to modern society’s view that successful leadership is contingent on the individual. “In a day when so much of our leadership culture in the church and the world emphasizes control, power, and efficiency, Nouwen is a healthy reminder of my need for contemplative presence, not just greater competency,” Elliott says.

First published in 1977, Sallie McFague’s Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature recently received praise from Assistant Professor of Religious Education Jennifer Ayres. In it, McFague, former dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School, crafts a Christian spirituality focused on nature as humans’ primary encounter with the divine. “This book is important for religious leaders and educators in particular because it asks not only what the Christian should do in response to our environmental context, but also who we should be,” says Ayres. “When we cultivate a loving eye toward the earth, we develop a different relationship not only to God’s world, but to God.”

Jenifer Hainse, D.W. and Ruth Brooks Associate Professor of World Christianity, recommends Introducing Asian American Theologies by Jonathan Yen. It explores the development of these theologies in North America, including the Asian immigrant experience since the mid-nineteenth century, the nature of Asian American Christianity, and themes that appear across traditions and denominations. “Asian Americans are contributing to the transformation of both Asian society and the American church,” Hainse says. “Their growing presence and wide-ranging experiences, rooted in immigration and transnational existence, not only represent new forms of Christianity, but also offer contributions to theological discourse.”

Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture Nichole Phillips also felt the power of Between the World and Me—so deeply, in fact, that she made it a reading assignment in her class on African American religion and culture. “Given the stakes in the relationship between police and ethnic and racial minorities, specifically the black community: this is required reading about black death. It is written in form and style, but the subject matter is challenging and rare.”

Noree, L.乙aski, professor of theology and ethics, read Between the World and Me alongside Paul’s second epistle to Timothy. Both books take the form of letters penned by father figures to their sons—Paul to Timothy with final instructions on living and preaching the gospel, and Coates to his teemed son Samori on being a black man in America. Though separated by twenty centuries, Eskuri notes that each writer evokes similar life touchstones. “Essences in the struggle to birth a better world are faith, family, friends, and awakening to a new consciousness that transcends four. Both letters are required reading.”

TwoforOne

Two faculty members—and millions of others across the globe—heartily recommend the same book: 2015 National Book Award winner Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Assistant Professor in the Practice of Ethics and Society Levetta Campbell has also been reading about race in America, and was moved by two books with literary ties. Born of Conscience: White Methodist and Mississippi’s Closed Society by Joseph Reif (’14) and, history professor Joseph Coates’s In Search of Southern Country: Mississippi and the Consumptive Counterculture. “Together, these books have been a powerful reminder that our movements toward racial justice have been advanced steadily by people of great creativity and moral courage. They have deepened my appreciation for the many unspoken people and everyday decisions that are part of the larger civil rights story.”
Imagine you’re playing the game Pictionary, and you’re tasked with drawing “church.” To get your teammates to guess this word, you might draw a square, representing a building, with a pointed steeple on top. Perhaps you’d draw a cross, or a pulpit with a speaker behind it to represent a minister.

It’s doubtful that you’d draw an addict who’s never attended a church service sitting next to a young woman who just lost her son. Or a group of black and white people sitting together in a circle, their faces indicating deep and difficult conversation. Or a fruit tree. Or those connected spots on a map.

And yet, because of Candler alumni like Ben Floyd ’87, Karen Webster Parks ’67, Tyler Shipley ’77, and Matt Miofsky ’77, the above scenarios are now part of valid descriptions of church. For these visionaries, “rethinking church” began with an observation of what was missing from church in its current form, and then grew as they imagined how to fill in the gaps.

We’re all recovering from something

“There’s an expectation that we have to walk into church on Sunday morning and already be put to-gether,” says Ben Floyd. “That’s the opposite of what church should be. I want to help people wrestle with how they’re hurting and how the church can help.”

Before he began his studies at Candler in the fall of 2004, Floyd had already begun working on a new kind of church in Asheville, North Carolina. Called Daybreak Fellowship, it was conceived as a faith community that applies ideas from 12-step recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) to help hurting people find community, comfort, healing, and hope.

The language of addiction recovery is familiar to Floyd, who is up front about his former alcohol and drug abuse. At typical recovery groups, he says, the mix of faith categories, with religious people working their 12 steps alongside agnostics and agnostics. While the philosophy is based on the concept of a higher power, “some people need something that’s more Christian than the spirituality that AA offers,” says Floyd.

He’s not the first to notice: Saddleback Church in California has provided the Celebrate Recovery program since 1990. The program, a Christ-centered reworking of AA’s 12 steps, began to attract more than just people struggling with alcohol or drugs. People came to talk through the losses of a partner, a battle with depression, homelessness, a history of sexual abuse. As Floyd puts it, “people need recovery from life. People are hurting, and the church can offer more than just a meeting for addiction.”

For his first year, Floyd committed to his classes at Candler while continuing to lead Daybreak as part of the Teaching Parish program. Meeting one evening a week, the congregation would share a meal together, have worship with a sermon and communion, and then break into small groups to talk.

“Christ’s ministry is a healing ministry, and we all require healing. Everyone is in recovery from something.”

“People saw that it was OK to struggle with God, that the small group was a safe place where there wouldn’t be any strange looks. You could build a relationship with someone else who was struggling. There were men and women who were struggling with depression, or losing a child, who had never had the experience of being asked, ‘How is it with your soul?’ and having the freedom to say, ‘It’s terrible!’”

As Floyd was fostering these groups on the weekends, his weekdays were spent in classes on Methodist with Candler professors Kerri Watson and Rex Matthews, which he says reinforced his vision for Daybreak.
Growth through Racial Reconciliation
Church

Karen Webster Parks

small group. Wondered what was going on with the congregations outside of them. Were they concerned, too?

“I didn’t see the church playing a role in what was going on,” she says. “I think there were no opportunities for the congregations to work together, because we didn’t talk. If we’re not talking to each other, then when a crisis comes, we won’t be ready to move forward.”

Parks envisioned a con-spreational study of Martin Luther King Jr.’s book, intentionally targeting five churches that were diverse in size and background. She approached Tom Elliott, Candid’s associate professor in the practice of practical theology and Methodist studies and director of ministry internships, who suggested that her work take the form of a two-semester internship. Elliott also recommended that Woodie White, then Candid’s bishop-in-residence, serve as her faculty advisor.

“We told Bishop White that his involvement would be three meetings with me over the course of a semester, but we had three meetings before we even finished the curriculum,” says Parks. “It was amazing to have an icon, a legend, agreeing to be my faculty advisor.”

Parks was not only conscious of the import of hiring Bishop White as a mentor, she was also aware that she was a member of the laity working with five senior pastors who had agreed to let her take on the task of facilitating conversations about race relations.

“We all know it would be a tough subject to talk about, and we all know it needed to be done,” says Parks. “It’s like breathing, though—people know they are supposed to breathe, but how do you teach someone to do it?”

With the help of Trace Haythorn, who taught Parks’s first semester religious education class, she designed a program that would take place over the seven Sundays of Lent. The sessions would open with a relevant video clip, followed by worship led by one of the participating church’s ministers. Following the service, the large group would break into smaller groups to talk before reconvening briefly at the end.

Parks and her mentors set a goal of registering 50 to 60 people, but more than 100 people from five churches registered, and weekly attendance remained steady at 70 to 80.

“No one could have told us this would never happen,” says Parks. “It’s a tough topic, and folks are busy. But I felt God. Even when I had those moments that were like, ‘why me, God?’ When God is in it, it’s going to happen.”

That doesn’t mean the conversations were easy.

“At the first meeting, there were some tears,” Parks says. “People don’t want to be blamed. But Bishop White laid down the ground rules and ensured that the conversations weren’t accusatory. We have to understand these issues as a family. We all have to look at ourselves and think about what we can do. We had to tell people that we didn’t have the answers, because everyone’s answer would be different.”

There were tears, laughter, discomfort, and acceptance in the small groups, and people wanted to continue the conversation longer than the time allotted. And when Lent was over, Parks heard from other churches and groups who wanted to use the curriculum she had developed.

“God is not finished with me,” she says. “I feel called to work on these issues of racial justice and reconciliation. I can’t just go back to my pew.”

Planting justice
Tyler Sitt also felt a call to work for justice—both racial and environmental justice. After graduating from Candler, he worked in Chicago for nine months as part of a United Methodist church planting residency, then returned to his home state of Minnesota to plant what he thought would be known as an “eco-church.”

“Climate change has been called the greatest challenge of our lifetime,” Sitt says. “I felt that this church plant should take that on issue. The church has to show up to work on this.”

Prayerfully walking through Minneapolis led Sitt to the Powderhorn, Phillips, and Central neighborhoods in the southern part of the city. He was drawn to the racial diversity there and the ecological work the area had already taken on, such as fighting for the removal of a factory that was causing asthma in local children and planting community gardens. Sitt quickly found out, though, that the term “eco-church” did not resonate with his new neighbors, who swiftly told him it sounded like something “expensive” and “white.”

But the people were concerned about racial, economic, and environmental issues as they related to gentrification. The Black and Mexican families who had worked so hard to improve the area were now being priced out of living there as more affluent—and usually white—families arrived.

“So many times I hear, ‘I guess I’m too poor to live in a nice neighborhood,’” says Sitt. “But God wants a place where all tribes live together—that’s what we read in Revelation 21. There’s no violence, and the earth is renewed. It’s a new city that has come to earth.”

And so, in biblical fashion, Sitt’s church plant received its name—New City Church—and its mission: environmental justice, the idea that God wants diverse groups of people to live together peacefully in a safe and green space.

Sitt acknowledges that many churches do good work for the environment through recycling programs, energy efficiency initiatives, and community gardens, but he didn’t want those things to be just one part of his church’s work. “The church can be pulled in so many different ways. I had an image of what environmental justice could be if a church just owned it. A church plant allows us to establish the values and traditions from the ground up, and we could have a laser focus on the transformation we expected from God.”

On the other side of the coin, the need for God in this project kept it from becoming just another nonprofit or community organizing work in the area. “Environmental justice depends on Jesus Christ. There must be an interior practice of worship to match our exterior practice of action,” Sitt says.

Andrew Blackburn, recommended director of the school and theology professor, designed a curricu- lum to address the needs raised by Sitt’s new congregation.

“Methodist started with small groups, where you’d be asked, ‘How have you fallen? If you have sinned, how can we help you?’ Wesley’s theology maps onto the steps directly,” Ford says. “The concepts of repentance, forgiveness, and sanctification—these are what we work on in our small groups.”

Ford admits that marketing Daybreak was a struggle. “A lot of people are scared to come to something labeled ‘recovery’ for fear of what people will think,” he says. “But Christ’s ministry is a healing ministry, and we see all require healing. Everyone is in recovery from something.”

Ford is now pastor of Baltimore’s Chapel United Methodist Church and executive director of BlackLives Community Outreach in Todd, North Carolina. But he expects his experiences at Daybreak to shape his work for years to come.

“Small groups are part of any church’s needs, so the Daybreak model could work anywhere. I hope to take the lessons and theology of small groups and make them part of my ministry going forward.”

Breaking the color barrier
Small groups were also instrumental to the work of Karen Webster Parks, who was among the first to earn Candid’s master of religion and public life degree. Like Ford, Parks’s work took root before she set foot at Candid, and came to fruition while she was a student.

Parks read Breaking the Color Barrier: A Vision for Church Growth through Racial Equalities, by Kevin Muriel Jr., senior pastor at Cascade United Methodist Church in southwest Atlanta, where Parks is a member. As she was reading, she thought of news headlines about police shootings of unarmed black men. She also thought of all the United Methodist churches she passed on her drive to Cascade, and
It seems that everything at New City is growing. A director of community outreach joined the staff in 2016, then came a minister of public witness, a director of worship, a project manager, plus interns. And programs have grown, too. The fruit tree ministry has blossomed into a backyard farms ministry where New City works with residents to plant organic gardens using permaculture design principles. This experiment in urban micro-farming gives families access to healthy food and possibly a new revenue stream through selling produce at farmers’ markets or to local restaurants.

There is much to do, but fit is already proud of the example the church is setting.

“Our biggest success is providing inspiration for people to consider the kingdom of God’s imagination,” he says. “Everyone knows we should do church differently, but it’s important to actually see someone do it. When the Holy Spirit moves in the world, it breathes new life into the church in every creative way we can imagine.”

Go forth and multiply

Eichler-Toni Miofsky’s advice to writers to write the book they wanted to read, Matt Miofsky created the church he wanted to attend.

After graduating from Candler, Miofsky was appointed to a mid-sized United Methodist church in St. Louis suburb. “While the church had all the markers of what we would consider a ‘healthy church,’ it wasn’t a place that my non-churched friends were interested in going,” he remembers. “And so I found myself with this weird tension of working at a church that I wouldn’t attend unless I worked there.”

What Miofsky’s friends did attend, though, was a small group he hosted in his living room. The group contemplated what “church” meant to them, and how to bring in new people who wanted to follow Christ but hadn’t found a church home. With the support of his bishop and annual conference, Miofsky’s growing group became The Gathering, which held its first worship service in 2016 in a historic Methodist sanctuary. In the years since, additional locations have opened: one in a school, one in a newly built worship center, and online.

Each physical location has its own staff, including a site pastor and worship coordinator, and small group learning is still a central practice at the church, keeping it authentic to its roots and allowing for growth at the same time. And it’s intentional that no matter which site you worship in, you’ll get the look and feel of a small- to mid-size church.

Miofsky says the multiple sites were due to organic growth, but also a response to the strength of various neighborhoods in St. Louis. “There’s a movement here to invest in the neighborhood you live in. Eat local, shop local, and to some extent, go to church local. We also thought it was very Wesleyan, since that’s how the movement started—small sites growing and multiplying.”

While The Gathering attracts people who have never attended church before, it does so with traditional United Methodist elements, including the format of the worship service. Miofsky attributes his Candler education to his ability to strike the right balance: “I came to Candler not certain that I wanted to be a pastor, but excited about what the gospel could mean in the lives of people who have never experienced it. Candler gave me a way to think about Christianity that was both deeply rooted in our tradition but also innovatively practiced. It gave me permission to think about things in a new way.”

It’s been more than a decade since The Gathering started, and in the years since, Miofsky says his role has shifted dramatically. “Every year it changes. Now, my role is largely teaching, preaching, leadership development, and managing the vision for our multi-site church. I’m responsible for equipping and mentoring our other pastors”—including Rev. Martin Ortiz, another Candler alumn.

Two core challenges include ensuring that the “feel” of The Gathering remains the same from site to site, and helping those who fall in love with a small group format to understand growth.

Of the latter goal, Miofsky says, “As churches get comfortable, it becomes really easy to say, ‘Hey, this looks pretty good. Let’s just maintain what we’ve got.’ I don’t want The Gathering to become like that. I feel like one of my jobs is to constantly remind people of our purpose, that we exist for more than ourselves. Our job is not to maintain something cool that was started ten years ago. Christ invited us and Christ shapes us and Christ sends us out to be witnesses to new people.”

In starting New City Church, fit went to a lot of community meetings and local hearings on environmental issues to meet people who already valued environmentalism. From that common ground, he’d explain what he was hoping to accomplish. It didn’t take long for him to find like-minded people—and it didn’t take long for others to find him. “We are attracting people who are diverse, progressive, and not particularly religious, as well as people who have gone to church for 50 years,” he says.

New City uses some fresh new language to signal that it’s a fresh take on church. Weekly worship is called “Community Table,” a time of gathering and refreshments followed by a service that includes a post-sermon discussion time. “Gospel Living Class- es” replace Sunday school. And small groups are an essential part of the community here as well. Called “Life Together” (or “Convivencia” for the Spanish version), the groups are intentionally diverse—at least 50 percent people of color—so members have an opportunity to connect across differences.

“Everyone knows we should do church differently, but it’s important to actually see someone do it. When the Holy Spirit moves in the world, it breathes new life into the church in every creative way we can imagine.”

COURTESY OF TYLER SIT

COURTESY OF NEW CITY CHURCH

"Our job is not to maintain something cool that was started ten years ago. Christ invited us and Christ shapes us and Christ sends us out to be witnesses to new people.”

Rethinking Church 37

36 | Candler Connection | Spring 2020
Recent Books by Faculty

Our distinguished faculty consistently pen around 10 percent of all books produced by Emory faculty in any given year. Here are the latest publications through December 2018. Can’t wait to see 2019’s books?

Visit: candler.emory.edu/news/releases/2019

King of Kings: Organ Music of Black Composers, Vol. 3
James Abingdon, Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship, editor. Whether it’s a church service or a concert, the latest edition in the King of Kings series features arrangements and original works by some of the preeminent black composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. (GIA, 2017)

Quick and Easy Guide to Methodist Polity
Anna Burkholder, Associate Dean of Methodist Studies and Associate Professor in the Practice of Youth and Counseling. This book presents a quick and easy guide to Methodist polity—explaining what it is, intended for anyone wanting to gain foundational knowledge of the polity of the United Methodist Church. (Westminster John Knox, 2017)

A Most Exalted Thracia and the History of Women in the Early Church
Susan Hylen, Associate Professor of New Testament. “Hylen challenges the common narrative that women were excluded from active leadership in the early church, arguing instead that they served as leaders in their own Greco-Roman cultural contexts. The Christian Century selected the book as “recommended reading” in its 2016 Fall Books issue. (Oxford University, 2015)

Women in the New Testament World
Susan Hylen. Part of Oxford’s Essentials of Biblical Studies series, this 232-page volume offers a new interpretation of the conflicting evidence for women’s roles and authority in the culture that shaped the New Testament, intersecting with contemporary discussions of women’s roles in churches. (Oxford University, 2018)

The Revelation Body: Theology as Inductive Art

Missionary Christianity and Local Religion: American Evangelicalism in North India, 1838–1878
Ann Jane, Dan and Elizabeth Hanley Associate Professor of World Evangelism. Jones documents how preaching indigenous bhakti movements and western missionary evangeli calism met to form the cornerstone of North Indian Christianity, a movement that was both evangelical and rooted in local religious and social realities. (Baylor University, 2017)
Pastoral Care, Health, Healing, and Wholeness in African Contexts
Emmanuel Gartey, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care, co-editor. This collection by pastoral theologians from Congo, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe draws on biblical, theological, social scientific, and cultural contextual perspectives to offer insights on pastoral care and counseling aimed towards healing, health, and well-being. (Wipf & Stock, 2017)

Image, Text, Exegesis: Iconographic and Cultural Contextualization
Emmanuel Lartey, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care, co-editor. This collection by theologians and scholars from Ghana, the United States, and the United Kingdom draws on biblical, theological, sociological, and cultural contextual perspectives to offer insights on theological and cultural contextualization. (Bloomsbury, 2018)

Reformed Sacramentality
Steffen Lohel, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, editor. This book by the late Graham Hughes contends that to counter the Reformed tradition’s vulnerability to a cultural colonization by secular modernity, Reformed theology needs to amplify its appreciation for God’s confluence in creation with a re-appropriation of the condensed symbols of faith. (Liturgical Press, 2017)

The Radius of Us
Marie Marquardt. In her second young adult novel, Marquardt provides a glimpse into the causes and devastating impact of latino gang violence, both in the U.S. and in Central America, and explores the risks that victims take when they try to start over. (Macmillan, 2017)

Flight Season
Marie Marquardt. Described by Booklist as a “poignant story of grief, healing, and finding balance and purpose,” Marquardt’s third young adult novel explores immigration, love, and loss. (Macmillan, 2018)

Conflict Transformation and Religion: Essays on Faith, Power, and Relationship
Ellen Ott Marshall, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Conflict Transformation, editor. Contributions to this collection—including fellow Candler faculty members Beth Come and Liz Borden—describe ways that conflict and their efforts to engage it constructively shape their work in classrooms and communities. (Palgrave, 2018)

Introduction to Christian Ethics: Conflict, Faith, and Human Life
Ellen Ott Marshall. Understanding that difference is often the origin of conflict, Marshall uses the inevitable reality of difference to enter and organize her exploration of the system of Christian morality, asking, “What does the good life look like in the context of conflict?” (Westminster John Knox, 2018)

Recent Books by Faculty

What Does It Mean to Be a Theologian?
In 2014-15 Candler marked its centennial year, spurring reflections on the school’s first century and an exploration of the major theological challenges awaiting it in its second. Throughout that year, we examined the issues that had helped to define Candler and anticipated those issues that would challenge and stretch our existing theologies in the near future. Past and present Candler faculty and other luminaries lent their institutional memory, insights, and intellects to the task, and the result was both inspiring and challenging, preparing us to speak God’s truth in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances.

Rex D. Matthews, professor emeritus in the practice of historical theology and Wesleyan studies, has gathered selected addresses from Candler’s centennial year in The Vocation of Theology: Inquiry, Dialogue, Adoration (GBHEM, 2017). In it, twelve Candler professors consider the challenges that have shaped us and those that will shape us in the years to come: LUTHER SMITH on Candler as a place for the formation of witnesses, CAROL NEWSOM on the history of women at Candler and on creation and care of the earth, TAD SMIRKE on theological imagination and secularization, ELLEN OTT MARSHALL on the image of God in contemporary society, JEAN MANCÈS on the kingdom of God and global pluralism, and TERESA F. BROWN on God-given on-the-job courage, among others.

These essays, sermons, and speeches shed light on the vocation of theology in a changed and changing world, a topic worthy of perennial reflection.
PATRIOTISM BLACK AND WHITE: THE COLOR OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Nicholas R. Phillips, Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture. Phillips examines a community of black and white evangelicals in rural Tennessee, exploring how racial identity influenced differing responses to the War on Terror and the Obama administration, and eventually led to a crisis in American national identity that opened the door to new nativistic and triumphalist interpretations of American exceptionalism. [Baylor, 2016]

HOW MARRIAGE BECAME ONE OF THE SACRAMENTS: THE SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE FROM ITS MEDIEVAL ORIGINS TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Philip Rapaić, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Medieval Christianity and Ancient Semitics, Professor of Historical Theology. Rapaić examines in depth the intellectual and institutional developments of marriage as a sacrament through the centuries, from the ancient predecessors to the Council of Trent. [Cambridge University, 2016]

ATTEND TO STORIES: HOW TO FLOURISH IN MINISTRY

Karen D. Scheib, Professor of Pastoral Care and Pastoral Theology. This book invites readers to rekindle a passion for ministry by helping others revisit their stories—leaping in mind that to do so effectively, we must be willing to revisit our own stories, connecting them to God and each other. [Wesley’s Foundation Books, 2018]

PASTORAL CARE: TELLING THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES

Karen D. Scheib. Scheib contends that the purpose of pastoral care is to generate stories that promote growth in love of God, self, and others. With a ground- ing in Wesleyan theology, she re-envisions pastoral care as a rhythm of life within the whole church, rather than a spacial action taking only in moments of crisis. This book was tapped for “recommended reading” in The Christian Century’s 2016 Fall Books issue. [Abingdon, 2016]

QUESTIONS PREACHERS ASK: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF THOMAS G. LONG

Ted A. Smith, Professor of Preaching and Ethics, editor. This reference work honors Professor Emeritus of Preaching Thomas G. Long, whose contributions as a scholar, teacher, and mentor have been instrumental in the field of preaching for the past six decades. It contains essays from some of the nation’s best-known preachers, scholars, and authors—among them Barbara Brown Taylor, Anna Carter Florence, and Thomas Lynch, among others. [Wesley’s Foundation Books, 2016]

SPORT AND CAPITAL IN AN AGE OF INEQUALITY

Ted A. Smith, editor. This Festschrift honoring Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics Eric Gossenmann brings together a diverse group of scholars, activists, and public intellectuals to consider one of the most pressing issues of our time: increasing income inequality that grate against justice and erodes the bonds that hold society together. Contributions include Candler faculty members Tim Jackson, Liz Bounds, and Steve Tippen. [Kendall, 2018]

GERMAN PIETISM AND THE PROBLEM OF CONVERSION

Jonathan Strom. Grounded in archival research, Strom’s latest book uncovers the varied, complex, and problematic character that conversion experiences posed for Pietists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, shedding new light on the development of pietism and modern evangelical narratives of religious experience. [Penn State University, 2018]

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Karen M. Watten, Assistant Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, editor. Watten and co-editor Scott Kisker explore the richness of the traditional Methodist band meeting and introduce a practical approach for growing toward an authentic, transformation-oriented small group experience. A step-by-step guide for groups is included. [Seabird, 2017]

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Changing the Game

An innovative program helps Candler alumni navigate the transition that comes in the first decade of ministry and rethink their role as public theologians.

By Claire Ashby Lennox

WHEN NEW CANDLER GRADUATES toss their caps in the air at Commencement, they’re celebrating a milestone well earned, the culmination of years of study and discernment. Next, they go out into the world to use the tools their professors, mentors, and ministry experiences have given them.

That shift from seminary life to the day-to-day workings of a pastor’s first congregation can be a challenging one, says Thomas G. Long, Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching. But, he notes, it is only the first of several transitional transitions that effective pastors must learn to navigate throughout their careers.

As now pastors establish routines and become steeped in their current ministry contexts, there isn’t a milestone that measures how far they’ve come in ministry. Of course, there are tributes and welcome when a pastor moves from one church to another, and hopefully each year brings a vacation or a retreat to reflect—but otherwise, it’s nose-to-the-ginderstone work. Long says that this can create a major breakpoint for pastors about five to ten years into ministry, after they have developed the essential skills and gained the basic repertoire of experiences to competitively serve a congregation.

Long believes that pastors at this critical juncture need to acquire new skills and knowledge relevant to the challenges they face, deepen skills and knowledge they already possess, and be encouraged to grow by colleagues and mentors. “They now stand on the cusp of new ways of understanding themselves as leaders and of performing as decision-makers and influencers in their institutions and communities,” he says. “At this point, they have learned the rules of the game. The challenge for them now is to change the game.”

Enter “Crossing Borders,” an early-career pastoral leadership program Long designed to help Candler alumni become game-changers. Funded by Lilly Endowment Inc., the program focuses on major transitional challenges facing not only pastors, but also their congregations and communities—challenges like immigration, education, transportation, communication, and religious pluralism.

“Christian ministry is now being challenged to cross, even to transgress, many borders, to venture in faith from comfortable places where we have lived into new and challenging regions of experience, witness, and service,” Long says. “We want to focus on these places where the heat of social and ecclesial change has melted the iron, where the categories are in flux, and where dynamic leadership is urgently needed.”

In the spring of 2007, the first cohort of ten Candler alumni of various denominations wrapped up their two years of continuing education and pastoral formation through the program. During these two years, they gathered for eight educational sessions, one about every three months. Most sessions took place at Candler and addressed transitional challenges specific to Atlanta, home turf for the participants yet also a city that mirrors larger cultural trends that impact ministry.

Those game-changing trends include population growth, a lack of efficient public transportation, and a shift in economic focus. At the time of the 2010 census, metro Atlanta was the ninth most populous area in the U.S., and it has only continued to grow since. A 2014 Brookings Institute study found Atlanta to have the widest income disparity between rich and poor of any American city. And general population shifts have triggered changes in racial and cultural demographics as well. “Whites are returning to the city center while the suburbs are becoming multi-racial and multi-cultural,” Long says.

“…they have learned the rules of the game. The challenge for them now is to change the game.”

—Tom Long

In the midst of these demographic and economic changes, Atlanta has become a city of many faiths. Christian traditions are in flux, with mainline denominations shrinking and nondenominational mega-churches growing.

Each session explored one of these challenges in depth, intentionally including the voices of those
deeply involved in the issue, who offered context, inspiration, and know-how. “The program brings young pastors into contact with seasoned and courageous community leaders who have experience sailing confidently through uncharted waters,” Long says.

He acknowledges that attempting to do ministry in the midst of all these changes and uncertainties could be seen as an overwhelming task. But instead, he contends that Candler’s entire approach to theological education takes it in the opposite direction, leading with the belief that the current historical and cultural moment is a rich and exciting time in which to do ministry. He also stresses how the program illustrates Candler’s commitment to the idea that leadership development in pastors does not occur separately from their ministry contexts.

*Preparing leaders for ministry in changing environments is in our institutional DNA...As pastors change, the churches and communities in which they serve are also changing, as is the very character of Christian ministry itself,* he says. “This program was birthed out of the same conviction about the leading of the Spirit and the new forms of ministerial leadership being called forth.”

It certainly embodied that conviction for participants in the first cohort. Josh Amerson ’07 says the program was eye-opening. “At the close of each and every session, I felt like I left with a better understanding and a greater hope for how the church can be good and healing news for the world.”

For Jenny Anderson ’07, the program came along at just the right time. “I was entering my tenth of ministry as a pastor-in-charge, and this experience challenged me to have thoughtfull conversations with my congregation on important civic questions of today.”

God Myoyo ’07 ’09 was struck by the breadth and depth of the speakers at each session. “Dr. Long pulled together an excellent team of academicians, civil servants, and community and religious leaders to share their knowledge and experience,” he says. “This program challenged me to think about public life and Christian life holistically.”

A highlight of the program was a weeklong trip to the U.S.-Mexico border to explore immigration. Amerson calls it “without question, one of the most transformative experiences of my ministry.” Myoyo credits the trip with helping him understand the complexity of immigration and border-related questions that people of faith face. “How should we treat our fellow human beings, documented and undocumented?”

One of the most powerful moments during the trip was a service of Holy Communion held directly on the border, the elements administered through a chain-link fence. “We were surrounded by border patrol agents,” Myoyo recalls. “Despite the fence that separated us, we were able to share Communion, pray, and sing with our brothers and sisters in Christ from Mexico. It was, for me, a powerful symbol that shows that our unity in Christ transcends geographical and political boundaries.”

By the final session in May 2017, each participant had begun to develop a Community Ministry Action Plan outlining a new ministry initiative involving a new partnership with at least one community leader or agency to address a transitional issue in the pastor’s community. The initiative was to be realistic, sustainable, and within the typical scope of the person’s pastoral duties. Each pastor could apply for a small grant of up to $500 to help implement the plan.

**Promoting Interfaith Understanding**

When it came time for Josh Amerson to develop his Community Ministry Action Plan, he thought back to the program session on religious pluralism. He was particularly drawn to the concept of scriptural reasoning, a format for engaging people of different faiths with each other’s sacred texts. During that session, he was in a group including Protestant Christians, Muslims, and Jews, who together examined Scripture passages from the Gospels, the Qur’an, and the Torah.

“I think the primary reason I connected so deeply with this practice is that it offers a means to build relationships with people from different traditions—and rather than developing relationships through a secular activity, it does so through holy dialogue,” Amerson says.

He sees such multifaith dialogue as having the potential to re-humanize “the other” in the eyes of congregants who, through fear or ignorance, have tried to keep other faith traditions at a distance.

Currently an associate pastor at Dunwoody United Methodist Church just outside Atlanta, Amerson has noticed that millennials in his congregation gravitate strongly toward opportunities for connecting with people of different faiths. One outgrowth of their enthusiasm comes in the form of a monthly multifaith panel hosted by Dunwoody’s young adult ministry and held in a local restaurant. A rabbi from a neighboring temple is a frequent panelist, along with representatives from Atlanta’s Islamic Speakers Bureau, Buddhists, and Christians. “There are typically 20 to 30 people of all ages who gather for that month’s forum, and the topics range from miracles, to heaven and hell, to why we all look the same at church on Sunday morning,” Amerson says.

CROSSING BORDERS also made Amerson more aware of ways to get involved in his local community. When the Community Assistance Center in Sandy Springs reached out to Dunwoody UMC to ask if a member of the clergy would sit on their board, Amerson volunteered. “I had not had this experience, I don’t know that I would have put myself forward for consideration,” he says. Until he joined, it had been 11 years since the Center had had a clergy person on the board. “It’s one of the areas of community life today that pastors, who should be able to contribute a theological raison to the public conversation, are sometimes less willing and able to do so than our business and civic leaders,” Amerson says.

**Driving Education Advocacy**

Jenny Anderson came mid-program to Hopewell United Methodist Church in Tynne, Georgia, where she serves as pastor-in-charge. In her first weeks

“…rather than developing relationships through a secular activity, it does so through holy dialogue.”

—JOSH AMERSON
there, several community members stepped up to meet her, including a principal at one of the local schools. And in this case, “local schools” really means local—Hopewell UMC is on the same street as an elementary, a middle, and a high school.

The church’s physical proximity to the schools spurred Anderson’s desire to build connections with each one—and to see the bigger picture of what that means. “The relationship between the church and the three schools on this road will continue for years. They have to work together side by side.”

One way Anderson builds connections is by driving teachers from Richard J. Burch Elementary School to their teacher training and celebration at the start of the school year. It’s become a tradition for the church—located just across the street from the school—to provide transportation for the annual event. Hopewell plans for a local health clinic at the elementary school mean that a new sidewalk on their road will soon make it easier for all three schools and the church to connect on a number of levels.

“I hope that visually, sidewalks will add a sense of connection and invitation between the schools and the church,” Anderson says. “The schools’ job is to challenge the mind and part of the church’s job is to inspire the soul. Having a clear path between the two is the image we need.”

Anderson says that being part of Crossing Borders at Candler has encouraged her to examine how she makes decisions and leads conversations about church development. She was especially appreciative of the sessions focusing on education. “It helped me understand the current struggles in our state, and the importance of working at the local level. I now have a better understanding that education change, reform, and improvements are all local.”

Anderson knows that the schools and church will be sharing a sidewalk for many more years than they will be pastor at Hopewell. While she does see there, she’ll continue to build ties with the schools. From driving the elementary school teachers to waving to the speaker at the high school graduation, she is laying the groundwork for long-term collaboration.

IMMIGRANTS, INTERRUPTED

When Gado Mpoyo heard about Crossing Borders, he was immediately interested because “it addressed major issues that I encounter on a day-to-day basis in my community of Clarkston, Georgia: immigration, education, transportation, and interfaith relations.”

Mpoyo pastors Clarkston’s Shalom International Ministries, a multicultural congregation founded in 2011 by immigrants, refugees, and the Tri-Presbyterian New Church Development Commission. People from more than 18 countries gather for worship in space provided by Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church. The congregation also has an after-school program for children and music ministries.

Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mpoyo says that after the November 2006 election, he began to notice an increase in stress and worry among his immigrant community—himself included. “For the first time, I heard many immigrants and refugees expressing fear, feeling unsafe and unwelcomed in this country, when they had come here with hopes to live a better life and prepare a better future for our children. The election cycle created in many a feeling of not being treated with worth and dignity as people created in the image of God.”

In response, Mpoyo and Shalom International Ministries have been taking measures to show the wider community the positive impact that immigrants and refugees have on America and vice versa. This included creating a YouTube video featuring refugee children involved in Shalom’s “Inspire” After School Initiative sharing their thoughts on why welcoming refugees is important. Mpoyo also took part in a panel on “Who is My Neighbor?” hosted by the nonprofit Friends of Refugees and the Clarkston Community Center. Shalom even organized the “Celebrate Shalom Fashion Show Fundraiser,” where immigrants and refugees donated their cultural finery to celebrate their homelands and raise money for Shalom and its after-school program, refugee children’s program, and youth scholarships.

“The negative portrayal of immigrants does not reflect the truth of who immigrants are and why they come to the U.S.,” Mpoyo says. “Through panel discussions and events like the fashion show, we are creating a platform that provides a space to learn from each other’s cultures. Our stories are woven into the fabric of America and it becomes a beautiful tapestry of the threads of all our lives. This tapestry of diversity is something uniquely American.”

Along with those larger community events, Mpoyo has also worked intentionally with immigrants so they know their rights under the law, organizing educational sessions with outside speakers. “Unfortunately, many immigrants do not know their rights due to language barriers and lack of understanding of how the justice system works,” Mpoyo says. “By organizing educational sessions, we are empowering them with a deeper knowledge of their rights. These sessions have the dual benefit of equipping immigrants to know the laws of this country, which enables them to be better citizens in their new land.”

Mpoyo’s Community Ministry Action Plan focuses on a demographic he encounters often at Shalom: immigrant and refugee students. Almost one-quarter of the 20,000 students in the DeKalb County School System where Clarkston is located are international. They hail from 80 countries, and many of them have experienced what Mpoyo calls interrupted education. “At some point on their journey, they stopped going to school because of war, political or economic instability, or because they were getting ready to come to the United States.” This puts the students at a distinct disadvantage when they arrive in Clarkston, not to mention the fact that they are also trying to learn English. Plus, Mpoyo explains, the school system in the U.S. is not fully equipped to receive them, compounding the difficulty.

Mpoyo’s study explores the classroom experience from the angle of both students and teachers, with particular focus on cultural sensitivity and care of students. It involves not only the DeKalb County School System, but also resettlement agencies and other Clarkston nonprofits, and, of course, parents and their children. “It is my hope that the findings will help teachers, parents, community members, and education policymakers to have a better understanding of the experience of students who come to the U.S. with interrupted education, and help them succeed.”

His time in the Crossing Borders program has empowered Mpoyo’s work in the community. “This has been a transformational experience for me. It has helped me to rethink local ministry in the sense that ministry does not limit itself to the walls of the church buildings. It lands in the community, where people are faced with issues such as immigration, transportation, education. We as ministers are called to walk alongside them and be the prophetic voice in the public square.”

“…we are creating a platform that provides a space to learn from each other’s cultures.” —GADO MPOYO
Giving

Building Lasting Legacies

Candler has been honored with two generous gifts from emeritus faculty that will benefit the growth of religious education and Methodist studies at the school for years to come.

Professor Emeritus of Religion and Education Chuck Foster and his wife, Janet, have established the Charles R. and Janet T. Foster Endowment for Engaging Religion and Education in Forming and Transforming Faith Communities and Public Life. This endowment will support the field of religious education at Candler, including initiatives preparing youth, seminary students, clergy, and scholars for leadership in theologically grounded educational ministries of ecclesial and public formation and transformation. Foster taught at Candler from 1988 to 2001, serving as director of the Christian education program, associate dean for faculty development, and interim dean (1999-2000). He also taught in Emory’s Graduate Division of Religion and chaired the organizational team behind Candler’s Youth Theological Initiative (YTI), now in its 27th year.

Dean Emeritus and William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church History Russ Richey and his wife, Sterle, have established the Russell E. and Sterle Urist Richey Professorship in Methodist and Wesleyan Studies, which will provide support for a faculty professorship. Richey has made enormous contributions to Methodism in his lifetime through both the church and the academy. He has authored, co-authored, or co-edited some 20 books on the denomination, as well as dozens of articles and reviews, and served as principal writer of the report of the UMC Task Force to Study the Episcopal, which included recommendations to assist bishops in providing visionary leadership.

“We are thrilled that two of Candler’s most beloved and revered faculty members have chosen to invest in the school in this way,” says Dean Jon Lowe. “Chuck Foster and Russ Richey both had stellar Candler careers, and their legacies are only further enhanced by their generosity in supporting future generations of Candler students and faculty.”

Partnering in Possibility

Candler is committed to making seminary affordable by offering one of the most robust financial aid programs in theological education. In 2018-19, the school awarded $5.3 million in financial aid, with 95 percent of all students and 100 percent of master of divinity students receiving scholarship assistance. And this year, we’ve expanded the financial aid program even more—read about it in the News section of this issue. The possibilities continue to grow thanks to generous gifts such as these:

Four new scholarships covering tuition plus a stipend were created by a gift from an anonymous donor. The Dean’s Scholarship recipient is selected each year by the dean, while three Faculty Scholarships include faculty in the selection process.

In partnership with another anonymous donor, Candler established a permanently funded scholarship endowment to support students called to serve as Methodist Army Chaplains, with secondary consideration given to students called to serve as Methodist Navy Chaplains.

The Confluence Scholarship Endowment has been established with a gift from Shannon Mayfield ’17T and Kristy Mayfield to provide financial support for first-generation graduate students in Candler’s MDiv program, one each from a rural and urban area. This gift enhances Candler’s ongoing dedication to the vital work of anti-racism by bringing together students from diverse backgrounds.

Karen Webster Parks ’87 and Kenneth Parks established the Karen Elaine Webster Parks and Kenneth D. Parks Endowment to provide stipends for students enrolled in Candler’s master of religion and public life degree program.

The E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation has funded six cohorts of incoming master of divinity students identified as Carpenter Scholars in Community Engagement. Selection is based on proven academic excellence and a deep passion for social transformation.

The above photo of happy 2024 graduates who received scholarships confirms it—these gifts and others like them make a huge difference!

Honoring Singular Commitment

Across the last few years, Dean Lowe has honored the Candler Dean’s Medal on eight of our most student-supportive supporters in recognition of their singular commitment and contributions to Candler. We give thanks for the ways those individuals have transformed Candler and its students, and in doing so, have helped to transform the world.

Mary and Jim Wesley were awarded the Dean’s Medal in January 2018. The Wessleys—faithful United Methodist laypeople, civic leaders, philanthropists, and visionaries—established two scholarship endowments providing financial support for master of divinity and doctor of ministry students. They also...
directed a gift to name the Wesley Teaching Chapel in honor of the 11 members of Mary’s family who entered Christian ministry. Mary Wesley died only a few months after receiving the medal. The Candler community celebrates her memory and gives thanks for all she and Jim have done for Candler.

Bishop B. Michael Watson ’74T received the Dean’s Medal in June 2008 in honor of his extraordinary leadership and service to Candler. He was bishop of the North Georgia Annual Conference of the UMC from 2000 to 2008, and bishop of the South Georgia Annual Conference from 2008 to 2010. He served on the board of Emory University, as chair of Candler’s Board of Advisors, as a member of Emory’s Presidential Selection Committee, and as chair of Candler’s Campaign Committee during Campaign Emory, the most successful fundraising effort in the university’s history. Watson and his wife, Margaret, established the Allie and Excell Watson Endowment, a fully-funded scholarship endowment at Candler, in memory of his parents.

Elisabeth Hardin received the Dean’s Medal in August 2012, in recognition of the Hardin family’s longstanding commitment to Candler, particularly in providing generous scholarship support to students from the North Alabama Annual Conference of the UMC. She is the widow of the Rev. Edward J. Hardin, Sr., a professor of music at Emory and a composer of over 100 sacred works. Elisabeth Hardin was an active participant in the life of Candler and Emory University and is a beloved former board member of Emory Atlanta University.

The Rev. James W. Gilliard, Jr. ’87T received the Dean’s Medal in June 2015 upon his retirement as senior minister of Skidaway Island United Methodist Church. A longtime member of Candler’s Community of Seniors, Gilliard was an early advocate of the Sherman Scholarship at Candler, which supports students preparing for local church ministry in The United Methodist Church. As pastor of Skidaway Island UMC for 30 years, he returned the favor for generations of Candler students who followed, encouraging his congregation to fund scholarships for students who are responding to God’s call to Christian ministry. To date, members of Skidaway Island UMC have directed more than $500,000 to Candler for scholarships.

The Rev. Woodie W. White received the Dean’s Medal in October 2015 in recognition of his twelve years as Candler’s bishop-in-residence and his steadfast commitment to civil rights and racial inclusivity across a long career in The United Methodist Church. A scholarship at Candler also has been named for White. Read more about it in the News section of this issue.

The Rev. Edward Ducree 68T received the Dean’s Medal in October 2015. Ducree came to Candler as a transfer student and graduated with a bachelor of divinity degree in 1968, the school’s first African American graduate. He has served in numerous capacities in churches and nonprofit organizations across the United States, and is known and respected for his ongoing work for social justice, especially within marginalized communities.

The Rev. Dr. Otis Turner 57T 74T received the Dean’s Medal in November 2018. He enrolled at Candler in 1954 as the first African American student admitted to the school. He graduated in 1959 with a bachelor of divinity degree, and then continued his studies at Emory’s Graduate Division of Religion, earning a PhD in social ethics in 1974. He was the first black faculty member at Williford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and later worked in racial justice and legal aid ministries of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Ducree-Turner Scholarship was established in their honor. Read about it in the News section of this issue.

Enhancing Worship and Eccumenism
The worship of God is at the heart of life at Candler, sustaining our students for witness to the world. A recent gift from the Floyd family, given in loving memory of their parents William R. Floyd 46T 57T and Joyce H. Floyd, now supports the important ministry of Candler’s Office of Worship and Music, where students, faculty, and staff work together to design and implement meaningful worship experiences. The Solon F. Patterson and Marianna R. Patterson Catholic-Orthodox Endowment has been established by Solon F. Patterson 57T 58T and Marianna R. Patterson 64T, to support the programmatic efforts and activities focused on Catholic-Orthodox dialogue and understanding through Candler’s Aquinas Center of Theology.

Advancing Reformation Research
2017 marked the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, and the 50th anniversary of the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection at Candler’s Pits Theology Library. Supported by the vision and resources of Richard and Martha Kessler and partners throughout the Southeast, the Kessler Collection provides a rich resource for scholars and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of the Christian faith. It now contains nearly 4,000 documents written by Martin Luther, his colleagues, and his opponents, all printed during their lifetimes.

In honor of the collection’s 50th anniversary, the Kesslers worked in partnership with Candler, the William D.H. and Lisa E. Pits Foundation, and other donors to raise $100,000 for its advancement, ensuring that the collection will continue to benefit Candler, Emory, and the broader world as it enters its fourth decade.

Leveraging Technology for Learning
Candler’s Kit Anne Rollins Building and Pits Theology Library are instrumental resources in our educational mission. Our 12,800 square feet of state-of-the-art facilities support teaching, research, community life, and spiritual formation for students, faculty, and the wider Emory community, and our many visitors. A gift from the congregation of St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Orlando honored the ministry of their longtime senior pastor William S. Barnes 71T 74T on the occasion of his retirement by underwriting Candler’s distance learning classroom in his name. The room’s technology allows instructors to conduct remote video lectures, bringing in scholars from around the world by using the latest web-based conferencing tools.

Enduring the Deanship
Finally, as reported in the News section of this issue, a gift from the estate of Mary Lee Hardin Willard of Gadsden, Alabama, has created a permanently funded endowment supporting the Candler Deanship. Jon Lee was installed by Emory President Claire Sterk as the inaugural Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean of Candler School of Theology during the school’s 2017 Fall Convocation, with members of the Hardin and Willard families in attendance to witness the historic event.

The generosity of members from every corner of the Candler community continues to fuel our mission to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world. Your gifts make a difference. Thank you.
These Class Notes run through July 2018. For the very latest alumni news, be sure to read Candler’s monthly newsletter emailed to alumni and friends on the first Thursday of the month. For those who prefer print, we’ll pick up where we left off in the next issue of Connection.

Share what’s new and notable in your life with the rest of the Candler community. Send us your class notes and associated photographs via our online form: candler.emory.edu/submit-class-notes.

50s

Thomas A. Summers ’57F was presented with the 2018 Public and Community Service Award by the Atlantic Institute on April 11, at its Peace and Dialogue Conference in Columbia, South Carolina.

60s

Willis H. Moore ’67F was recognized for 46 years of service in the United States Air Force Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in a ceremony at Moody Air Force Base.

Emma Max Richardson ’67F spoke at a luncheon honoring the 25th anniversary of ordained clergy daughters during the 2016 Oklahoma Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. She, along with 23 others, played an integral role in ensuring the recognition of deacons as full clergy daughters in the denomination.

70s

Beth Adams Brewer ’71F was named “Distinguished Alumnus of the Year” at Reinhardt University in March 2017. James A. Baskett ’72T presided over his last luncheon honoring the 20th anniversary of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in a ceremony at Moody Air Force Base.

70s

Enoch L. Hendry ’79T retired from historic Trinity United Methodist Church in Savannah, Georgia. The school had its grand opening in February 2016.

80s

[01] Gerald D. Lord 74T 86G retired as Associate General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. During his time in this role, he created partnerships with Methodist education leaders in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, championed reform in the General Board of Higher Education of the United Methodist Church. She, along with 23 others, played an integral role in ensuring the recognition of deacons as full clergy daughters in the denomination.

90s

Mark Youmans Alex Davies ’97F is one of the 22 inaugural members of the UMC’s academic publishing imprint, New Room Books, which offers Methodist scholars and students a reviewed academic monograph series.

90s

William James Abbott ’01T married Rachel Abbott.

Vicente Morente ’01F has been appointed to be the next chaplain at NorthShore University Health System in Skokie, Illinois.

Kathleen Weber ’95C 03T has been appointed to be the next chaplain at NorthShore University Health System in Skokie, Illinois.

80s

Carole A. Fack ’87F retired in 2018 after serving First United Methodist Church in Dallas, North Carolina, and New Life United Methodist Church in Houston for 18 years. and was a presenting author at the 2017 AJC Decatur Book Festival.

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[02] F. Douglas Price, Jr. ’86G 06G was named director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership. He currently serves as Wesley’s James C. Logan Professor of Exegesis (an E. Stanley Jones Professorship) and as managing director for The Institute for Community Engagement and director of its Urban Ministry Program.

80s

Justin Wayne Miller ’02T recently founded a non-profit organization called SingingHope Memphis, Inc. Their mission is to disrupt poverty by applying investment principles in the charitable giving landscape.

80s

Brenda L. Iglehart ’88T is the founder and director of the Intentional Growth Center jointly received the 2017 Franklin Scherry Fouke BBT received a 2016 Community Builder Award at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast at First Presbyterian Church in Morestown, Tennessee.

80s

90s

Susan Laraine DeHoff ’95T was ordained to the ministry in homiletics in May 2016.

90s

Stephen H. Persons Parkes ’98T graduated from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in 2018.

90s

Kathleen Weber ’95C 03T has been appointed as professor of Selma, Alabama, in the fall of 2016. He formerly served as a State Representative. Darrio Traman Melton ’04T was elected mayor of Selma, Alabama, in the fall of 2016. He formerly served as a State Representative.
the Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers Social Action. Bridget Cabrera 08T has been named Executive Director of the organization.

Austin Dickson 07T was selected for Emory’s 2017 list of “40 Under Forty.” He joined the Center for Community Progress in Indianapolis, Indiana. Nancy Smith-Mather 08T welcomed a baby, Jordan, and big sister Addie. Shelvis and Rebekah Smith-Mather 06T 07T joined the Fox University in Newberg, Oregon.

Lauren Holtkamp-Sterling 10T was also honored by the Georgia House of Representatives as an Atlanta LGBTQ trailblazer at the second annual Litigation 40 Under Forty in recognition of their work as a general counsel for the Center for Community Progress in Atlanta, a national nonprofit focused on organizational change in communities struggling with vacancy, abandonment and disinvestment.

Dona Renee Meek 05T joined the Board of Visitors of Emory University in fall 2016 after being nominated for this position by Candler School of Theology. Emory’s 05T serves as a pastor of Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia. He previously served at Fourth Baptist Church in Chicago, Ill., and was recently inducted into the Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers at Morehouse College.

Shelvis Smith-Mather 07T and Nancy Smith-Mather 08T welcomed a daughter, Nicole Krisi Smith-Mather, on October 13, 2016. She joins big brother Jordan and big sister Addie. Shelvis and Rebekah Nancy were also selected for Emory’s 2018 list of “40 Under Forty” in recognition of their mission work in South Sudan.

Karen S. Drey 08T was selected for Emory’s 2018 list of “40 Under Forty” in recognition of her work as a general counsel for the Center for Community Progress in Atlanta, a national nonprofit focused on organizational change in communities struggling with vacancy, abandonment and disinvestment.

Duncan Eric Teague 11T was recognized as a 2015 American Public Health Association (APHA) International Litigator for the Institute for Justice in Washington, DC.

Green 14T 22G (Emory) were selected as part of the 2018 class of “40 Under Forty.” They were among the fellowships 50 years ago. Five Candler alumni have been selected to receive 2018 Doctoral Fellowships from the Lilly Endowment for Theological Exploration (TE). Whitney Bond 07T (Chicago Theological Seminary), Eunil David Cho 17T 21G (Emory University), Diana Rodgers 18T 22G (Emory), Ericka Dorsey 15T (Drew University) and Rachelle Green 17T 21G (Emory) were selected as part of the largest class of Doctoral Fellows since 1971, offering the fellowships 50 years ago.

Dominique Aneya Robinson 10T 17T won the Beatitude Society’s 2013 Brave Preacher Award. The Beatitude Society recognizes and encourages emerging preachers who address social justice issues through the lens of the current cultural context and the biblical story.

Paige Katherine Swaim-Price 17T was the keynote speaker for the Oxford College Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration held on January 16, 2017. George C. Payne 09T joined the Willow Domestic Violence Center as a case manager.

Sunggu (Paul) Yang 09T is now Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon.

Laura K. Brekke 17T is now Benfield-Vick Chaplain at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, West Virginia.

Dana, welcomed their second son, Carter Arlen Goshorn, on September 8, 2015. Jaeva Rice Violet Moore 15T was appointed in June 2016 as Director of Civil and Human Rights at the UMC’s General Board of Church and Society in Washington, DC. She was also named to Emory’s inaugural class of “40 Under Forty” in 2017 and the Center for American Progress’s “10 Faith Leaders to Watch in 2018.”

Jason Adams 08T is the community engagement coordinator for Lutheran Services of Georgia’s Immigration and Refugee Services programs, one of Candler’s long-term Community Engagement I sites.

Angelo Luis 07T is the staff chaplain at St. Anthony Regional Hospital in Carroll, Iowa. He completed his chaplain residency at Unity Point Health in Des Moines.

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James W. Fowler III died on October 18, 2015. He was Professor of Theological Education at the Charles F. Howard Center for Divinity. He earned his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University, where he worked on his dissertation as the center director of the Center for Divinity and Church Renewal and the founding director of Emory’s Center for Ethics, where he worked until his retirement in 2015. His book, Stages of Faith: The Stairway to Adult Faith Development, has been translated into 24 languages and remains required reading in many college and seminary courses. He was an ordained elder in the Western North Carolina Conference of the UMC.

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And Shall a Little Child Lead Us?

Elizabeth W. Corrie, Associate Professor in the Practice of Youth Education and Peacebuilding and Director of the Religious Education Program

Currently, my favorite thing about going to church is Reese. Reese is a nine-year-old boy. Like most boys his age, he prefers to run around in the back of the Fellowship Hall with his good friend Fletcher rather than chatting with uninteresting adults like myself. He doesn’t have much awareness of me, but I am very aware of him.

This is because he is a leader in our church.

Reese ushered regularly, making sure the offering plate gets passed from row to row, and helping organize us as we filter out of our seats to go forward for Communion. More recently, he has begun serving Communion, holding the cup and saying, “This means God loves you” when I dip the bread into it. He has stood up in front of the congregation and read prayers he has written, sometimes joined by his friend Fletcher. And in the children’s moment, he is the first to answer questions our children’s minister asks about the day’s biblical or theological theme.

Although Reese might be a little more interested in liturgy and theology than some of the other children in our church, I don’t believe he is a theological child prodigy. He just happens to know that he is a full member of the Body of Christ, and that our church needs him.

And our church really does need him, and his friends. This year, our congregation, an in-town church whose building was built in the heyday of Christendom and before white flight, and whose membership has been declining ever since, finally closed its doors. Along with another in-town church a mile away—also built during a time in which having multiple churches of the same denomination within a few miles of each other made sense; also declining in membership ever since—we have dissolved our former two churches and are starting a new church together. It’s an exciting time, but we’re anxious. We’re facing exactly what every hand-wringing article about church decline posted in my Facebook newsfeed describes. The church is dying because young people are leaving church and not coming back. The church is dying because young people are growing up as “nones” and would never consider going to church in the first place. The church is dying because young people don’t like that it is filled with judgmental conservatives. The church is dying because young people don’t see the point in going to a separate place to expose a liberal “niceness” that is indistinguishable from the larger culture.

The problem of church decline is complex, and I do not have the definitive answer. But I do wonder if part of our problem is that we don’t really believe—not deep down—that we need youth and children. Yes, we believe that “children are our future.” But this belief our assumption that they are full members of the Body of Christ only when they become adults. As children they are co-equal partners in the life of the church, answering questions in children’s sermons (even during sermons where we set them up to say silly things so we can laugh at them—but if they are loud and restless, we prefer they leave for their parents’ church). As youth they are problems, so we keep them separate in the “youth wing,” except for the occasional “Youth Sunday.” We tolerate them or display them, and even occasionally enjoy them, but we don’t really need them.

The institutional church is becoming small, and it feels like we’re doing it. But what if we’re actually just paring down to the point where we realize we need each other—every single one of us, regardless of age—in order to worship God? What if giving up our separate children and youth services is a good thing, something that pushes us to become a truly intergenerational, interconnected Body of Christ, in which “the eye can’t say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you,’ or in turn, the hand can’t say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you.’” (Gal 3:28) What if the deaths we are facing is an invitation to die to our habits in thinking we can’t grow spiritually by walking alongside—even following behind—children and youth?

Reese loves to serve Communion, and he loves to talk about God. That might mean he will become a pastor and lead a church in the future. That would be wonderful. What matters more, however, is that he is leading our church now, and that I am becoming more faithful in response.

“...what if we’re just paring down to the point where we realize we need each other—every single one of us—to worship God?”
GRATEFUL HEARTS

Emory Thanks is an annual event that gives faculty, staff, and students a chance to write notes of gratitude to the donors who support us each and every day. Here’s a close-up of a few notes of heartfelt appreciation written by members of Candler’s community. They are a powerful reminder that your gifts really do make a difference to so many. Thank you!