Dear Friend,

Our commemoration of Candler’s centennial has come to an end, leaving our community with a multitude of memories to savor, a wealth of new knowledge to spur further learning, and a renewed sense of call as we enter our second century.

Where the first half of the centennial focused on our history, this spring we turned our minds toward prophecy—“discerning in the complex circumstances of everyday life a Word from God, and speaking that Word to a world that most desperately needs to hear it,” as Luke Timothy Johnson so eloquently puts it. In popular parlance, another way to put it is to “speak truth to power.” Though some consider the phrase overplayed today, when Quakers first introduced it to the wider public in 1655 via a brochure of the same name, it sparked fresh and provocative conversations rooted in God’s truth.

Yet as popular as the title phrase is, the opening of Speak Truth to Power launches another axiom that beholds Candler’s observance of our centennial even more: “new conditions demand new response.” Conditions are certainly different now than they were 100 years ago when Candler was founded; thus, during the second half of our centennial, we challenged ourselves to seek new responses to these new conditions. The centerpiece of this spring’s activities was a major academic conference that brought together a dozen scholars, thought leaders, and practitioners to examine issues confronting theology and the church today, and to explore faithful responses to those issues. In true prophetic fashion, the conference started new conversations rooted in God’s truth. As you’ll read in Luke Timothy Johnson’s keynote address and in the article summarizing the conference, the challenges are great, and engaging them will demand great thought, great action, and even greater prophetic boldness.

As we close this centennial year, let us consider the closing of Speak Truth to Power:

...the world is not saved by discoveries or inventions, by the trample of iron hoofs nor the thunder of bombing planes, but by the quiet perseverance of the small company of people who in all lands and in all times, in spite of all that has happened or may come to pass, steadfastly continue to say, “Nevertheless...I believe.” Faith is relevant, and in an Age of Anxiety, an effervescent.

Indeed, in our first one hundred years, and now at the dawn of our second century, we, the people of Candler School of Theology, continue to proclaim our faith amid this ongoing “Age of Anxiety.” This year, our attention to story and prophecy has enlivened and energized us to move forward with confidence in the God who calls us for the transformation of the world.

Grace and peace,

[Signature]

Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
The Centennial in Pictures

What a year! Candler marked its 100th anniversary with an array of events, from the Centennial Celebration in the fall to the academic conference in the spring, and much more in between. Here are a few of our favorite images from the yearlong commemoration. For a complete recap of centennial events, including links to videos, visit the news section of candler.emory.edu.

01 August 28, 2014: The centennial opened with Fall Convocation, featuring the dedication of Phase II of Candler’s new building.

02 September 12, 2014: Candler dedicated the new Wesley Teaching Chapel in Phase II.

03 October 16, 2014: Doris Shockley attended the dedication of a classroom in honor of her late husband, Grant S. Shockley, the first tenured African American on Candler’s faculty.

04 October 23, 2014: Brent Strawn, professor of Old Testament, preached at the opening chapel service for the fall two-day Centennial Celebration.

05 October 23, 2014: Attendees enjoyed an outdoor reception on Theology Plaza after “Memories of Candler in Word and Song.”

06 October 24, 2014: The Centennial Convocation highlighted Candler’s historic significance within the larger community, with 56 individuals recognized as Centennial Medalists.

07 October 24, 2014: Professor Emeritus of Church and Community Luther E. Smith, Jr. gave the Centennial Convocation address, “Since We Are Surrounded.”

08 November 6, 2014: Professor Emerita of Church History Roberta C. Bondi, Candler’s first female tenured faculty member, attended the dedication of classroom in her honor.

09 March 18-20, 2015: Candler’s centennial academic conference, “Prophetic Voices: Confronting Theological Challenges of the Next Century,” featured presentations by a dozen renowned theologians from Candler and beyond.

10 May 11, 2015: Candler conferred 138 degrees on the school’s 100th graduating class.

Photo Credits: 01-Pat Graham; 02, 03, 10-Lisa Stone; 04-Bryan Meltz/EPV; 05, 06, 07, 09-Kay Hinton/EPV; 08-Claire Asbury Lennox.
The Gift of a Long Legacy

After winning every possible Candler and Emory prize for teaching, wide acclaim for his books, the respect of his peers, and the gratitude of his students, Thomas C. Long retired at the end of spring semester after 15 years as Candler’s Ready Professor of Preaching.

Named in 1998 as “one of the 25 most effective preachers in the English-speaking world,” Long has been popular with Candler students and colleagues alike. In addition to university-wide honors such as the 2011 Emory Williams Teaching Award and the 2013 Scholar/Teacher Award—two of the highest faculty honors Emory bestows—Long recently received the “On Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award, which is presented by Candler’s senior class in recognition of faithful and dedicated service. In the words of one student nominator, Long “does more than simply teach students; he prepares them for growth in ministry with helpful, critical feedback, and a spirit of encouragement, which creates stronger preachers and leaders.”

Not only a gifted preacher and teacher, Long is also an accomplished scholar/author who has produced a prolific body of work, including 21 books and scores of articles in both professional journals and popular periodicals. His 1998 book The Witness of Preaching—now in its second edition—is one of the most widely used texts on preaching, appearing on class reading lists in seminaries throughout the world. In 2011, Preaching magazine named it one of the 25 most influential books on preaching from the last 25 years. The Academy of Parish Clergy named his Preaching from Memory to Hope as one of the “top ten books for parish ministry published in 2009” and What Shall We Say? Evil, Suffering, and the Crisis of Faith as the 2011 Book of the Year. And he is a frequent contributor to The Christian Century magazine.

Although Long is officially retiring, Candler will continue to benefit from his expertise in his next chapter: developing a grant program to help recent Candler alumni become leaders in their communities through a two-year program of leadership education and pastoral formation. Thanks be to God! 

REAL INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT 01
James T. and Betty R. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership Robert M. Franklin, Jr., led students in his “Moral Leadership in International Context” travel seminar course on a ten-day trip to South Korea in May. Their jam-packed itinerary included three highlights: meeting and worshipping with families of victims of the Sewol Ferry disaster, visiting the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) (02), taking part in a demonstration alongside Korea’s World War II-era “comfort women,” and participating in a prayer service at the world’s largest church, the 80,000-member Yeoido Full Gospel Church. They also visited Yonsei University and attended Methodist Theological University’s International Conference for the 175th anniversary of John Wesley’s conversion, featuring the university’s president, long Chun Park (ext. big). Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling Gregory C. Ellison III accompanied the group as a guest lecturer.

BACK TO SCHOOL 02
Candler welcomes back Don E. Saliers (02), William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor of Theology and Liturgy, Emeritus, who has returned to the active faculty for a multi-year term as Theologian-in-Residence. Saliers retired from Candler in 2007 after 33 years of teaching systematic theology and liturgy. In his new role, he is focusing on spiritual formation and lifelong learning, including developing and teaching new courses, crafting opportunities for students to practice daily prayer in Candler’s new Wesley Teaching Chapel and new spiritual formation rooms, and leading retreats and workshops for congregational leaders. It will come as no surprise that one of his great passions will accompany this new journey. “There will be music all along the way,” he says.

“Dr. Long has this unique gift and calling to help people see the gifts that God has given them for ministry, even if they can’t see it in themselves.” — DANIEL OGLE 08T
When Jeannine Lee Moore ’05 (U.S.) decided to attend Candler, she wasn’t sure exactly where the experience would lead. Now that experience is leading her to further studies at the University of Cambridge in England, where she has been awarded a Gates Cambridge Scholarship, a prestigious full scholarship given to students outside the United Kingdom to pursue a postgraduate degree at Cambridge. The 40 U.S. recipients were chosen from 755 national applicants, with 55 additional scholars coming from other countries. Recipients are selected for outstanding intellectual ability, leadership potential, and a commitment to improving the lives of others. Since the scholarship’s inception in 2001, Moore is the fourth Emory student to be named a Gates Cambridge scholar—and the first from Candler. A candidate for season’s end in The United Methodist Church, Moore will pursue a four-year master’s degree of philosophy in theology and religious studies, only the fourth Gates Cambridge scholar to do so.

CAREER HIGH
John Stanny, Franklin N. Parker Professor of Human Development and Ethics, won the 2014 Lisa Kahneather Career Award from the Association for Moral Education (AME). The award recognizes those who have made outstanding, long-term scholarly contributions to the field of morality and to the AME. Praised as “an innovative and fearless researcher,” Stanny was noted for his award-winning research and critical review in Pulpit and Pulpit Bulletins on cross-cultural morality, as well as for his book How Farther Care for the Next Generation: A Four-States Study (Harvard University Press, 1993). “Stanny has focused on religious ethics and experiences, building a broad foundation for research and theorizing at the interface between morality and religion. He puts his theoretical ideas and research findings into action by honoring multiple voices in the morality conversation at AME conferences and school classrooms,” read the award announcement.

LUMINARIES WHO LECTURE
Candler hosted a star-studded roster of guest lecturers this spring. Obioma Ihedirechiche, who has been called one of the country’s most provocative and innovative commentators on religion, politics, and social policy, taught a 2-term course called “The Politics of Jesus” in the 2015 Bickford Scholars in Black Church Studies. Former president Jimmy Carter spoke in February as part of the Laney Legacy in Moral Leadership. Georgetown University’s Julia Watts Belcher spoke in March at the inaugural Nancy Garden Endowment Lecture, named for Candler’s late associate professor of sociology of religion and disability studies. Activist the Rev. Oseugabio Seken addressed “The Liberation Theology of Ferguson” in April. Read more about these and other lectures in the news section of candler.emory.edu.

FACULTY MOVES 04 & 05
New titles and new opportunities were abundant among the Candler faculty this spring. Professor of Homiletics Tricia L. Fry Brown (’94) was selected from a national pool of candidates to become Candler’s fourth Randy Professor of Preaching, effective September 1. The Randy Chair in Preaching was created in 1986 with a gift from B. Jackson Randy, and is considered by many to be the premier chair in homiletics in the country. Bishop Mark B. and Rose T. Stokes Professor of Theology Ian A. McFarland (’05), who currently serves as associate dean of faculty and academic affairs, will leave Candler this summer for the University of Cambridge, where he has been named Regius Professor of Divinity. England’s King Henry VIII created the famed Regius Professorships in 1535. Following McFarland’s departure, Associate Professor of Church History Jonathan Strom will serve as associate dean of faculty and academic affairs. Rev. D. Matthews was promoted to professor in the practice of historical theology and Wesleyan studies. Gregory C. Ellison II was promoted to associate professor of pastoral care and counseling. Steffen Linsel received a new title, associate professor of systematic theology, and Elizabeth Corrie was promoted to associate professor in the practice of youth education and peacebuilding. Andrea C. White, assistant professor of theology and culture, has accepted a position as associate professor of theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Lighting the Way
Candler and the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts at Georgia Tech have established a joint initiative called the Leadership and Multi-Faith Program (LAMP) to address the need for multi-faith understanding and community building in Atlanta and the surrounding region. The partnership includes the establishment of a faculty position at Candler and the development of public programming to be coordinated by the Ivan Allen College. “More than in any previous period in American history, people of many different faith commitments—no faith commitments—go to work, school, hospitals, recreational facilities, grocery stores and malls together, but they often don’t understand each other’s religious identity or communal practices very well,” explains Candler Dean Ian Love. That ignorance, she says, has the potential for breeding contempt that can cause the degradation of public discourse and—in the worst
New Degrees of Possibility

Now open for business: Candler’s newest degree, the Master in Religion and Public Life (MRPL) and the Master of Divinity/Master of Social Work (MDiv/MSW) dual degree. The MRPL is a 10-credit-hour, residential degree program that explores the dynamics of faith in the public sphere. Designed for completion by a part-time or a full-time student in one to four years, the MRPL is ideal for professionals desiring a better understanding of the specific concerns of religious traditions they encounter at work, as well as for lifelong learners interested in developing an appreciation for the ways religions shape the public landscape. The MRPL/MSW, offered in partnership with the University of Georgia, is designed for those interested in considering the role of faith and religious institutions in community health and development, the care of individuals in poverty and crisis, responses to systemic and institutional injustice, and issues of social transformation. The program allows the MRPL/MSW degrees to be earned in four years, one year less than if the theology and social work degrees were pursued separately. For more information on these and any of Candler’s 17 degrees, visit candler.emory.edu/academics.

The Prize Is Wright’s 06

Actually, make that two prizes. Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible Jacob L. Wright (‘68) has received a $50,000 Templeton Foundation grant to underwrite new research and a book award recognizing his most recent scholarship. The grant will enable Wright’s participation in a philosophy research group at Jerusalem’s Herzl Institute, where he will examine the highly developed discourse regarding the knowledge of God in the Hebrew Bible and undertake comparative work with the New Testament. Wright’s 2013 book, David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory (Cambridge University Press), received an honorable mention in the theology and religious studies category at this year’s PROSE Awards, administered by the Association of American Publishers. Recognizing excellence in professional and scholarly publishing, the PROSE Awards acknowledge pioneering research and landmark work in more than 40 categories. Entries are judged by peer publishers and librarians, and awards are given each year at the Professional and Scholarly Publishing Conference.

Remembering the Saints

Candler recently lost two of its best-loved saints. William Mallard, professor emeritus of church history, died on December 23, 2014, at the age of 87, and Fred B. Craddock, Randy Professor of Preaching, Emeritus, died on March 5, 2015, at the age of 88. Both legendary teachers put their inimitable stamps on this place, and were honored as Candler Centennial Medalists at the school’s Centennial Celebration in fall 2014.

Bill Mallard was Candler’s longest-serving professor, teaching from 1957-2000. During those 43 years, he shaped the lives of generations of students, along with the school’s culture and curriculum. A leading voice on the faculty, he demonstrated strong commitments to civil rights, academic freedom and collegiality, the church—and perhaps most of all—teaching. Mallard was known for his unfailing scholarly presentation, occasionally unconventional methods, and unparalleled broad reach as he taught thousands of students at Candler and thousands more lifelong learners in church programs around the region. His impact on Candler might be illustrated most clearly by the course he co-taught with Roberta Bondi, says David Pacin, professor of historical theology. “Their practice of opening each class with a full-dress rendition of ‘Give Me That Old Time Religion’ won the hearts of many a Candler student who otherwise might not have found the incarnations of early Christian church history anywhere near as enticing as they did.”

Described by some as “one of the most important homiletics in America for the last forty years,” Fred Craddock appeared on many lists that marked his impact. In 1976, Baylor University named him one of the 12 most effective preachers in the English-speaking world, and in 2010, his 1986 book, Preaching—widely used as a textbook in seminaries around the world—was ranked fourth on Preaching magazine’s list of the 25 most influential preaching books of the past 25 years. When Craddock came to Candler in 1979 as the first Randy Professor of Preaching and New Testament, he was already a world-renowned preacher, but he was also a scholar. His advocacy of an inductive style of preaching was groundbreaking in the field of homiletics and continues to influence countless pastors in the pulpit today, four decades after its introduction.

We are grateful to God for the lives of Bill Mallard and Fred Craddock. To read fuller tributes and access links to videos of their memorial services, visit the news section of candler.emory.edu.
Meeting the Theological Challenges of the New Century

BY LUKE TIMOTHY JOHNSON, R. W. WOODRUFF PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT AND CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

If we ask what the task of theology is within the life of the church and in service to the world, several answers are possible and legitimate. Theology can be thought of alternatively as catechesis, criticism, or doxology, depending on whether we see its goal as the handing on of tradition, the assessment of thought and practice, or the praise of God. For a school of theology like Candler, theological education can correspondingly be thought of as equipping students to faithfully transmit the teaching of the church, or as distancing students from an unthinking acceptance of traditional ways, or as preparing them for a richer experience of worship. All these modes are actively present in our pedagogy.

But another way of construing theology is as a form of prophecy. For prophecy I do not mean the ability to predict the future. I speak of prophecy in biblical terms, as discerning in the complex circumstances of everyday life a Word from God, and speaking that Word to a world that most desperately needs to hear it. Theology understood as prophecy is a risky proposition. Risky because prophecy asks one to discover the ways of the living God, and as Hebrews reminds us, it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Risky because God’s work in the world, here and now, is disclosed only partially, indirectly, and often, slowly.

It is risky above all, though, because the theologian as prophet does not stand above or apart from the context of ordinary life but stands solidly within life as shared by all. The theologian is therefore required to discern and declare God’s Word both with boldness and with humility—boldness because the Word must be spoken without a reason the people perish; humility because the theologian holds no position greater than that of servant, wields no power other than that of the Word itself.

For a school of theology like Candler, continuing theology as prophecy means committing faculty and students alike to the dangerous and exhilarating challenge of moving beyond the exegesis of ancient texts to the exegesis of the complex and ever-changing texts of worldly life. We seek to learn how to hear and to speak the Word that is God’s own amid the constant noise and distraction of human bubble. We must together embrace the risk of engaging God’s world directly and without safety goggles.

THEOLOGY AS PROPHET

This conference on the occasion of Candler’s centennial represents just such an effort to do theology in a prophetic mode. We have gathered together to speak simply and candidly, to listen carefully and respectfully, and to discuss responsibly some of the great theological challenges that face us as we move into the school’s second century. We do not pretend to be prophets in the predictive sense. We have no special ability to forecast the future. We take on only the daunting task of discerning what God might be up to in the world now, and to what response God might be calling us as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To expect those who founded Candler a hundred years ago to be prophets in any sense of the term would have been foolish, much like Expecting the Pilgrims in 1620 to stop off the Mayflower and immediately declare America’s foreign policy. In 1914, Atlanta was quite literally making the turn from horse and carriage to automobile, how could anyone then living predict the technological revolutions that would transform every aspect of life: the air conditioning that would change the old to the new South, the antibiotics that would conquer infections and extend life, the cybernetics that would change communication, the planes that would span the globe and the rockets that would leap to space?
Who in 1942 Atlanta could have predicted that the great European empires would dissolve, that colo-
nialism would disappear, that new world powers would emerge from the Far East, that Africa would be the scene for great adventures in suppression and liberation, that the combination of mineral resources and religious upheaval would give Islamic lands an importance greater than at any time in his-
tory? How could anyone imagine that the Great War begun in 1914 would initiate a century of warfare in which advanced technology would be employed for the slaughter of untold millions? Who could have dreamed that humans would be capable of ideologi-
cally inspired genocide on the scale of the Holocaust in Nazi Germany or the Gallipoli Archipelago of Stalin or the killing fields of Pol Pot?

In 1942, the great theological common of Europe showed themselves unaware of the cataclysmic events that the 20th century would bring, and ill-
equipped to respond to them when they occurred. Theological responses to war, genocide, and social oppression tended to be weak and late. No sur-
prise, then, that the founders of Candler, with a tiny faculty, few students, and truly-marginal resources, would have kept their eyes fixed mainly on the

catastrophical and ideological dimensions of theology as they sought to form ministers for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Mainly, but not entirely. In the great battle between fundamentalism and modernism that has domi-
ninated American theology from the time of Candler’s founding, this school aligned itself quickly and consistently with modernism. The reputation of being “liberal”—that is, of encouraging and sup-
porting free inquiry into Scripture and tradition—has been Candler’s throughout its history, with not

always positive consequences for the perception of the school in a predominantly conservative region and church. In similar fashion, although Candler as an institution was aggressively slow to advance the cause of racial equality, its first professor of New Testament, Andrew Hill, wrote passionately against racist practices, and Candler’s alumni were among the most prominent figures in raising racial consciousness on the issue.

THEOLOGICAL ISSUES FACING US TODAY

We seek in this conference to stand within that Can-
dler tradition of free inquiry and passion for social justice. We attempt to do theology in a prophetic mode by considering four issues, which in our judg-
ment demand our best attention now, and will, in all likelihood, continue to demand the attention of theologians through the coming century: theological

imagination and ascendantation; the image of God in contemporary society; creation and the care of the earth; and the kingdom of God and global pluralism.

The four topics have several characteristics in com-
mon that recommend them to our attention. They are all grounded in Scripture and the Creed, and

involve connections close to the core of Christian identity. They all have been the subject of examina-
tion in the earlier theological tradition. They all

involve developments in history and culture, making them especially attractive to this school’s habit of practicing theology contextually. And they all are under serious threat in the contemporary world.

Theological Imaginative and Secularization

The first issue is that of the Word of God. No need to

defend the centrality of this topic within Christian faith. Scriptures declare that God creates the world through speech and communicates with creatures through speech. The medium of God’s revelation to humans is the word, expressed first through creation itself, then through God’s self-disclosure in law, prophecy, and wisdom. God’s Word, we confess, is most fully revealed through the incarnation of God’s Son Jesus Christ, in his embodied presence among humans, in his sacrificial death, and in his glorious exalation as Lord. Through the presence of God’s Holy Spirit, we also affirm, God’s Word continues to be spoken in and through the experiences of men and women. The gift and task of the church, there-

fore, is to be the place in the world where the Word of God is truly embodied and powerfully expressed, so that the power and presence of God that is only implicitly present within human experience might be brought to full articulation within the community gathered by the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus.

The theological tradition has naturally devoted

sustained attention to the revelatory word, defining the ways by which God’s Word in Scripture is best interpreted, inquiring into the adequacy of human speech to express divine mysteries, distinguishing between the orders of natural and supernatural re-

velation, defining the ways that God’s Word calls

humans to the obedience of faith. Until relatively

recently, however, preachers could assume that if the

word was proclaimed clearly and passionately, it would find a hearing in human hearts. A few stones may need to be cleared; the bird and the words need to be controlled, but there is always good soil for the seed to take root and grow.

There were always problems posed to effective preaching by cultural diversity, to be sure, thus, the persistent concern to translate the Scriptures into language intelligible to people in diverse settings—if people could only hear of God’s wondrous words in words of their own, they would recognize God’s Word and respond to it in faith. But the optimism of Christian preaching was always based on the premise that humans, no matter how alienated their existence or how degraded their behavior, still had a longing for the truth that enabled them both to hear and obey God’s call.

According to this premise, humans have a natural

imagination toward God. People have a longing for something more than the everyday world affords them. Christian preaching historically found suc-

cess among those who were in one way or another already religious. The Gospel provided a distinctive and convincing version of a truth that their hearts already sought without knowing. But was that reli-
gious instinct solely a matter of the heart’s natural longing, or was it also a consequence of cultural formation?

We know that there have always been thoroughly secular people, who define themselves explicitly by what they saw and touched, and who lived their lives in disregard of the divine. But such folk were historically a tiny minority, and their secular stance was actively discouraged by societies that supported and rewarded religious adherence. Take for example the Greco-Roman culture within which Christianity found its first and most lasting success. The struc-
ture of that society supported a piety embracing both politics and religion in a single vision, and the form of education reinforced this vision, so that Greeks and Romans thought naturally in terms of a “city of gods and men.”

Today, that historical premise for proclamation is no longer obvious. The challenge facing theology today with respect to God’s Word is not disdaining religi-

osity but the apparent absence of religious sensitivity in the contemporary First World, an absence carried over from human consciousness by the Enlightenment, by the astounding successes of science and technol-

ogy, and by powerful ideological forces making the argument that the beginning of human liberation is the abandonment of religious purity. Secularity—defin-
ing reality solely in terms of matter, seeing the world not as mystery but as a set of interlocking problems and answers—is now no longer the quirk of idiosyn-
cratic individuals or odd groups. It is the defining

element of First World culture, supported and reinforced by politics, commerce, and education.

Theological challenges facing us today is there-

fore more radical than for the founders of Candler, who could assume in their student body and in their congregation both a language and a perception of the world shaped by religious convictions and commit-
tments, who knew that when they spoke of sacri-

fice for others, of seeking God’s will, of or value 

considering self-sacrifice, such ideas were already familiar to those culturally shaped by late Chris-
tendrin. No such assumption can be made today.

Today, theology must come to grips with a radical and pervasive secularism that makes speaking of God at all increasingly strange, even quaint, and must come to grips with the fact that the effects of secular-

ity in fact profoundly corrupting ways even those who profess religious belief. The challenge of how we might speak God’s Word today is real, serious, and not for the weak of heart.
The Image of God in Contemporary Society

The second issue is the image of God in contemporary society. The conviction that humans are created in the image of God is one that derives entirely from Scripture rather than the observation of human behavior. It is a perfect example of the way Scripture does not so much depict the world as suggest a world, and invite us, by imagining the world in the same way, to make it real. We should never have come to such a perception on our own, but we are schooled by Scripture to regard ourselves and every other human being as bearing the impress of the divine. As Saint Paul insists, “Just as we have borne the image of the man of the dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor. 15:49). Christian theological anthropology is thus inherently complex and tension-filled. On one side, Scripture propounds a truth about ourselves that we could never imagine on our own; on the other side, Scripture also instructs us to pay the closest attention to our actual mortal bodies, for through them we find God’s Spirit disclosed in the world. Not only changes in human consciousness, then, but also changes in human bodies are significant for thinking about the image of God. Today, the digital revolution is changing our culture with unanticipated speed, and promises to alter even the structures of human consciousness. Medical technology has increased longevity and enabled an astonishing range of physical alterations: organ transplants, prostheses, plastic surgery, transgendering, cloning—all these transformations press on us serious reflection on what human identity might mean in the face of such malleability. What might it mean to be created in the image of God when we or our neighbors are cyborgs?

Speaking of the neighbor, our convictions concerning God’s image on human demands that we think in moral as well as ontological terms. Scripture’s language, in fact, tends to focus on the imperative to treat humans differently because they are stumped with God’s image. The third statement in it in Genesis 9:6 declares, “Whoever sheds the blood of a human being shall that person’s blood be shed, for in his own image God made mankind,” and the last in James 5:14 directs the evil use of the tongue: “with it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God.” Paul similarly links learning the image of Christ and the ways we treat others: “When you sin against the brothers, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ” (1 Cor. 8:12). The dignity, even the sanctity, of human life, and the basis for all claims to religious and other rights, is located in the special character of the human person as created in God’s image. How we treat our neighbor is the measure of our response to God.

The historical record from Cain and Abel to the killing fields of Birmoind, however, does not suggest that this doctrine has had much of a positive influence on human relations; the tide of human cruelty and violence is both long and great. People have been conquering each other in war, raping and pillag- ing, taking others into captivity, and degrading other people apparently as long as they have been aware of each other. But it is legitimate to be asked whether over the hundred years since Candlin was founded, the pitch and pace of human savagery has not made both a quantitative and qualitative leap. It may be, in fact, that this past century has seen the unprecedented convergence of human cruelty, technological capacity, and ideological justification, leading to forms of genocide, enslavement, discrimination, and degradation that former ages could scarcely have imagined, and which makes any effort to think creatively about the human person a perilous proposition. Receiving some of this most tangible and precise of theological convictions in difficult, not least because of the overwhelming amount of experience that seems to contradict it. As Gerald Manley Hopkins lamented concerning God’s grandeur, “generations have trod, have trod, have trod; and all is scorched with trial, blooded, smeared with toil; and wars men’s ordeals and shares man’s smell: the soul is bare now, not can feel, being shod.” It is difficult, but it is also necessary directly in proportion to its difficulty.

Creation and Care of the Earth

That frightening quotation from Hopkins serves as a transition to our third topic, creation and the care of the earth. The crisis of the present moment can be seen as shaped by the collision of two realities. The first is the recognition that Christians have participated in practices deriving from a distorted vision of the human place in God’s creation. The second is the sudden and shocking realization that such practices threaten to damage or even destroy the work of God in creation. Candlin’s founders had no sense of the issue: Though coined in 1875, the term “ecology” was not used in reference to human interactions with the environment until the 1910s. Now, it forms a major dimension of our awareness of the world.

The distorted Christian vision of humanity’s place in the cosmos has taken two main forms. The first derives from the powerful dialectic view of the world that we associate as in a mild form with Christian Platonism and in its severe form with Gnosticism: Matter is at best a shell for the spirit; it is a prison, the point of human existence is to liberate the soul from the body. In this construction, the notion of “caring for the earth” is a form of antithesis, with that despotic materialism from which the soul ought to flee. A more contemporary form of such dualism is the fervent expectation of the rescue of the elect from the earth where they have been trapped, with their being swept up to heaven, leaving the planet to configuration and destruction. If the Gnostic vision were only the soul’s worth caring and regarded all other creatures as but foolish, the second theological position—one based squarely on a certain understanding of humans being created in the image of God—adopted a far more aggressive stance toward creatures regarded as lower on the great chain of being. The scriptural warrant for such a sense of superiority is clear enough. Having created male and female in God’s image, “God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’” (Gen. 1:28). This majestic imperative has historically overwhelmed the humble but now suddenly more pervasive scene where “the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend it and to keep it,” and placed strict bound- aries to the human exploitation of the garden’s fruits (Gen. 2:15–17).

Ecological blindness is not entirely the fault of the Bible or Christian theology. Christians lived for centuries with these views in remarkable harmony with other cultures. Indeed, material exploitation and dispossession are far more the results of attitudes and practices that have developed in direct opposition to classical Christian tenets. It is the spirit of the Enlightenment, after all, that sought to domestify everything, reduce mystery to problem, magic to statistics. Cartesian dualism did more than Christian mysticism to cultivate the perception of the body as a machine and the world as the mind’s laboratory. Above all, it has been the spirit of capitalism—that with the Christian ideal of sharing possessions—that has fostered competitive acquisition as the measure of human success, and has reduced all things material and spiritual to marketplace commodities.

More than anything else, the effects of technological revolution—and the human population explosion such technology supports—have fundamentally altered the relation between humans and the rest of creation. The impact of our inevitable growth and consumption on the sustainability of the human species as well as every other species is something we are still struggling to comprehend. The impact could not have been understood a hundred years ago, when the consequences of the human drive for power, speed, and pleasure—abets by mind-boggling technological prowess and multiplied by screaming populations—could not yet even be imagined. Nature still seemed to be infinitely vast, infinitely rich and varied in life and resource, even infinitely frightening.

“We are schooled by Scripture to regard every human as bearing the impress of the divine.”
Meeting the Theological Challenges of the New Century

The Kingdom of God and Global Pluralism
The final issue again demands the reassessment of traditional teaching in light of contemporary circumstances. In this case it is the conviction, rooted in the teaching of Jesus himself, that God is king of the universe and, as Jesus expressed in his prayer, that God desires his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, a criterion of Israel’s vocation to God’s right hand is that Christ rules over all cosmic powers until he gives over final sovereignty to God, so that God will be “all things in all things.” The Nicene Creed declares as the hope of the Christian people the expectation of a kingdom that shall never end.

But convictions concerning the kingdom of God have never been easy to coordinate with conditions on the ground. Christians from the beginning experienced a tension between the already and the not yet of God’s dominion, with believers locating themselves either optimistically in terms of God’s presence now, or, more pessimistically, in terms of God’s triumph in the future. There was also the question of the relationship of God’s rule to human kingdoms. With Constantine’s establishment of Christianity as the religion of the empire, the church began a manipulation with human political power that lasted until very recently, and that made it seem fitting to wed evangelism to colonialism. Only with the hammer blows to religion’s establishment struck by political revolution in the United States, France, and Russia has the church found itself largely unscathed by civil government and able at least to embrace the diaspora that was natural to it in the first four centuries of its existence. Despite such unanticipated, Christian theologians have always been confident about declaring who was to be included and who excluded from God’s rule, or to put it more precisely, who would experience the rule positively as salvation and who as damnation. Outside the church, the slogan said, there was no salvation. A great deal of Christian self-definition over the centuries—involving an astonishing amount of intellectual passion and energy—has consequently been devoted to deciding issues of inclusion and exclusion, always to the advantage, to be sure, of those doing the deciding. From the start, authentic belief was defined in terms of an absolute exclusor, and located in contrast to rival sects after God: among the Gentiles, there could be only nonexistence, no light, among the Jews, there could be only blindness, not sight. The practice of Gentile religion was demonic; the practice of Judaism was stubborn disobedience.

Definition by exclusion continues in the long tradition of hermeneutics. Getting anything wrong means getting everything wrong and failing outside the realm of God’s rule. In a time of relatively robust xenia- ism among families of Christians today, it is helpful to remember that at the time of Candland’s founding, scrupulous attacks between Catholics and Protestants were standard fare, missionaries to Africa were regarded in terms of an urgent roster of pagan habits from the church of demons, and theological low-bowing was common in Christian sermons.

All of this theological map-making was carried out with supreme indifference to what might actually be happening—still less what God might be up to—among Jews and the countless Gentiles who had never heard of Jesus or perhaps had never heard of him apart from the sinister implications of Western imperialism. Christian theologians were like pre-Copernican astronomers who could draw exquisite charts of the sun and planets visible to those resting comfortably on the planet they complacently assumed was the center of the universe. The tragedy of the Holocaust has revealed the not that lay at the center of Christian presupposi- tion. The collapse of colonialism has revealed how corrupt the alliance between Christian mission and Western political ambition truly was. Islam has ousted from its centuries-long slumber to become the fastest growing religion on the planet, making claims concerning God’s rule and its con- nexion to the state that are eerily reminiscent of Christianity’s Constantinian alliance. The Gentile religions of the present—are those of India and China—are in our schools and playgrounds.

The secularization of the so-called First World has revealed the powerful ideological forces that not only dominate the role of Christianity in society but challenge the default promising religion. In short, Christians and Christian theology must today come to grips with a pluralism that is both global and radical.

On this topic, we truly are at the starting point.

With regard to the quantum of the church and the world, we need to start over. The task is massive and demanding. We are not sure how to reframe Scripture and the tradition with sufficiently fresh eyes. But at stake is the authenticity and integrity of Christian teaching within which a world that truly is under God’s rule rather than ours.

Conclusion
There are, then, the theological issues that we seek to address in this conference. Let me conclude by ant- icipating three objections to the agenda we have set.

First, our selection of topics omits issues of arguably even greater urgency and topicality. Why not speak prophetically to the issue of covenant and church unity, the historical Jesus, the prosperity Gospel, or the persistent conflict among Christians between fundamentalism and modernism? While not denying the importance of taking a stance on each of these issues, we are not of such fundamental importance, for the world as well as for the church, as the themes we have chosen.

Second, it may be objected that the topics are insuffi- ciently theological, in the sense that they do not derive directly from the church’s confession or lead directly to prayer and piety. They tilt rather to cultural analysis and ethics, are perhaps too much critical and not enough doctrinal. Our answer to this is simply that this is the way we do theology here at Candland. Over the several decades that we have tried to learn and to teach how to think theologically within social and pastoral contexts, we have now become unable to think of theology as a subject that lacks cultural dimensions and ethical entail- ments. And we are convinced that this is just the sort of theology our world most needs.

Finally, each of these themes taken by itself could command the attention of many such conferences. We are well aware that taking them all together in such a short span of time may make our treatment appear introductory and superficial. It is our hope, though, that our conversation will bring to light other dimensions of each topic, and that by putting all those topics into play at once, we can appreci- ate the interconnections among them. We do not pretend to know ahead of time how our theological conversation will turn out. But we do not intend to close a conversation. We want to start a conversation that can help shape the next hundred years of this school and be a prophetic voice for the church and world. So, let’s get started.
Echoes of Prophetic Voices: A Recap of the Centennial Conference

By Claire Asbury Lennox

Some of the best minds in theological education gathered at Candler this spring for an academic conference on the pressing issues facing theology in the coming century. Part of Candler’s yearlong Centennial Celebration, “Prophetic Voices: Confronting Theological Challenges of the Next Century,” sponsored by the McDonald Agape Foundation, featured a dozen renowned theologians from Candler and beyond who considered new responses to the new conditions that surround us.

“Points of stories declare our hope for something more... our trust in a story with a better ending.”

The three-day event consisted of academic presentations by Candler faculty members, with responses from distinguished guest panelists and questions from the audience. Each of the presentations centered on a theme deliberately crafted and selected by Candler’s Centennial Committee, chaired by Luke Timothy Johnson, R. W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins. Johnson introduced the four themes in his opening keynote, “Meeting the Theological Challenges of the New Century”: theological imagination and secularization, the image of God in the contemporary world, creation and the care of the earth, and the kingdom of God and global pluralism. [See p. 12 to read his address.]

“Those were identified as issues that are distinctive to our age in a way that they weren’t when Candler was founded a century ago,” Johnson said.

Regarding the title “Prophetic Voices,” Johnson emphasized that “prophesy” in this context should not be translated as predicting the future, but as discerning God’s Word in everyday life and speaking that Word to the world. Thus, instead of choosing isolation, a prophet must live fully engaged within the world.

The presenters and respondents rose to that challenge, engaging these “real world” problems with intellectual finesses, theological insight, and lively discourse. Together, these prophetic voices started a conversation that can help shape Candler, the church, and the world in the next hundred years.

Theological Imagination and Secularization

Associate Professor of Preaching and Ethics Ted A. Smith opened Prophetic Voices’ first full-day with “Great Birds of the Kingdom,” considering two forms of sermon narratives: the typological narrative, popular among the Puritans in the 17th century, and the illustrative narrative, which rose to prominence in the 18th century and is still the most common sermon narrative today. Smith proposed that the decline of typological sermons and the rise of the illustrative signaled a shift toward secularism—but this is not necessarily a reason for concern, he said.

Smith’s example of an illustrative sermon came from Bishop Warren Akin Candler, co-founder of Candler School of Theology. In a sermon nearly a century ago, Bishop Candler described the anomaly and despair that must have overcome the sailors who accompanied Christopher Columbus on his 1492 expedition, after weeks of floating in open water. When land birds began to appear in the skies above the ship, the crew joyfully shouted, “Land ahoy!”

Candler used this story to illustrate how humans sail, despondent, on “uncharted waters” until “the great birds of the kingdom come singing in the sails,” and we know there is land ahead.

“Candler used the story of the land birds to illustrate his point that God sends signs of hope when we need them,” Smith said. “Because all the theological significance resided in that point, and because the story connected to the point only as Candler made the connection, Candler proachcd as if the events of the story had no theological significance in themselves.”

In the earlier typological narratives of the Puritans, preachers paired a thing, person or event—a “type”—with an “antitype” that represented its fulfillment. “Such stories worked through connections that were found, not made, by the preacher,” Smith said. Puritans held that these connections existed to be found because God had established them out of...
God’s gracious desire to be known. Smith recounted Puritan pastor John Winthrop’s 1630 sermon to his congregation aboard a ship heading for New England, where Winthrop declared that God’s deliverance of the Puritans to the New World had created a covenant between them, making the Puritans an antitype to the Israelites, God’s original covenant people. In Winthrop’s sermon, the relationship between the two communities was no mere persuasive invocation of the preacher’s imagination; it was seen as real, Smith said.

The rise of modern science, religious pluralism, and increasing social and geographic mobility in the late 18th and 19th centuries catalyzed the shift from the typological sermon narrative to the illustrative. “The shift happened because deep changes in background beliefs made typology less plausible than illustration,” Smith explained.

Acknowledging that some may view this shift as a narrative of decline in theological imagination, Smith argued against that perspective. “First, a narrative of decline does not take into account the fact that humans are finite beings that develop over time. “We cannot undo the deep shifts of many centuries simply by changing the way we tell sermon stories.”

Secondly, a narrative of decline fails to see that the shift from script-driven typological sermons to more democratic, illustrative sermons fit with the cultural reforms “in the name of equality for all.” Finally, a narrative of decline does not recognize the richness that comes from the role that humans play in making meaning.

“Stories about this world have meaning not because we tell them in a particular way, but because the world itself is part of a much larger story,” he said. “Prints of stories, even if we make them, declare our hopes for something more. They declare our trust in a story with a better ending.”

Pauline Prize-winning author M. Shawn Copeland and Janet Soskice of the University of Cambridge served as guest panelists at the session. Robinson suggested that perhaps the lack of faith in our society comes down not to secularization, but to a lack of reverence for humankind. “I find myself having to explain that yes, I am Christian, but I’m not angry. I don’t hate anybody,” Soskice described prophetic Christians as those who act when called upon, even when there are grave consequences. “Jesus calls us ‘foolish,’ not servants,” she said. “The servant does what is told, which doesn’t require initiative. Friends take initiative. A friend sees his friend’s need and acts. I can help with this. Here I am. Lord. Send me.”

The image of God in the Contemporary World

Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Conflict Transformation Ellen Ott Marshall presented “Affirmation and Accountability: Ethical Dimensions of That Blessed Image.” “The ‘Blessed image’ she referred to is the concept of Image Dei, the idea that all humans are made in the image of God. Affirming this idea, Marshall said, is one of the great prophetic challenges for the 21st century. “If we take the image Dei seriously, we cannot dismiss anyone as unworthy of care or beyond redemption.”

The image Dei has its basis in Scripture but comes to a fuller depiction in life as we live it, Marshall said. “The image Dei is affirmed by our experiences in the world. We understand more fully (it) profound meaning...by truly attending to bodies, in their destruction, brokenness, healing, restoration, and transformation.” For Marshall, the image of God in contemporary society is not so much an exercise in doctrinal definition as an engagement with an expansive and dynamic project of faith comprising those elements: universality, relationality, and process.

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The image Dei is a canvas on which to paint communication, and it becomes a tool for theological education. “The image Dei is not only a declaration of personhood, it is a declaration of relationship. We share a common root system. With this argument, image Dei emerges as a theological foundation for restorative justice and processes of reparation.”

Process applies to both descent and healing. “An act of violence is never an isolated or encapsulated event,” Marshall noted. “It is always part of a larger story.” The same applies to violation of the image Dei. But that sense of a broader story means that the impact of violence and violation bleeds the lines between perpetrator and victim. “As we explore the details of a life, we see the formation and transformation of personhood over time. We see the ways in which the image Dei gets buried beneath acts of abuse,” Marshall said. “And, most powerfully, we see that this burial occurs in the life of those inflicting violence as well as those receiving it.” In an example, she cited the concept of moral injury, studied in-depth over recent decades of war, when veterans “feel as if they lost their souls as combat and no one knew who they once were.”

Healing from such inner wounds, as victim or perpetrator, is also a process; it takes what Marshall calls “a journey of grace.” She noted the healing work and process of affiliation taken on just this year by Candler students in the “Black Lives Matter” movement and in advocacy for death row inmate Kelly Gissendanzer. “The students here have not only affirmed the image of God that narratives of violence have diminished and devalued, but they also hear that image into this world of great need and pain.”

Marshall concluded that through all we face the daily challenge of affirming and reflecting the image of God in the world, there is a more particular challenge for theological education: maintaining image Dei’s dynamism, vibrancy, and coherence, while avoiding its fragmentation, instrumentalism, and idolatry. “This is at the heart of theological education, particularly theological education that seeks to be prophetic.”

M. Shawn Copeland of Boston College and Steven J. Kralisch of Candler were the panelists. Copeland emphasized the concept of the Word made flesh, as stated at the beginning of John’s Gospel. She also cited Jeremiah 7 of Lydia, who believed that image Dei was situated in the body. “Christ, Jeremiah tells us, is the visible image of the invisible God. Further, Christ is the perfect human being...the conjoining and union of the soul receiving the spirit of God and joined to the flesh, which was made after the image of God.” Kralisch dealt with the concept of transubstantiation, the process of human beings and bodies becoming “enshadowed” with technology, from communication and business to medicine and implanted devices that prolong life. “The physical and psychological boundaries between the person and the tool are increasingly blurred to the point of vanishing.” What is the image Dei when the organic and the inorganic aspects of humanity are so closely intertwined?

Creativity and the Care of the Earth

Charles Howard Candlen Professor of Old Testament Carol A. Newsom’s presentation, “Understanding and Hope in a Time of Climate Change: A Conversation with the Bible,” began in the context of Can- dler’s first 10 years. When the school was founded in 1915, no one could foresee the rate at which human progress would move, and the severe damage that so-called progress would cause the earth’s environment. Today, she said, there is near certainty that humanity’s actions have impacted the earth so negatively that it would require thousands of years to repair. “The world that comes after this century will be very different from the one that existed before, much poorer in biodiversity, much less hospitable to many species,” Newsom said. “At the same time, I do not see the future in dystopian terms.”

In Genesis, Adam and Eve’s eating from the tree of knowledge gives them access to what Newsom calls a “divine capacity” that humans are not equipped to handle wisely the capacity for reflective self-consciousness. “We are both splendid, and very, very dangerous,” Newsom said. When God discovers the couple’s transgression, God declares, “Cursed be the earth on account of you.”

There is a deep irony, Newsom noted, in that “human-divine capacity...Such ability to

“All inequities, whether based on economics, race, gender or other elements of difference, are violations of the image Dei.”
“We have been enchanted by the idols of our own making, and we are being called to account...”

Christians of various stripes. He reconceived the biblical story of the tower of Babel, one that is typically interpreted from the angle of “pride and punishment.” But from a different angle, Hanciles argued, the people’s desire to build a city simply shows their desire for a stable life in the midst of constant movement. Perhaps the builders’ action “was prompted not by sinful rebellion, but rather a natural human resistance to migration and the flux of disorder,” he said. “When the dust is interpreted this way it was continued, ‘the divine plan for humanity is not one language but a plurality of languages, not one location but global dispersion, not a single culture or cultural identity but a multiplicity of cultures.’ Hanciles noted the growing reach of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity, and the massive impact of globalization and immigration on the spread of these religions, in particular what he called ‘the re-emergence of Christianity as a non-Western religion.’ On the other side, the dramatic rise of immigrant communities means that Western societies as a whole are increasingly pluralistic, with huge implications for religious encounter and change. The most dynamic and fastest growing churches in the U.S. today are either linked to immigrant communities or incorporate a wider range of racial and cultural groups in their structures.

Acknowledging this increase in global pluralism, Hanciles called on the ‘kingdom of God’ concept, which ‘envisions God’s presence and saving power in the world and expresses the good news of salvation for the poor and oppressed,’ and which found its fullest manifestation in the life and ministry of Jesus. Matthew 19:11-12 encapsulates what Hanciles called the ‘pluralist aspect’ of Jesus’ message: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind.’ In this way, Hanciles said, ‘Our common commitment to the “kingdom of God” daily calls us to a new understanding and fresh perspectives.’ This includes fresh perspectives regarding Western theological education. Hanciles proposed that a “fundamental reorientation” is required in theological programs in the West are to integrate global perspectives in order to offer the best education for the next generation. “Leading theological institutions like Candler must address this need as a matter of priority and academic integrity,” he said.

The dramatic rise of immigrant communities means that Western societies are increasingly pluralistic.”

Within a Broad Air

In his keynote, Luke Timothy Johnson said, “The theologian as prophet does not stand above or apart from the context of ordinary life, but stands solidly within life as shared by all.” Through each topic and presentation throughout the Prophetic Voices conference acknowledged different challenges, one defining thread was clear: all humans, all people of faith, all Christians are part of a larger context and a wider story, something that has only become clearer in the 100 years since Candler’s founding. By considering, discussing, listening, and welcoming that broad—by standing “solidly within life as shared by all”—may the life-giving Word of God resonate even more profoundly in this second century. —

You can view all conference western and worship services online at candler.edu.
Required Reading

Whether it’s the wisdom of ancient saints and psychopaths, revisionist history, or prize-winning literature, you’re sure to find something to intrigue you in the latest books recommended by Candler’s faculty.

**James T. and Bertha B. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership ROBERT FRANKLIN has been reading Kevin Darton’s “insightful, quirky, and humorous” The Wisdom of Psychopaths: Why Saints, Spies, and Serial Killers Can Teach Us About Success. Franklin’s classes on moral leadership entertain two questions posed by the book: Do the saint and the psychopath somehow constitute two transcendental sides of the same existential coin? And why do people follow toxic leaders? Darton answers from his perspective as a research psychologist, offering a look into the nature of irrationality and leadership.

**Robert Putnam**

The Wall Street Journal review summarized R. PATRICK GILKESON’S review of Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis by Robert Putnam. The Margaret A. Pitts Professor of Theological Bibliography and director of the Pitts Theology Library reports that the book uses portraits of representative individuals to analyze the current American landscape of societal fragmentation along lines of class. The issues of income inequality and wasting possibilities for upward economic mobility “will be of interest to all who see responsibilities for the church in these areas,” he says.

**Arun Jones**, Associate Professor of World Enlightenment, has been reading Mary Doris Russell’s The Hidden History of Women’s Ordination, which calls for the ordination of women. He suggests that the debate is not limited to the ordination of women but also involves the ordination of non-Christians, a topic that he says is “theological and spiritual. It’s a fascinating book.”

**Arun Jones**

**Arun Jones**, Professor of Historical Theology, has been reading into the works of Marilyn Robinson, the acclaimed author who recently visited Candler to participate in the “Prophetic Voices” conference. He recommends her most recent novel, *Lily’s* (2021), which tells the story of a young woman’s life. He says that the novel is “thoughtful and engaging,” and that it offers a “fresh perspective on the nature of spirituality and leadership.”

**Arun Jones**

**Arun Jones**, Professor in the Practice of Historical Theology and Wesleyan Studies, has been reading the novel *The Goon Squad*, which was a 2010 Pulitzer Prize-winner. He says that he was drawn to the book because of its “global scope” and its exploration of the connections between different events and characters. He notes that the book is “a masterful work of fiction” and that it offers “important insights into the nature of human experience.”
On December 4, 2014, Candler students led a “die-in” protest on Emory’s campus, spurred by recent grand jury decisions not to indict white police officers involved in the deaths of unarmed black men. The peaceful protest attracted approximately 200 students, faculty, and staff from Candler and Emory and garnered the interest of media outlets from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution to the BBC News and USA Today. Several faculty members spoke at the protest, including Robert Franklin. In January 2015, Franklin delivered the following lecture during Emory’s King Week honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

DR. KING’S VISION AND VALUES

We gather today to honor one of America’s greatest moral leaders by taking his life and work seriously. King’s life and legacy provide much for our reflection on who moral leaders are, what they do, and the outcomes they enable. Moral leaders are women and men who act with integrity and imagination to serve the common good while striving to make people better. This includes but is not limited to charity. Becoming a moral agent, one who lives in accord with deeply held ethical principles and moral values, is hard work. The Greeks said the moral life is an agen, a daily struggle or contest. But to aspire to moral leadership—a small step beyond moral agency—is a more audacious enterprise.

King was animated by a vision, and we should understand our responsibility for implementing his vision. He was also driven by a framework of values. His vision and values placed him at an historical crossroad where he would provide the moral leadership America required to align her reality with her noble democratic rhetoric. King elaborates on his vision in his final book, Where Do We Go from Here? Chaos or Community? in the last chapter, “The World House,” he writes:


“Some years ago a literary work was published. Among its pages was found a list of suggested films for future years, the most prominently underway being this one: ‘A family owned family inherits a house in which they have to live together.’ This is the great new problem of today. We have inherited a large house, a great ‘world house’ in which we have to live together—black and white, Easterners and Westerners, Catholics and Jews, fundamentalist and liberal—without fully understanding in ideas, culture and intent, how, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

He goes on to describe people and life as “interdependent” and “interacted.” In the 13 short years that marked his public ministry, those were the animating vision and the informing values that drove him forward.

King’s vision of interdependence has been creatively reformulated for our digital age in an exercise called “100 People: A World Dotted.” It considers how a village of 100 people would be composed if the existing human ratios of the earth’s population were applied. With this methodology, there would be 60 Asians, 17 Africans, 14 people from the Americas, and 11 Europeans. There would be 33 Christians, 22 Muslims, 14 Hindus, 7 Buddhists, 12 people who practice another religion, and 12 people not aligned with any religion. 53 would be able to read and write, but 7 would not be able to. 7 would have a college degree, while 23 would not have shelter and 23 would have no clean water to drink.

This is a portrait of stunning diversity and difference that invites an inclusive, generous, respectful narrative capable of moving forward in peace. King’s metaphor of the world house offers that it is a reason that can implement components of human cooperation and understanding. As his vision lingers in the mind, let us turn now to the reality of this house.

OUR CURRENT REALITY: A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE

The events of recent months and years have exposed the danger of a society wanting for a vision of interdependence and a narrative of equal justice for all. Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and others demonstrate that unarmed men of color face an uncontrollably high risk of being killed by a small number of law enforcement officers who regard them through the lens of fear and prejudice, complicated by situational-specific poor judgment. It is important to understand that these high-profile cases have exposed more than the history of bad police-community relations. They also expose a wider damaging divide.

In December, CNN reported on racial differences in how Americans view police and the criminal justice system. According to their poll, 57 percent of white Americans think none or almost none of their area police are prejudiced against blacks, while only 25 percent of non-whites Americans held that perception. White Americans were also much more likely to believe that the criminal justice system treats blacks fairly—59 percent felt that way, compared to 27 percent of non-whites polled.

These divergent perceptions are rooted in very different everyday experiences and perceptions of race, class difference, and the functions of law enforcement. People serving on grand juries who see police only as non-violent figures are not likely to indict them in complicated cases. Whenever a slow call must be made, law enforcement will always get the benefit of the doubt. As a society, we need to renounce with these potentially lethal assumptions.

Time will not allow a full unpacking of the implications of these varying perceptions, but I do want to draw your attention to the historical and legal realities that inform these views. In October 2014, the Economic Policy Institute released a report by Richard Rothstein, the subtitle of which could serve as the theme for the evolution of urban America’s racial polarization during the past century. The title of the article is “Is the Making of Ferguson,” but the subtitle in “Public Policies at the Root of Its Troubles.”

Rothstein notes that while race prejudices have led to the creation of white and black neighborhoods, influential and intentional policies developed by government officials and business leaders were also responsible for the residential segregation that has been the status quo in urban and small town America. Rothstein’s list of the offending policies includes actions such as zoning decisions, restrictive covenants, government subsidies that favored white developments, lack of municipal services in poorer
neighborhoods, and annexation and incorporation initiatives, all of which served to keep the races separate.

I am personally unmoved and disturbed by these patterns of residential segregation because my family lived in this narrative. Our first home was in an all-black community on Chicago’s South Side. Just before I came to Atlanta to attend Morehouse College, my family became the second black family to move to Mount Vernon, formerly an all-white neighborhood. We enjoyed good relationships with our neighbors, but we witnessed family after family move out of their homes at night, never to be seen again. Friendships erupted, but more importantly, integrated communities that might have thrived were quickly abandoned. Residential segregation was not solely responsible for isolating ghettos. Racial discrimination in labor, jobs, and economic policies meant that blacks were excluded systematically from opportunities to improve their economic conditions. By paying their taxes, they helped finance public-supported measures that benefited their white counterparts, subsidizing their own exclusion. It is important, however, to remember that black people were not helpless victims in this unfolding narrative of state-sponsored exclusion. They established their own banks, credit unions, entrepreneurial activities, and vest businesses. Black business districts thrived in places like Auburn Avenue in downtown Atlanta. Black colleges like Morehouse and Spelman helped attract a national cadre of talented young people. Black churches supported entrepreneurial and social justice activism.

In addition to residential and labor segregation, law enforcement is part of the narrative. Many scholars and activists have commented on how law enforce- ment was deployed not simply to serve and protect local citizens, but also to patrol and protect color lines and class boundaries. Police became virtual guards on the border to prevent unwanted transgression by blacks, especially young black males.

As we engage in community empowerment and social justice, we should think about the political, social, and economic histories of our churches and neighborhoods. We should allow that knowledge, the knowledge of the current reality, and Dr. King’s vision of the final outbreak to influence our oppor- tunities for moral leadership. As an example from Lashanian’s report made me smile and gave me hope of the way forward.

In 1988, the same year my family moved to Mount Vernon, Lamont and Geraldine Williams bought a home in Ferguson, Missouri, becoming one of the first black families to do so. They had been living in St. Louis, and thought that Ferguson would provide a better education and less violence for their daughters. But the path to homeownership in Ferguson wasn’t easy—the real estate agent refused to show the Williams family a house that was on the market. The family belonged to a church with a white pastor, who called the agent; the agent told the pastor that the neighbors objected to a black buyer. The pastor held a prayer meeting for the neighborhood, and the neighbors agreed to allow the Williams family to purchase the home.

One white pastor, one lone and courageous pastor, helped open the door for this family and broke the silence of the faith community. Amidst the tragic color narratives, there have been, are, and must con- tinue to be moral leaders who transgress the racial milie- gien boundaries, who break the silence, and act with integrity and imagination for justice and inclusion.

THE WAY FORWARD

Going forward, I see three zones of moral action that people of faith must engage simultaneously. First, the zone of community-policy relations. Moral leaders must step into places where there is mistrust and fear with visions and values of interdependence, respect, and hope. We must have difficult public conversations about repairing poor community-policy relations through changes in policy, greater diversity in personnel, and by holding law enforcement accountable for professional behavior, particularly in communities of color.

Second, alongside the public work of improving police-community interactions is the unenviable homework of providing care, discipline, and moral education for our young people. That is the responsibility of the village elders, anchor institutions, families, schools, congregations, and community organizations. Harvard developmental psychologist Erik Erikson said that as elders enter the latter phases of the life cycle, their pur- pose and their great opportunity is to prepare the next generation for the world.

Part of that learning agenda—perhaps the hard- est part—will be the psycho-social-spiritual and political work in our ethnic and economic enclaves. What must grapple with white privilege and myths of supremacy, a benefit not sought or earned but merely conferred by solidarity and color with deep roots as a racist past. One does not have to choose to be prejudiced, like flies in a Happy Meal, it comes along with the package. Know the history, know your location in the narrative, and shows all, know how you can transcend and transform the narrative.

Blacks must wrestle with the torturous memories, legacies, politics, and social demon of the past. These demons assume many forms, including a sense of victimization that promotes self-pity, mag- nation, and self-destruction. Blacks must avoid the traps of internalized oppression and self-blame.

Those who are Asian, Hispanic, and others who are neither black nor white must understand that they are part of this interconnected network of destiny. No one gets a pass or can stand outside of history. You are in this narrative. Instead of being assigned a part, be an agent and define the part you will play.

In all of our communities, our young people desper-ately need to know how to live together in a diverse world. Teach them their responsibilities as well as their rights. Teach them to respect and accept—not merely tolerate—people who are different. Teach them the art of civility and manners. Teach them to work, to love, to forgive, and to reconcile. This is parental work of care and discipline, but it is too important to leave to parents alone. We have done that andaped tragic consequences. Nor can a government or the market teach them what they need to survive in this new world. If the village elders do not fill the void, the village kids will.

As police-community relations are sorted, and as each of our households, neighborhoods, and branches of worship work on re-souling our youth for the 21st century, the third zone calls all of us of our ethnic and economic enclaves to the demanding work of reforming and reimagining our institutions, poli- cies, and practices through multi-racial, interfaith coalition-building. Moral leaders do not remain in their zip codes or comfort zones, they venture, they push boundaries, and they explore and pioneer new relationships for the common good. We must work together to ensure greater inclusiveness and equity in our institutions. Those who have been excluded or barely visible in the past must be welcomed at the table, including women, people of color, and those from other faith traditions.

Organizational management experts Julie O’Mara and Alan Kitcher provide some guidance in how to change these institutions. Working with a vast group of other scholars, diversity experts, and change managers, they have defined diversity as “the variety of differences and similarities (dimensions among people, such as gender, race/ethnicity, religious-identity, sexual orientation, age, income, race, cultural background, social class) and the ability to perceive them as different.”

This expansive understanding of the concept of diversity is helpful. Achieving basic inclusiveness where diverse segments of the community are wel- come at the table will be a huge moral achievement, but is not enough. The next step—recall King’s vision—is to demonstrate our ethical commitment to inclusion by institutionalizing the world house. How will we know we are achieving this? O’Mara and Kitcher present benchmarks that institutions can strive to meet. According to their guidelines, we will be on the right path with everyone in an institution demonstrates a belief that inclusiveness is a key to success. We will be heading the right direction when we can credit our accomplishments to our work becoming more inclusive. And as we continue on the path, we must continually review our vision, initiatives, and goals to ensure that we are doing all we can to achieve inclusion.

CONCLUSION

This is a condensed version of Dr. Franklin’s lecture. To view the full lecture, visit: www.candler.gsu.edu/15Summer

This is an abridged version of Dr. Franklin’s lecture. To view the full lecture, visit: www.candler.gsu.edu/15Summer
The Candler faculty contributed an impressive 10 percent of the total number of books published by Emory faculty in 2014. Their work fosters a vibrant intellectual community of scholarship and learning that serves the church, the academy, and the human spirit. Here are the latest publications by Candler’s own:

**New Books by Faculty**

The Candler faculty contributed an impressive 10 percent of the total number of books published by Emory faculty in 2014. Their work fosters a vibrant intellectual community of scholarship and learning that serves the church, the academy, and the human spirit. Here are the latest publications by Candler’s own:
In a sense, you could say that all Candler graduates are prophets. After all, as a seminary, we’re in the business of training our students to discern where God is working and to join that work with hearts, minds, hands, and voices. So in keeping with the centennial theme of “story and prophecy,” here are a few stories about the everyday prophets among us and the incredibly varied witness they offer.

By Claire Ashbury Lennox

Inward Spirit, Outward Service

In 2002, Christina Repoley ’17 gave the commencement address at her alma mater, Guilford College. This honor might suggest that Repoley is retired after decades of experience in a field where she excelled. In reality, only the last part of that statement is true. At 24, Repoley is far from retired, with hardly a decade of experience under her belt. Yet there is no doubt that she excels in what is not simply her field, but her calling.

When she graduated from Guilford in 2011, she hoped to work with a Quaker service organization, but her search came up empty. Gone were the Quaker work camps of the early 20th century, where young adults took part in domestic and international service programs. “Older Quakers who had lived their lives committed to peace and justice point back to an experience of Quaker service as young adults,” Repoley says. “There weren’t those opportunities for my generation.” But instead of looking elsewhere, Repoley had a vision.

Her vision was to build a network of intentional communities where young adults, Quaker and otherwise, could worship with local Quaker congregations and serve with local nonprofits for a year. Repoley refers to this pairing as the integration of the inward and the outward, two elements essential to Quakerism. She was inspired by Jane 19th-century Quaker Rufus Jones, who coined the term prophetic service. “Prophetic service means being engaged in the world in a way that comes out of your spiritual grounding,” Repoley says. “Engaging in service from a place of understanding that we’re all broken and seeking wholeness.”

After a decade of conversation and consultation with Quakers from around the country, Repoley launched Quaker Volunteer Service (QVS) in 2012 with seven young adult fellows living and serving in Atlanta. QVS houses in Philadelphia and Portland, Oregon, opened in 2013, and this August, another will open in Boston. By its fourth anniversary, QVS will have 25 fellows and close to 50 alumni, many of whom are still actively engaged with the communities and congregations where they served.

Much of Repoley’s preparation for what would become QVS blossomed at Candler. She wrote her M.Div. thesis on the history of Quaker service and credited professors Luther Smith and Ellen Ott Moor- shall as integral to her work. Candler also nurtured Repoley’s need for the integration of inward and outward in her own life. At 24, she was already beginning to fuel burned out by activism. “If social justice work was going to be something I could do sustainably for the rest of my life, I needed a deeper theological and spiritual grounding,” she says.

“To speak a challenging word to society, you have to do it in an instantaneous, hopeful way, rather than coming from a place of anger and frustration. When we come from a grounding in relationship with God and with each other, we’re able to live more prophetically and more boldly.”

Molding the Next Generation

It’s not just Old Testament prophets who hear the voice of God in dreams. Bob Beckwith’s 85th fruitful ministry at the University of Georgia Wesley Foundation owes its start and the success of its hallmark discipleship program to the prophetic power of dreams.

Nearly twenty years ago, Beckwith, an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church, felt a nudge toward college ministry. “I had a very clear and unusual dream one night, through which I believed God was calling me to equip this emerging generation. But I had no idea where or how I was going to do that.”

Within a year, a UGA Wesley board member told him that the position of director was open and asked him to apply. In that moment, Beckwith knew God’s answer.

He took the post in 1999 and hasn’t left, facilitating the growth and vibrancy of a campus ministry committed to nurturing students. While many students detach from organized religion and intentional spiritual formation during their college years, UGA Wesley adds a hopeful footnote to that story. During UGA’s 2014-2015 academic year, about 1,100 students and staff regularly attended Wesley’s two weekly worship services.

“This generation is one of great significance,” Beckwith says. “The future of the church is in their hands, and yet, they are the most spiritually unformed generation our nation has ever produced. But when they do encounter God, they often grow and come alive in ways that my generation struggles to understand.”

Beckwith works alongside UGA Wesley’s four long-term lead directors, ten associate directors, and 65 full-time ministry interns. Chris Fisher ’17, who served as a full-time intern before he came to Candler, says Beckwith possesses the mix of flexibil- ity and flexibility, homility and joy required to work with young adults whose faith journeys are still evolving. “Bob bridges the stability of the Bible with...
Nothing Happens without the Word
When Maria Dixon Hall ‘84 got to know a Candler student, Professor Teresa Ivy Brown nicknamed her “Pearl.” Pearls are created by an irritation of dirt, Ivy Brown told her, and that irritation ultimately forms something precious. “Isa,” Dixon Hall said wryly, addressing students at the start of a recent lecture at Candler, “my intent today is to irritate you somewhat.”

Dixon Hall loves up to her nickname, and she wouldn’t have it any other way. “Let’s think about the word ‘irritate,’” she says, when asked to elabor- ate. “So often we think of it as provocative, but really it means ‘to unconsciously irritate’—irritation requires intentional movement. Irritation requires strategy. The gospel calls us to irritate powers and principalities that are comfortable in the way things are, rather than in the way they could be.”

An ordained United Methodist Deacon and associate professor of communication studies at Southern Methodist University, Dixon Hall has done her fair share of irritation—in the classroom, at speaking engagements, on the page, and on the Internet. Her blog, “The View from Dixon Hall,” hosted on Parthenon.com, tackles communication issues within Christianity, the United Methodist Church, and theological education, along with issues of race, gender, and politics in America; entities have been picked up by each news outlet as the Huffington Post, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and the Houston Chronicle, to name a few. She challenges the boundaries of language, culture, and faith, often turning issues upside-down in unexpected ways, as she did in her March 2015 blog post disputing the University of Oklahoma’s multi-decision to copel students involved in a racially offensive video rather than recognizing the situation as a “triviable moment” for both the perpetrators and the community.

The church is not excluded from Dixon Hall’s examination. She references 1 Corinthians 4:16: “Until ye have spoken upright words with your tongue, how shall anyone know what you are saying.” The verse is picking up weight in this day and age, Dixon Hall says. “God is calling the church to find a way to communicate the gospel that resonates with people. And I believe God is calling me to be that irritating translator that holds our leaders accountable for learning how to speak in ways that are authentic.”

Current Master of Religion Life student Michael Graves came to Candler because of Dixon Hall, and calls his former SMU professor a spiritual guide. “Dr. Dixon Hall’s work in both communication studies and the church can be summarized by the word ‘grace,’” Graves says. “She writes about our world’s most pressing and complex issues. Instead of losing patience and pushing opposing voices away, she welcomes those who criticize her, and constantly seeks to engage those who reject her in holy conversation.”

That desire for holy conversation constantly renews Dixon Hall’s calling. “Every semester when I teach Communication Theory, I open with the same phrase from John 1:15: ‘he is the beginning of the Word.’ I am transfused and transformed by that verse. It is the foundation of my ministry and my scholarship. Communication shapes identity and possibility. Nothing happens without the Word.”

Welcoming the Lord
Brian Combs ‘07 teaches out to restore respect to members of society most people try to avoid—prostitutes, drug addicts, people with mental illness, and those living with AIDS.

Raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, Combs attended a suburban church that he says held Christ “afar in the sky and so far away that not only can you not see him, but you can’t follow him.” Candler brought him down to Earth for Combs, and he has been building intimate community with people who live on the streets since he graduated.

“At Candler I was introduced to a Jesus in the gut- ters, this Savior who chose to take on flesh and blood, bone and breath as a derelict among us. That was completely revolutionary for me,” he says.

Combs applied his Candler experience to a chap- lanship at Admiral’s Great Memorial Hospital, the nation’s fifth largest public hospital and one of its busiest Level I Trauma centers. His work there with people from various marginalized populations led him to Asheville, North Carolina, where he was inspired to start the Haywood Street Congregation, a United Methodist mission church launched in 2009 as a place of welcome and ministry for people who are homeless or otherwise living on the margins.

Combs focuses on reframing roles when ministering to the homeless person or the individual struggling with addiction or mental illness. First, he helps dispel the perception that they’re homeless, they must be in a state of deficit in their relationship with God. “If Jesus was going to incarnate as the schizophrenic, the homeless person, the crack addict, the pros- titute, then we have to begin by saying, ‘I’m actually the one—even though I have housing, education, spirituality—who has a spiritual poverty, who needs to encounter that Jesus, and I can’t do that if it’s great to be a spiritual project,’” he says.

This message resonates with the people—homeless or not—who come to Haywood. Combs talks ethno- graphically about the dramatic conversion he’s seen in the church, people whose assumptions about poverty and themselves have been completely obliterated.

“When they say to me, ‘I’m for most of my life I as- sumed following the gospel and believing in Jesus meant running my clock to the social service agency so they could do the discipleship that I didn’t want to do. My liberation is bound up in the people I’ve dismissed for most of my Christian life. I’m here, I’m broken, and I need to be filled back up in a new way,’” he says.

Combs encourages this sort of transformation. “If there’s one thing I hope people are transformed into, instead of dismissing the guy on the corner with the sign, they will instead extend a hand, ask a name, offer a hug... because they have realized that their humanity is bound up in that person,” he says. “To be able to search someone as they realize that maybe God does love them that much—they begin to take seriously that they’re a child of God. That’s kingdom work as far as I’m concerned.”

From Brokeness, A New Creation
During her final semester at Candler, Jen Richardson ’13 got beginning to see what she calls “those skills I learned in kindergarten”—cutting, pasting, and placing paper on top of paper to create works of art. “Collage became a powerful practice for me,” she says. “A form of prayer and metaphor for the continual work of piecing together that God, the consummate recycler, does in us.”

It is that sacred piecing together that Richardson, an ordained United Methodist minister, has felt called to explore in the years since seminary. As director of The WellSpring Studios, LLC, she leads retreats, speaks at conferences, and has published books of her writing and visual art. Two of her works adorn this magazine, one in the table of contents and the other on the title page of this article.

Associate Dean of Methodist Studies Anne Burkh- holder ‘77 GRD is a longtime friend and colleague of Richardson’s. To her, Richardson’s visual art and writing call people to a life of encounter with the Holy. “One cannot help but encounter the reality of God’s presence through them,” she says. “They beckon us to dive deeply into the waters of literal and prayer practices, emotion, and spiritual encounter that remind us how genuinely we are loved by God.”

Richardson’s art has served as that reminder of God’s love for others and for herself. In December 2013, her husband, singer/songwriter Garrison Delos, passed away unexpectedly following compli- cations from surgery. After only three years of marriage—during which the couple frequently collaborated in retreats, conferences, and worship—he died, she says, an “absolute shattering.”

In her grief, she has turned constantly to the artist’s art of piecing together. “Because of the practice of collage, I know in my hands, my bone, my soul, what it means to put the pieces together, and to allow God to do this in my life. I know what I means
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Prophecy from the Pulpit

Jane Mitchell Weston 14T was an attorney for more than 20 years before she came to Candler. She’s divided on cultural, political, or theological grounds, we owe it to them to go to the coffee pot after we preach so they can talk to us and let us know how what we said affected them.

WESTON: Those hard sermons—do you think most preachers can actually preach them, or do you think some preachers are always going to be better at getting a prophetic word?

LONG: Some preachers are better at it for a variety of reasons. I think of Reinhold Harbide when he was a young pastor. He wrote in his journal that he used to think the preachers who avoided the hard sermons did so out of cowardice, but the longer he was a pastor he realized that it was sometimes done out of love. That the more you know about people in the congregation, the more you know about how fragile they already are, how many things are overwhelming them.

WESTON: Some congregations may be too usually to hearing a difficult word, so when you talk about being pastorally sensitive—I think that’s probably the way you go into talking about these things, by being pastorally sensitive.

WESTON: We heard at the conference about the increasing secularization in our communities and that we can’t assume all the people sitting in our pews will know the Christian stories that we take for granted. How do we as preachers adjust and face that new reality?

LONG: Just yesterday, the pastor of the church where my family attends was saying that a person told him, “You can keep your Christian stories, I have no interest in them whatsoever.” We are in a time when not only do people not know the story, they’re increasingly emboldened to say, “I don’t belong to the story and I don’t want the story.” On one level this is very discouraging to me. I’ve spent my whole life preparing to preach to a congregation who’s ready to hear the gospel and now they aren’t there, or they’re certainly not there in the same intensity and numbers that they used to be.

But on another level, I find this very exciting because I think we’re now in a position of having to renegotiate the hearing of the gospel everywhere we go. In one sense the congregations don’t know the story; in another sense, God has erased the hard drive and we can recreate. We can announce a hearing to be a startling new way. We are increasingly having to make use of those occasions where we are cut out the public square to be bold and speak the gospel. I’m thinking of funerals, weddings, civic occasions when we are in the role of preacher-pastor. Everybody’s gathered there—people who are close to the gospel, people who are not. And at that point, to be able to give not just a conventional preacher talk, but to speak authentically out of the gospel has a reviving effect.

WESTON: We heard at the conference about the increasing secularization in our communities and that we can’t assume all the people sitting in our pews will know the Christian stories that we take for granted. How do we as preachers adjust and face that new reality?

WESTON: I think the current generations really valued public speaking and I think now, as you say, people are surfing the Internet during a sermon or speech. Could you speak about the importance of good public speaking for the preacher?

LONG: I do think changes have, and one of my predecessors in the Birdy Chair at Candler, Fred Craddock, was a perfect example of a changing style of public speaking. Fred had nothing of the virtues that a 19th-century preacher should have held. He was short and had a high squakiness voice. But he didn’t not think those “weaknesses”—and turned them into strengths, he also came at a time when the deep-voiced, pulpit prince was disdained, and he managed to ride the crest of that wave of disdaim.

I’m wondering if preaching is moving in that same direction again. That instead of standing in the pulpit and dropping the lights down and doing the NPR piece with that golden tone, if preaching in the future is going to be in the middle of a living room at a table, with the microphone on it, and the preacher in a chair speaking honestly to a group of people gathered around the table. Living in essence, “Before we eat there’s one thing I really need to say”—and speaking out of the gospel in that sort of way. It’s not diagnostic century, but maybe it’s more matched to the time.

we’d still students not to let that get out of balance, knowing that most students would do five pastoral sermons for every prophetic sermon, if they ever did a prophetic sermon at all.

But I don’t think that holds anymore. It seems to me the gospel is as countercultural now that regardless of whether we’re dealing with pastoral concerns or whether we’re dealing with public issues, all sermons are controversial and all sermons are prophetic in a sense.

One caution, though. I think sometimes those preachers who fancy themselves as more prophetic imagine themselves as Amos charging into the shrines of Baal with the prophetic and socially just Word. We have to remember we are the private of those shrines and we take care of those people. That means we must do our prophetic teaching in ways that leave pastoral windows open to people. Actually, we the preachers are not the prophets in that sense. It is the congregation that is supposed to be the prophet in the world, and our preaching is designed to equip congregations to engage in prophetic witness and action.

WESTON: What is “prophetic preaching,” and how does it differ from other preaching?

LONG: In a sense, the term “prophetic preaching” is redundant. All preaching is prophetic. We need to talk to students that there were two kinds of sermons—prophetic sermons and pastoral sermons. Pastoral sermons were aimed at individual kinds of concerns, concerns of the heart, and prophetic sermons were social justice sermons, sermons about public issues.

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WESTON: What you just said dovetails with what you’ve said in close, that we should never give “hit and run” sermons.

LONG: I think if we’re going to preach on a hot button issue where we know the congregation is
They feel like they’re getting some God-knowledge that’s generally useful for everyday living. It’s not my cup of tea, but it’s out there in the communication mix, along with that conversational model in a living room, and the 18-minute TED talk. Things are in a swirl in a way.

WESTON: Are you hopeful about the future of preaching?

LONG: Oh, I am, absolutely. I think there will always be a need for someone who loves other people to tell those people the truth. There will always be a hunger for the gospel if it can come wrapped in the authenticity of “this is the truth, but God’s truth about us that I want to speak to you today.”

WESTON: I’m always curious about pitfalls of preaching. Your thoughts?

LONG: I think one of the pitfalls is not watching the amount of autobiographical disclosure that goes on in preaching. There are some teachers of preaching who forbid it, who think there is no reason to ever mention yourself in a sermon. I disagree with that, but I do think that autobiographical information is very potent in small doses and logged to be dilated the more we talk about ourselves. Every now and then I do this little discipline for myself. I look back at the last four or five sermons I’ve written to see how many of them start with the word “I.” It’s such an easy way to start a sermon. “I hate reality shows,” we start out, or “I had trouble with this text this week,” or “My favorite season of the year is Lent.”

WESTON: I find it interesting that you go back over your old sermons.

LONG: Oh, yes. Marilynne Robinson’s novel Gilead is about an old minister writing a long letter to his young son. One of the things his minister is his old sermons in the attic, and how those sermons are up there judging him. I know that feeling. You think about the missed opportunities, missed things, misunderstood things that you’ve done in old sermons.

I think this finally throws us on the grace of God about preaching—that we have been fools for Christ and we have been damned fools at the same time! Our sermons are full of the brokenness that is a part of all of us. And yet we are confident that they have been taken up into the providence of God and used to shape the gospel’s hearing.

WESTON: How have students changed over your career?

LONG: The big change for me is that when I first started teaching I could look out at the class and know that every person there felt called to be a preacher. And so the task of the class was, how do we do it? We want to do it. We’re called to do it. But how do we do it? Now I am looking out at a much more tentative group. Many are there because it’s a required course, and they have no inclination at all that they should be a preacher. Or they may feel like they want to be a minister, but preaching is not something they can see themselves doing. So I have to start in a different place now. I start in a way of calling them to preach, not just instructing them about how to preach. Letting them know how important this ministry is, and how some of us, from biblical characters forward, have ever come to this moment with the kind of deep confidence that we are supposed to be here. That from Jeremiah to Paul, there have been those who ask, “Am I to do this, why am I here, what is this that has fallen to my lot?”

WESTON: Having done this for quite awhile, what would you say is the most important thing you do in preparing a sermon?

LONG: When we’d go over the process of preparing a sermon in class, I used to have students complete that I never mentioned the place where you pray. I always resisted talking about it as if prayer were a step in the process—pick your text, pray, then do this—because I think the whole thing is an act of prayer. I realize now I probably should have articulated that dimension of it as so important to me now. It’s almost like Augustine’s Confessions—the whole book is an act of prayer and the whole act of preparing a sermon is an act of prayer, and to keep that in my consciousness the whole time is the most important thing I do.

WESTON: What has been the highlight of being a preaching professor?

LONG: Some people don’t last long at this job. They do it for a few years and decide they’d rather be a pastor themselves. Often they burn out in hearing student sermons. There is a certain repetitiveness. But I am not in the group that burns out on this. I am touched when a student preaches for the first time in my class. No matter the level of accomplish- ment, it’s still a brave thing to do, and the student brings a huge gift to the moment. That’s been the best part about this. Sometimes talk about is if I were an instructor in skydiving, and there’s that moment when the person is standing in the bay of the airplane. They look down and sense the depths and their eyes widen, and then you, the instructor, say, “GO!”

“Increasing secularization means we can’t assume that people will know the Christian stories we take for granted.”

“Make use of those occasions in the public square to be bolder and speak the gospel. Speaking authentically out of the gospel has a riveting effect.”
Giving

Strongening International Ties

International students from 23 countries currently make up 39 percent of Candler’s enrollment, and more than three-quarters of these students are from South Korea. This fall, Candler received two gifts that will establish the first scholarship-endowments created specifically for South Korean students at the school. The Bishop Youngkag Kwon Scholarship and the Dr. Haesuk Lee Scholarship will be awarded beginning in the 2015-2016 academic year.

The gifts recognize abiding personal relationships between the benefactors and two key figures at Candler. The gift given by Bishop Kwon, bishop of Candler’s alma mater member Gyeongsan Kwon 87T, honors the family’s relationship with Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Pastoral Theology Karen Schmi, who has served as faculty advisor to Emory’s Korean Graduate Student Association for 15 years. The gift given by Dr. Lee伊利 is in honor of the late Fred Craddock, Randy Professor of Preaching and New Testament, Emeritus, in thanksgiving for Craddock’s legacy of teaching homiletics at Candler.

As the first awards designated for South Korean students, the Kwon and Lee scholarships symbolize both Candler’s role in preparing leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world and its commitment to international engagement. Candler is honored to receive these gifts as a sign of the deep and enduring bonds of friendship.

Fostering Future Leaders

For more than 20 years, Candler’s Youth Theological Initiatives (YTI) has offered young people the opportunity to wrestle with deep theological questions in a supportive community of peers, facilitated by Candler students and faculty. To help further this important work, YTI has received a $50,000 grant from the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s Young Clergy Initiative, a program designed to increase the number of young clergy in the denomination.

Beginning in fall 2015, the Carpenter Scholarship for Community Engagement will be awarded to five incoming MDiv students who have received another Candler scholarship, demonstrate academic excellence, and possess a well-articulated commitment to community engagement and social transformation. Recipients will receive $5,000 annually for the duration of the three-year MDiv program, as well as priority in selecting their Comenial Education sites.

The Carpenter Scholarships affirm Candler’s commitment to support individuals who have the passion and courage to pursue Christian ministry in community contexts, and to equip them to make a real difference in the real world.

Responding to the Call

Candler is the beneficiary of a generous gift from the Amos family that will create two new endowments to fund student scholarships for years to come. Both honor important figures in the life of Kathelen Van Haren Amos 79C, a member of Emory University’s board of trustees. The Kathelen Trammell and Jesse Winford Martin Scholarship is named in honor of her maternal grandparents. The William B. Turner Scholarship honors Amos’s friend, mentor, and former Sunday school teacher Bill Turner, an emeritus Emory trustee who taught high school Sunday school for more than sixty years at St. Luke United Methodist Church in Columbus, Georgia.

“Quite simple, when I think of my own faith journey, Kathelen Trammell and Jesse Winford Martin, along with William B. Turner, have been the greatest influence on my willing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and in modeling a life of surrender, grace, and love,” Amos says.

Dean Jan Love notes that the Martin and Turner scholarships will help make it possible for students to respond to God’s call to Christian ministry. “I am grateful to Kathelen and Don Amos for investing in Candler’s mission to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world.”

Paying it Forward

On May 11, Candler conferred degrees on 138 new graduates. We celebrate the hard work and faithfulness that went into their years here, as well as the dedication they have already shown to future generations of Candler students. Through the Senior Class Gift campaign, 78 percent of the class of 2015 made a gift to Candler, with 100 percent of the MTS class making a gift for the second year in a row. This is the highest participation rate in recorded history, trumping by two points the record previously held by the class of 2014. The campaign raised just over $9,000, with the majority going to student scholarships via the Theology School Fund for Excellence, the Emory Stone Moore Scholarship, and the MTS Scholarships Fund.

Our newest alumni are already making their mark to ensure that those who will walk Candler’s halls in the years to come continue to have access to excellent, first-rate facilities, profound coursework, and outstanding engagement. May their support of Candler’s future inspire us all to act as we begin this second century with renewed commitment to the students of tomorrow.

—MATTHEW A. PELSON, Assistant Dean of Development and Alumni Relations
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Is Candler, Too, Among the Prophets?

Brent A. Strawn, Professor of Old Testament and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program

According to 1 Samuel 11, shortly after Saul is anointed king of Israel, the spirit of God overcomes him and he is caught up in a prophetic frenzy. Just a few chapters later in 1 Samuel 13, despite his steady decline in the face of David’s steady ascent, Saul again falls into a prophetic frenzy. This twice-told event led to the coinage of a proverb—“Is Saul, too, among the prophets?”

The proverb appears to register surprise at an unusual phenomenon. “The persons in question, it is not a prophet but is nevertheless acting like one. How can this be? Is he other than what we thought him to be? Is he a prophet, too?”

The proverb’s nature or question also suggests that it could be applied to others, not just Saul. If so, and in light of Candler’s centennial theme, “The Centennial in Story and Prophecy,” perhaps we might ask if Candler, too, is among the prophets.

It is tempting to respond quickly with a resonating “yes!” Like Saul, Candler may not be a prophet in the mold of Amos or Isaiah, but surely Candler has acted prophetically at many times and in various ways during its first 100 years. And certainly Candler continues to aspire to the prophetic tasks of speaking God’s truth to those in power and asking God’s justice and righteousness in a world dead set against both.

But before we answer affirmatively, it pays to remember that being a prophet in ancient Israel was a dangerous occupation. According to the first-century pseudepigraphical text The Case of the Prophet, most of the prophets suffered cruel and untimely deaths with no one to collect the life insurance. The danger involved in the prophetic task led many prophets to object to their callings—to try to find an escape clause even before their missions began, it is Moses. Speaking God’s truth to those in power, or proclaiming God’s justice and righteousness in a world dead set against both, is no light affair. Those in power often have power over life and death. They can take away life and deal out death. And if the world truly is dead set against God’s justice and righteousness, then it may very well mete out death before taking those other options.

These hard realities of the prophets’ lives warrant caution when considering Candler’s prophetic status. For one thing, the prophetic call is not something to run toward, but to run from! For another, prophets typically don’t last long enough to celebrate centennials!

From this, the proverb’s surprise over Saul, who isn’t a prophet, suddenly fitting the bill suggests that Candler, too, might also be prophetic. No, Candler doesn’t run away from his vocations—quite to the contrary. Candler tenaciously continues in his mission “to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world.” And, yes, Candler has enjoyed a very long life (at least in prophetic-years). But Candler, like Saul, at times has been overcome by God’s Spirit so as to act in prophetic ways.

That last detail is fundamental. According to 1 Samuel, it is God’s Spirit that enables Saul to join the prophetic ranks, even if only for a brief stint. It is only God and God’s power that permit those who aren’t prophets per se to act the part. So at those times and in those places that Candler has been prophetic, it is no doubt due to God’s empowering Spirit. It is God, then, who deserves the credit for Candler’s prophetic moments. And it is God who deserves the credit for sustaining Candler and its moments of prophetic frenzy for more than 100 years.

One final remark: There were big prophets in ancient Israel, like Amos and Isaiah, but also countless lesser-known ones, such as those who made up the “band of prophets” alongside whom Saul prophesied. These prophetic guides—“prophets” or “mudirs” as it were—accompanied the supernum prophesies and preserved their words for posterity. And they played a crucial role. It took guts to say what Amos said, but it also took guts for a group of people to hear what he said, preserve it carefully, and pass it along faithfully for millennia. This is one more way that Candler has been and continues to be counted among the prophets: by listening to the prophetic word of God in Scripture and the world, preserving it carefully, and passing it along faithfully. That may not be the same as being Amos or Isaiah, but it is no small matter, because without this kind of faithful reception and transmission there is no Amos or Isaiah at all—their words world have been lost forever. Listening for, treasuring, and proclaiming God’s message—these are the prophetic tasks of the faithful. These are the tasks Candler faces every day.

May God continue to sustain and enrich Candler School of Theology with God’s Spirit for another century! Then Candler, too, will continue to be counted among God’s servants, the prophets.
Candler School of Theology’s internationalized curriculum prepares students to meet the global challenges of the 21st century. This spring, students traveled to South America to observe pastoral care in the Brazilian context at the Universidade Metodista de São Paulo. One of the group’s first stops: the Tree of Wonder in the middle of campus, where they offered up thanks to God for bringing them together in that moment. The tree’s roots are as deep and wide as the branches above, reflective of the deeply-rooted bonds the students formed with each other and the people of São Paulo.