

# RETHINK



Candler Connection Spring 2020

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

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## in this issue

18



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44

- COMMUNITY:**
- 02 THE COLLECT  
Rethinking...  
more than church
  - 04 NEWS  
Catching up on  
Candler happenings
  - 50 GIVING  
An update on the gifts and  
the givers that keep us growing
  - 60 BENEDICTION  
Beth Corrie on the benefits  
of intergenerational worship

- FACULTY:**
- 30 REQUIRED READING  
What faculty are reading now
  - 38 RECENT BOOKS  
BY CANDLER FACULTY
- ALUMNI:**
- 53 MEET YOUR CANDLER  
ALUMNI BOARD
  - 54 CLASS NOTES  
Honors, achievements, life  
events, and career moves of  
your seminary classmates

## FEATURES:

- 18 PASSING THE TORCH  
A look back at the illustrious careers and lasting legacies of Candler faculty members who have recently retired
- 32 RETHINKING CHURCH  
How a few Candler alumni are reimagining both “doing” and “being” church
- 44 CHANGING THE GAME  
An innovative program helps early career pastors connect public theology and community leadership



# The Collect

“How might we think again about so many concepts we thought were settled?”

## Dear Friends,

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



The theme of this issue is “Rethink.” With their blessing, we borrowed the idea from The United Methodist Church’s “Rethink Church” campaign, right down to the image of the iconic red church door. But there’s something unusual about the church door in our cover photo: There’s a vine growing across it! How long has it been since this particular door has been opened, ushering people into a sacred space? Fortunately, in this case, the photographer assures us that the door is a rarely used side entrance. But with two-thirds of millennials reporting church attendance of a few times a year or less—and 40 percent of those saying that they seldom or never go<sup>1</sup>—a vine soon might consider the main entrance fair game as well.

As influential author and speaker Brian McLaren told a group of Christian educators at a conference in 2018, “In the world of organized religion, we’re in a time of great upheaval. We don’t face mere technical challenges...we face adaptive challenges. This isn’t just a matter of slight tweaks; this is a matter of rethinking the entire system of what we’re doing from scratch.”<sup>2</sup>

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

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

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

Grace and peace,

*Jan Love*

JAN LOVE  
MARY LEE HARDIN WILLARD DEAN AND PROFESSOR  
OF CHRISTIANITY AND WORLD POLITICS

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, “In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace,” Oct. 17, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> UMNS, “McLaren urges churches to get in alignment,” Oct. 17, 2018.





## *New(ish) to the Neighborhood*

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

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

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

**03 Ellen Shepard** was appointed in fall 2015 as director of the Women, Theology, and Ministry Program and assistant professor in the practice of

practical theology. She is also senior pastor of Stone Mountain First UMC.

**04 Lang Lowrey III 04T**, an Episcopal priest and canon for Christian enterprise for the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, is director of the Episcopal and Anglican Studies Program and professor in the practice of church leadership. He joined the faculty in fall 2015.

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

**06 Larry Goodpaster 73T 82T**, retired United Methodist bishop, joined as bishop-in-residence in fall 2016.

**07 Kendall Soulen 86T** came (back) to Candler in fall 2016 as professor of systematic theology. He is an ordained elder in the Virginia Conference of the UMC.

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

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

**10 Richard Manly ("Bo") Adams, Jr. 05T 12G** was appointed in fall 2017 as director of Pitts Theology Library and the Margaret A. Pitts Assistant Professor in the Practice of Theological Bibliography.

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

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

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

**14 Damon Williams** was appointed in fall 2018 as co-director of the Baptist Studies Program and assistant professor in the practice of practical ministry. He is also senior pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta.

**15 Kevin Murriel 11T**, senior pastor of Atlanta's Cascade UMC, began in fall 2018 as the first Black

Methodist Seminarians Program director and assistant professor in the practice of practical theology.

**16 Ryan Bonfiglio 14G** was named in spring 2018 as the inaugural director of public theological education and assistant professor in the practice of Old Testament.

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

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





ORLANDO EVANS 197BOWTIE PHOTOS

### MORAL LEADERSHIP IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Students in **Robert M. Franklin, Jr.**'s travel seminars have journeyed to Haiti (01) and South Africa in the last two years to learn firsthand from noted moral leaders how they work for positive change in their specific locales. Franklin, the James T. and Berta R. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership, leads these international seminars to challenge students to extend the concept and understand the complexities of

moral leadership in contexts and cultures outside the United States. The groups visited with artists, academics, and spiritual and political leaders who have responded to both persistent and emergent crises—public and private corruption, stabilizing society after rapid changes in government, and rebuilding after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and poverty, the lingering legacy of apartheid, and stark inequality in South Africa. Highlights of the trips were meetings with Haitian literary giant-artist-

activist **Frankétienne** and South African anti-apartheid activist and Nobel laureate **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**.

### WIDENING THE CIRCLE

Long considered dry ground for Roman Catholicism, the South is now home to 27 percent of the nation's self-identified Catholic population, according to a 2014 study by the Pew Research Center. Today, the Archdiocese of Atlanta is one of the most diverse

Catholic contexts in the country, comprising 1.2 million Catholics, more than half of whom are black or Latinx. In response to these shifts, Candler has launched a **Catholic Studies Program** and begun a formal affiliation with the **Aquinas Center of Theology** to prepare leaders for lay ministry in the Catholic Church and scholars for research in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Both developments have already increased Candler's engagement with the Catholic community in Atlanta and beyond and promise to build on that footing at a rapid pace. The new program, led by scholar and composer **Tony Alonso**, features a master of divinity concentration in Catholic Studies. The Aquinas Center, established at Emory in 1987, provides a Catholic scholarly presence, ecumenical in spirit, for the benefit of the university, the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and the region. The two entities collaborate closely, bringing relevant programming and prominent Catholic scholars and speakers to campus to address issues ranging from spiritual formation to politics to conservation to reform in the Catholic Church.

### DOUBLE THE HONOR

Two Candler faculty members received honorary doctorates in 2018: **Emmanuel Y. Lartey** received a doctor of divinity, *honoris causa*, from the University of Pretoria in South Africa (02), and **Lang Lowrey III o4T**, director of Candler's Episcopal and Anglican Studies Program and professor in the practice of

church leadership, received the same degree from the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church (GTS) in New York. Lartey was nominated by the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria in recognition of his "unique and important contributions" in developing an African practical theology, which argues that African spiritual heritages should



COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA





KAY HINTON/EMORY PHOTOVIDEO

be embraced and built upon using an inter-cultural and cross-cultural approach. Lowrey was tapped for his active engagement in diverse, meaningful ministry. He served as president of GTS from 2010 to 2013, leading the financially challenged institution through a period of broad-based restructuring and the development of new revenue streams.

**SOMETHING ABOUT THAT NAME**

Names are important in the Bible—and in the academy! Congratulations to **Teresa Fry Brown**, **Philip L. Reynolds**, **Jan Love**, **Emmanuel Larthey**, **Ian McFarland**, and **Walter T. Wilson**, all of whom were installed into named positions in

recent years. In fall 2015, Fry Brown became the Bandy Professor of Preaching, the first woman and African American to hold the post, considered by many to be the academy's preeminent chair in homiletics. Reynolds, already Aquinas Professor of Historical Theology, added a second named title to his signature block in fall 2016,

becoming Charles Howard Candler Professor of Medieval Christianity. In fall of 2017, Love (03), Candler's dean, was installed as the school's inaugural Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean, an event made possible by a gift from the estate of Mary Lee Hardin Willard of Gadsden, Alabama, which created a permanently funded endowment to support the Candler deanship. And in fall 2019, Larthey was installed as Charles Howard Candler

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

**SMALL BUT MIGHTY (04)**

Though only about an inch in diameter, the Haskins Medal is among the most prestigious awards in medieval studies—and this year, Candler's own

**Philip Reynolds** has won it. Given annually by the Medieval Academy of America for a distinguished book in the field of medieval studies, the medal was awarded to Reynolds for his 2016 book, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge University Press). Marveling at the book's enormous scope and extensive bibliography, the judges praised Reynolds's "1,051 pages of cogent analysis" of "extraordinary depth and lucidity," and his "rich and magisterial treatment" of the material. They predict that the book will be the standard work on the subject for the foreseeable future.



LESA STONE/CANDLER



## TWIN PEAKS

As their nearly identical titles suggest, **Carol Newsom** and **Carl Holladay**, the Charles Howard Candler Professors Emeriti of Old and New Testament, respectively, have a few things in common: an interest in ancient sacred texts, sterling reputations as distinguished scholars in their fields, a gift for guild leadership (president of the Society of Biblical Literature for Newsom, president of the Society of New Testament Scholars for Holladay), and almost 40-year careers on Candler's faculty. But in the realm of professional accomplishments, perhaps one shared trait rises above them all: Both Newsom and Holladay have been elected fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious honorary societies. Newsom signed the AAAS membership book in 2016 (05) and Holladay in 2017 (06). They now join the leading "thinkers and doers" from each generation, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the 18th century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the 19th, Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill in the 20th...and Candler's own **E. Brooks Holifield**, Charles Howard Candler Professor Emeritus of American Church History, who was inducted in 2011.



## MAGNA CUM LAUDE

Several members of the faculty have received external recognition for their scholarship, leadership, and teaching. Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship **James Abbingtion** was selected as a fellow of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, the highest honor the organization bestows. • Professor of Theology and Ethics **Noel L. Erskine** received the Atlanta Jamaica Association's 2016 Black History Month Award. • Associate Pro-

fessor of the History of Early Christianity **Anthony Briggman** won a student-selected 2016 Crystal Apple Award at Emory for excellence in graduate education/instruction. • Associate Professor of New Testament **Susan E. Hyle** received the 2017 "Women of Excellence" Excellence in Teaching and Pedagogy Award from the Center for Women at Emory and the Emory Alumni Association for her use of teaching methods, syllabi, and/or course design that addresses women's issues or matters of feminist importance

with innovation and success. • Associate Professor of Religious Education **Jennifer R. Ayres** and **Walter Wilson** were the Presidential Fellow and the Senior Theology Fellow, respectively, at Emory's Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry during 2017-2018. • **Robert Franklin** was named a 2018 Peter J. Gomes Memorial Honoree by Harvard Divinity School for his public voice for moral leadership. He also was recently appointed by Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms to the city's Task Force for the Promotion of

Public Trust, created as part of multiple reforms to improve transparency and accountability in government. • Professor of Historical and Philosophical Theology **David Pacini** won a 2019 Eleanor Main Award for excellence in mentoring at Emory's Laney Graduate School. • Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture **Nichole R. Phillips** was inducted into the Martin Luther King Jr. Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College in 2019. • Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and

Conflict Transformation **Ellen Ott Marshall** was awarded the Provost's Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Education for the Laney Graduate School in 2019. • Dan and Lillian Hankey Associate Professor of World Evangelism **Arun W. Jones** was elected president of the American Society of Missiology for 2019-2020. • **Tony Alonso** won the 2019 Catherine Mowry LaCugna Award from the Catholic Theological Society of America.





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### HERZLICHE GLÜCKWÜNSCHE!

...Or in English, “Heartfelt Congratulations!” on the 40th anniversary of Candler’s international exchange program with Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen, Germany. Since 1978, nearly 80 theology students from both Candler and Göttingen have experienced seminary life on the opposite side of the ocean, returning home with broader theological knowledge, international perspectives on Christianity and culture, clarity around vocational call, and deep friendships—not to mention a marriage or two. Supported and nurtured by the late **Theodore H. Runyon, Jr.**, former professor of systematic theology, and his wife, Cindy, the exchange has made its mark on more than a generation of global leaders in the church and the academy, and will continue to do so for years to come. See a video-enhanced story, remembrances from exchange participants (and a photo of Ted Runyon on his first trip to Germany!) in the news section of [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu).

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

### BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG SPEAKERS

A bevy of big-time speakers has visited campus in the past few years, illuminating students and members of the broader community with their insights, anecdotes, and advice. Some of the most memorable include eminent theologian **Jürgen Moltmann**, who



ORLANDO EVANS 19T/BOWTIE PHOTOS

attended the “Unfinished Worlds” conference Candler hosted in honor of his 90th birthday; atheist-turned-Episcopal-priest and food activist **Sara Miles**; pastor and social justice activist **William J. Barber II**; the presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, **Michael Curry**, the first African American to be elected to the post; popular speaker and award-winning author **Joan Chittister**; the Vatican’s **Cardinal Kurt Koch**, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; syndicated columnist and political commentator **E.J. Dionne, Jr.**; Atlanta

Mayor **Keisha Lance Bottoms**; and author, academic, and civil rights activist **Angela Davis (08)**. Videos of most of these speakers are available at [vimeo.com/candler](http://vimeo.com/candler).

### PAYING IT FORWARD

With \$6.3 million in financial aid distributed in 2018-2019, Candler is already known for one of the most robust scholarship programs in theological education. Now that program is even stronger. In fall 2019, Candler announced major expansions to

its scholarship offerings for students admitted to master of divinity, master of theological studies, and master of religious leadership degree programs. Available to incoming students beginning in fall 2020, the new program features full-tuition scholarships for all certified candidates for ordination in the UMC, new merit scholarships covering 75 percent of tuition for non-denominational, pan-Wesleyan, Latinx, and chaplaincy-track MDiv students, additional full-tuition scholarships for qualified MTS students, and awards of at least 50 percent of tuition



to all MDiv, MTS, and MRL students. The revamped program is designed to advance Candler's long-standing commitments to reduce student debt and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. "We're eliminating part of the financial obstacle that can prevent folks from pursuing graduate theological education," says **Sam Martinez**, assistant dean of admissions and financial aid. "Removing this obstacle at the beginning of the journey translates to more diverse and inclusive leadership in the church, the academy, and society in the future."

#### ACCOLADES FOR ALUMNI

Candler alumni serve all around the world, garnering honors and awards as they go. **David Graves 90T**, **R. Lawson Bryan 75T 85T**, and **Sue Haupt-Johnson 95T** were elected bishops of The United Methodist Church at the Southeastern Jurisdictional meeting in 2016. Graves serves the Alabama-West Florida Episcopal Area; Bryan, South Georgia; and Haupt-Johnson, North Georgia. • **Pamela A. Cahoon 77T** and **Marshall L. (Jack) Meadors 58T** received Candler's 2015 Distinguished Alumni Awards, Cahoon in recognition of 36 years as executive director of CROS Ministries in Palm Beach County, Florida, and Meadors for five decades of service as a UMC pastor,

district superintendent, bishop, and bishop-in-residence who was especially active in issues around children and poverty. • **Robert (Bob) N. Clarke 58T** and **Allan Sandlin 89T** were the 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award honorees, Clarke for more than six decades of service through music and education ministries, and Sandlin for 25 years of ministry in Episcopal parishes from Maine to Germany. • **Timothy McDonald III 78T** and **Sarah Gerwig-Moore 02L 02T** won the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Awards, McDonald for lifetime achievement in service to the church, university, and larger society, and Gerwig-Moore for faithful and creative leadership in the community. • **R. Lawson Bryan 75T 85T** received the 2018 Distinguished Alumni Award for Lifetime Achievement in recognition of his 40+ years of service to the church, first in the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference and currently as bishop in South Georgia. • **Carolyn Abrams 92T**, **Robert Lee Abrams 92T**, and **Michael Zdorow 12T** received the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Awards, the Abramses for lifetime achievement in the Mississippi Annual Conference of the UMC, and Zdorow for faithful and creative leadership while serving as pastor of the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy through the General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC.

• Eight alumni have been chosen for Emory's "Forty Under 40" list across the last three years: **Jeania Ree Moore 15T**, **Austin Dickson 07T**, **Kevin Murriel 11T**, **Nancy Smith-Mather 08T**, **Shelvis Smith-Mather 06T 07T**, **Sarah Toering 06L 06T**, **Alisha Gordon 15T**, and **Kimberly Jackson 09T**. *Mazel tov* to all!

#### NEW SCHOLARSHIPS SALUTE TRAILBLAZERS

Candler has established two new scholarships honoring three individuals who played key roles in the school's history. The **Bishop Woodie W. White** Scholarship, named for Candler's longtime bishop-in-residence, and the **Ducree-Turner** Scholarship, named for Candler's first black graduate, **Edward Ducree 68T**, and first black student, **Otis Turner 69T 74G**, were announced in fall 2018. The three honorees also received the prestigious Dean's Medal, an award reserved for persons whose efforts on behalf of the school have had a transformative effect. The two scholarships will be awarded to selected master of divinity students who have discerned a vocational call to ministries of racial justice, inclusiveness, and reconciliation, and to those who are called to serve in historically black denominations.



## Faculty and Staff Honor Roll

THE END OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR brings a host of awards to Candler faculty and staff for outstanding teaching, service, and commitment. Here's the full rundown of award winners from 2016 to the present:

- 2016 Faculty Person of the Year: **Barbara Day Miller**
- 2016 On Eagle's Wings Award: **Rex Matthews**
- 2016 Emory Williams Award: **Karen Scheib**
- 2017 Faculty Person of the Year: **Gregory C. Ellison II**
- 2017 On Eagle's Wings Award: **Kevin Watson** and **Steffen Lösel**
- 2017 Emory Williams Award: **Teresa Fry Brown**
- 2017 Exemplary Teacher Award, sponsored by the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry: **Elizabeth Corrie**
- 2017, 2018, 2019 Staff Person of Year: **Sarah Bogue**
- 2018, 2019 Faculty Person of the Year: **Kwok Pui Lan**
- 2018 On Eagle's Wings Award: **Brent Strawn**
- 2018 Exemplary Teacher of the Year (GBHEM): **Steven J. Kraftchick**
- 2019 On Eagle's Wings Award and the inaugural Provost's Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Education: **Nichole Phillips (09)**



### KUDOS FOR CANDLER, COURTESY OF CON ED

Candler recently earned high praise from outside organizations including Auburn Seminary and the Center for Faith and Service. We were featured as a case study for “innovation” in Auburn’s 2016 report “Bright Spots in Theological Education,” which focused on our immersion-based Contextual Education (Con Ed) program, then tapped a second time in their 2018 study, “Making Theology Matter: Field Education as the Practical-Prophetic Heart of Effective Ministry Preparation,” which highlighted Con Ed’s integration of classroom and experiential learning. • In fall 2018, Candler was named for the sixth consecutive time to the Center for Faith and Service’s annual list of “Seminar-ies that Change the World” (STCTW). We were among 18 institutions honored in the original STCTW list in 2013, and have been included every year since. A big reason for our perennial inclusion? You guessed it: Con Ed, for helping students connect the dots between faith and justice in both nonprofit and church settings.

### EXPANDING THE POSSIBILITIES

Several new concentrations have added depth and breadth to the MDiv program, expanding possibilities for students as they more closely align their coursework with their academic and vocational

interests. The **Chaplaincy** concentration introduces students to the range of contexts in caregiving ministry while also providing depth in the practices of spiritual care. The **World Christianity** concentration allows students to gain competency in the study of Christianity as a global phenomenon and helps equip them for ministry and church leadership in culturally and internationally diverse Christian communities. The **Catholic Studies** concentration prepares students for leadership in Catholic parishes, schools, nonprofits, and other contexts, as well as for further academic research in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The concentration in **Criminal Justice Ministries (10)** shapes religious leaders who are equipped to constructively engage issues

and people connected to the criminal justice system through work in both congregations and communities, including ministry in prisons, mentoring of youth in juvenile facilities, congregational support for reentering citizens, educational offerings in prison, jails, and detention centers, and policy advocacy. The **Justice, Peacebuilding, and Conflict Transformation** concentration equips students to constructively engage conflict within their congregations and communities by providing a structure for theological reflection on violence, justice and peacebuilding, studying nonviolent alternatives, and practicing skills in conflict transformation. Candler now offers 14 MDiv concentrations ranging from 12 to 18 credit hours.



EMORY PHOTOVIDEO



ISABELLE SLICK ALEIXO

### THEOED: BRIEF TALKS, BIG IDEAS

As part of a new initiative in public theological education, Candler is partnering with First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta to sponsor **TheoEd Talks**, an ecumenical speaker series where leaders in the church and the academy share “the talk of their lives” in 20 minutes or less, aimed at sparking conversations that change the way people think about God, religion, and the power of faith to change

lives. Speakers at the fall 2019 TheoEd Talks (11) were **Austin Channing Brown**, author of *I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*, on “The Double-Sided Pursuit of Racial Justice”; **Mihee Kim-Kort**, Presbyterian minister and author, on how learning her “Mother Tongue” (Korean) opened up new ways of understanding God, culture, and her own vocation; noted journalist **Jonathan Merritt 10T** on “The Death and Resurrection of Sacred Speech”; and Candler’s own **Ted A. Smith 04G**, professor

of preaching and ethics, on “Reckless Love: Living for Things that Die.” Next up? Womanist Episcopal priest and Hebrew Bible scholar **Wil Gafney**; “Love or Work” podcast hosts **Jeff and André Shinabarger**; **Hillary McBride**, therapist, author, and host of the podcast “The Liturgists”; and **Bryan Massingale**, Catholic priest and Fordham University Christian ethics professor. Watch their talks at [theoed.com](http://theoed.com).



## PASSING THE TORCH

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



BY MOLLY EDMONDS, CLAIRE LENNOX, AND VALERIE LONER 10T

### BARBARA DAY MILLER *Creating Space for Everyone's Song*

For nearly two decades, **Barbara Day Miller 88T** was a fixture in a worship space known for creativity and excellence. She retired from her position as associate dean of worship and music in 2016, but she has made an indelible mark on the worship life at Candler.

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

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



EMORY PHOTO/VIDEO

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

“Everybody is welcome, everybody has a part, and everybody can have a voice,” says Toni Belin Ingram

07T, who worked with Day Miller in the Office of Worship as a student. “It’s just who she is.”

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

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

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

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

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

Her former students echo that description.

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

Perhaps Day Miller’s insistence on excellence was most visible in the Candler Singers. Under her leadership, the group of auditioned choristers toured throughout the Southeast and sang four times at the General Conference of The United Methodist Church. She also directed worship for North Georgia’s Annual Conference for several years, and served as music director of the 2004 General Conference in Pittsburgh, working with nearly 100 musical groups to coordinate all the music for the 12-day meeting.

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

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

There’s no doubt that she will. — VL



## M. PATRICK GRAHAM

### *The Librarian Turns the Page*

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



"It's like hosting a banquet, where you introduce your guests to the greatest scholars and authors of all times and places, provide a hospitable surrounding for their engagement, and then admire the great things that come from their time together," he says.

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

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

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

When Jeschke retired in 1994, Graham became director of the library—"the librarian," in library parlance—and continued the work of growing the Pitts collections. During his 29-year tenure, the library expanded from 460,000 to 610,000 volumes, a 32.6 percent increase. Graham also took the lead on making the library's resources more widely available by creating the Digital Image Archive, an online catalogue of 60,000 downloadable images scanned from Pitts' Special Collections.

Just as Pitts was growing, so too was Candler. Graham spent a decade as chair or co-chair of the committee that oversaw construction of the 128,600-square-foot Rita Anne Rollins Building for Candler. "He spent untold hours consulting and working with faculty, Emory's Campus Services staff, architects, and the design and construction specialists," says Holladay. "Through all of this, he

faithfully represented Candler's interests and priorities and advocated effectively on our behalf. His footprints and fingerprints are everywhere to be seen."

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

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

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

Graham says he will miss his favorite tradition—"the opportunity to welcome new students, call their attention to the wonderful resources that have been assembled for their benefit, and then offer them en-

couragement for one of the most important periods in their lives"—but he knows he has built a staff that can ably handle the task.

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

In his retirement, Graham looks forward to spending more time with his children and grandchildren, developing his gardening and photography skills, and completing his own research projects. He also plans to volunteer for a "good theological library in the area." After all, how can you pass up such a lavish banquet? —ME

## CARL R. HOLLADAY

### *Consummate Scholar, Wise Mentor*

True to scholarly form, **Carl Holladay** has given good thought to what his 39 years on the Candler faculty mean in their fuller context: "Almost half the school's life," he says. In those nearly four decades, Holladay, who retired as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of New Testament in 2019, has made his mark on Candler, generations of students, and the broader field of New Testament studies.

Holladay recalls coming to Candler in 1980 and the "generative context" that the school and his fellow faculty members provided from the start. "I found myself surrounded by a circle of dazzling colleagues,

talented and energetic, from whom I learned so much," he says. "I found myself having to stand on tiptoe, just to see over the ledge what was going on—high-order scholarship that stretched my own intellectual horizons, people doing field-defining research and writing influential articles and books that became referential in their respective fields and beyond."

In the years since, Holladay has joined the ranks of Candler faculty whose scholarly influence is felt far and wide. He has authored eight books, including *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Abingdon, 2005), which is used extensively by seminaries and ministers. He has received prominent fellowships and honors, including a Fulbright Senior Scholar Award, a Luce Fellowship, and a *Festschrift* titled *Scripture and Traditions: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Carl R. Holladay* (Brill, 2008).



A member of the Society of Biblical Literature, he has also served on editorial boards for multiple scholarly journals, and as the 2016-17 president of

the Society for New Testament Studies. And in a career-capping flourish in 2017, he was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious honorary societies.

No matter how far his scholarly work has taken him, Holladay has given his time and talents to Emory as well, including as a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, a faculty member in the Laney Graduate School's Graduate Division of Religion (where he served as co-director from 2010 to 2012), and as Candler's associate dean of academic affairs from 1983 to 1991, and dean of the faculty and academic affairs from 1992 to 1994.

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

Christy Bonner '03T got to know Holladay as her academic advisor, Con Ed professor, and New Testament professor. She describes him as an engaging teacher who took the time and energy to invest in his students, from their papers to their vocations, and says he was integral in helping her discern her next steps after graduation.

"The feedback and support Dr. Holladay offered as we considered the many possibilities regarding my particular future in ministry were invaluable. I am grateful to him for encouraging me to continue my education beyond Candler by pursuing a DMin degree," she says. "I am only one of many who have



been impacted by his wisdom, teaching skills, and encouragement. I hope he knows what a difference he has made in my life, and in the lives of so many students.”

Erich Pracht 18T also credits Holladay with guiding him through a pivotal time of vocational discernment. “I knew I wanted to pursue a career in New Testament studies, but needed help understanding how to adequately prepare and a great deal of direction in refining my research interests,” he says.

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

Faculty colleagues appreciate his approach as well. Steven J. Kraftchick, professor in the practice of New Testament interpretation, borrows one of Holladay’s favorite quotations from Ralph Waldo Emerson to describe a defining trait of his longtime friend and colleague: “The first rule of writing is not to omit the thing you meant to say.” Kraftchick considers the line a watchword for Holladay’s writing, from his academic work to sermons and lectures. He then quotes directly from *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook* (Westminster John Knox, 1st ed., 1982), co-authored by Holladay: “Text criticism is ‘based on common sense and ingenuity.’ To do that work well requires tireless attention to specifics and an expansive imagination. In a nutshell, that has defined Carl’s careful and consistent work on the New Testament. There are scholars who give us the data, but too often nothing about the ‘so what.’ There

are scholars who are happy to provide an ingenious interpretation, but often at the expense of the texts themselves. Carl never succumbed to either, but rather his work combines both: a keen eye for every detail and interpretive sentences that, in the words of Emerson, do not ‘omit the thing’ one meant to say.”

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

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

#### DAVID O. JENKINS *Community Beyond the Classroom*

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

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



EMORY PHOTO/VIDEO

His efforts in the areas of theology and immigration and theology and disability, especially, have shown seminarians how to engage effectively and compassionately with their communities, in ministry or otherwise. He has been deeply involved in the Atlanta disability community, inspired by his years serving and living with the L’Arche community in London in the 1980s. He helped establish L’Arche Atlanta, served as president of L’Arche USA, and chaired the organization’s first national capital campaign, as well as the L’Arche USA National Task Force on Spirituality and Religious Identity. He brought this passion to various academic communities, organizing Candler’s first Nancy Eiesland Lecture on Theology and Disability Studies in 2015, delivering the 2016 Boston College Pyne Lectures on the practical theology of L’Arche, and presenting at Emory’s Disability Studies Initiative Scholar Showcase. He designed and taught courses on the church and disability, so that students would encounter a gifted world of disabilities, new theologies of vulnerability, and authentic friendships with those who are differently abled.

Jenkins was director of Con Ed I and Clinical Pastoral Education from 2005 to 2014, working alongside then-director of Con Ed II and Teaching Parish P. Alice Rogers to revitalize the Con Ed curriculum, including the development of new sites centered around refugees and immigrants. The pair visited 15 theology schools to determine best practices, hosted a national conference to discuss them, and co-authored a book on their findings, *Equipping the Saints: Best Practices in Contextual Education* (Pilgrim Press, 2010).

Not only has Jenkins shaped opportunities for Candler students to pursue experiential learning outside the classroom, he’s also been integrally involved in creating new degrees and courses. He designed Candler’s MDiv/Master in Social Work dual degree with the University of Georgia, and the school’s dual MDiv/Master in Development Practice degree with Emory’s Laney Graduate School.

Lyn Pace 02T 17T, chaplain at Oxford College of Emory University, has called Jenkins a mentor and friend throughout his MDiv and DMin journeys at Candler. He says that Jenkins “expects a lot from his students. He expects you to read, do the work, and put your body into your local community to be in real relationship with people.” That last piece, Pace notes, “sounds a lot like what we’re called to do as Christians in the life of faith and ministry.”

International study has also been important to Jenkins, who served as Candler’s founding director of international initiatives. Through this work, he developed relationships with schools in Africa, Asia, and Latin America for the first time in Candler’s

history, increasing the school’s global partners from three to 21, and expanding international summer ministry internships. He’s led students on travel seminars to Cuba, Honduras, Brazil, and Mexico, including five “Church on the Border” courses co-led with Scholar-in-Residence Marie Marquardt, where students spend a week at the U.S./Mexico border to study the church’s response to immigration.

Marquardt says that Jenkins balanced holding students to the highest standards of academic rigor while engaging with them pastorally in the challenging environment. “In our time at the border, I witnessed him holding sobbing students in his arms, sitting quietly beside students in crisis, and gently offering words of support and encouragement. Like any good shepherd, he intuitively knew when to let them wander, and when to gather, lead, and nourish them.”

MDiv student Jad Taylor 20T took the Church on the Border class and calls it one of his most transformative seminary encounters. “Dr. Jenkins opened my eyes to the alternative future the church can and should imagine with the world. He is more than a professor—he is a fellow sojourner working toward a more just and caring world.”

Many students over the years have considered Jenkins a “fellow sojourner.” They voted him 2004-2005 Faculty Person on the Year, and welcomed his advising in student organizations including Sacred Worth and the Social Concerns Network. He chaired Candler’s Worship and Spiritual Formation Committee, as well as its Sustainability and Climate Action Plan Committee. And he’s donated more than 1,000 books to Pitts Theology Library.

Lyn Pace points to the common thread in these varied roles. “The constant is the way in which David lives out his calling: that being in relationship with people in the community in which you find yourself is of utmost importance. It’s what the gospel is calling us to do.” —CL

#### LUKE TIMOTHY JOHNSON *Pure Energy*

If anyone discovered what gives **Luke Timothy Johnson** his extraordinarily high energy level, they could bottle it and make millions. The effervescent Johnson served for 24 years as the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins before retiring in 2016. The Woodruffs are Emory’s most distinguished endowed chairs—but don’t confuse “distinguished” with “stuffy.”



CINDY BERNON 01T

Former students speak fondly of Johnson—whom they affectionately called “LTJ”—and his annual vertical leap. Up until his mid 60s, Johnson would select a day each year to launch himself from a



standing position onto a nearby desk. It was an event not to be missed.

“I witnessed multiple jumps,” recalls Brian Erickson oOT, senior pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Homewood, Alabama. “They were impressive.”

Erickson, who took a class with Johnson every semester he was at Candler except for a term when Johnson was on sabbatical, says he wishes he had witnessed the leaps during the cell phone era so he could have recorded them.

While the jumps were remarkable physical feats, they were more than matched by the mental dynamism and fortitude that have marked Johnson’s illustrious academic career. His scholarly output is staggering and still growing: At the time of his retirement, he had written more than 30 books (with three more under contract); 70 journal articles; 100 popular articles; 190 book reviews; and 175 academic lectures. And that doesn’t include the hundreds of presentations he’s given at churches over the years.

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

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

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

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

“He reminds students repeatedly that scholarship requires courage, that researching, writing up your findings, and thinking through their impact on the church and the world is a courageous act,” notes Shively Smith 15G, one of Johnson’s doctoral students and now assistant professor of New Testament at Boston University’s School of Theology.

Erickson agrees.

“You always felt like you were playing with fire,” he recalls. “Something might happen! This was dangerous, sacred, holy stuff we were dealing with and we’d better give it the best we’ve got. Whenever I stand in the pulpit, I hope I’m doing justice to the time he put into me.”

Johnson’s enthusiasm for Scripture is apparent in his writing, which has won acclaim from both academic and general audiences, from the \$100,000 Grawemeyer Award in Religion for the scholarly *Among the Gentiles* to the Catholic Book Award for *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church*.

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

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

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

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

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

Johnson’s dedication to his students was recognized by both Candler and Emory: He received the “On Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award from Candler’s graduating class in 1997 and 1999, was named Candler Outstanding Faculty Person of the Year in 2006, and received the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award, the university’s highest award for teaching, in 2013.

Smith notes that Johnson’s signature passion and compassion have worked together to heighten his students’ educational experience. “He cares about his students’ overall well-being as well as their critical intellectual development,” she says. “In that way he’s very pastoral.”

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

## REX D. MATTHEWS

### *The Man Who Knew John Wesley*

Stories extolling the professorial prowess of **Rex Matthews** abound at Candler. One in particular stands out to Thomas W. Elliott, Jr. 87T 97T, associate professor in the practice of practical theology and Methodist studies, who came across a group of students talking about how much they enjoyed Matthews’s classes. Out of curiosity, Elliott asked them, “What makes Dr. Matthews such a great teacher?” They said, “We think the man knew John Wesley!”

Matthews, who retired in 2017 as professor in the practice of historical theology and Wesleyan studies, introduced hundreds of students to a deeper understanding of Wesley and Methodist history. His research on the life and thought of John Wesley, and the historical and theological development of Methodism in both Britain and America has enlivened his students’ theological imaginations. His natural gift for teaching—combining extensive knowledge, remarkable communication skills, and a deep concern for his students—has made him among Candler’s most beloved professors.

Matthews first came to Candler in 1981 alongside his wife, Carol Newsom, who was joining the faculty. His significant talents and Harvard MDiv degree were noted, and he was recruited to teach classes

even as he managed the on-campus Cokesbury bookstore, undertook part-time editorial work for Abingdon Press, and completed his doctor of theology at Harvard, which was awarded in 1986. In 1989, he moved to the world of academic publishing, where among his notable accomplishments was establishing the Kingswood Books series for scholarly works in Wesleyan and Methodist studies.

Matthews returned to Candler’s faculty in 2004, and his work in the classroom has been lauded. He received the “On Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award in 2010 and 2016, the Exemplary Teaching Award from the General Board of Higher Education



CINDY BROWN 08T

and Ministry of The United Methodist Church in 2012, and the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award from Emory University in 2011.

“As a teacher, Rex has the rare gift of framing complex theological thought in a way that is accessible and brings John Wesley to life for his students,” says Teresa Angle-Young o7T, a certified clergy coach and an elder in the North Georgia Annual Conference. “He gave me the language with which to interact

with fellow scholars, but also to teach and preach Wesley in a congregation. As a mentor, he has encouraged me, sought out professional opportunities for me, and supported me in ways that have had significant impact on my life and career. His personal integrity, excellent scholarship, and generosity of spirit are unmatched.”

Matthews’s scholarly pursuits have garnered recognition throughout his career as well. Russ Richey, dean emeritus and William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church History, says that Matthews has been “the greatest facilitator and promoter of Wesley studies and Methodistica for at least the last half-century” through his work in academic publishing and his role as managing editor of the *Methodist Review: A Journal of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies*, an online academic journal launched in 2009. Additionally, Matthews served as co-chair of the Wesleyan Studies Group of the American Academy of Religion from 2007 to 2013, was a Luce Exchange Fellow and visiting professor at the Methodist University of São Paulo in 2013, and a fellow of the Summer Wesley Seminar at Duke Divinity School in 2004 and 2014. He received the Florence A. Bell Scholar Award from Drew University Theological School Library in 2014.

Matthews’s book *Timetables of History for Students of Methodism* (Abingdon Press, 2007) received the 2007 Saddlebag Selection Award from the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church as the best book published during the year on the history, biography, polity, or theology of United Methodism. More recently he edited *The Vocation of Theology: Inquiry, Dialogue, Adoration* (GBHEM/Foundry Books, 2017), a collection of essays from Candler’s centennial celebration, and wrote *Ministerial Orders and*



*Sacramental Authority in The United Methodist Church and its Antecedents, 1785–2016* (GBHEM/Foundery Books, 2017).

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

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

### CAROL A. NEWSOM The Biblical Matchmaker

During Carol Newsom’s 39-year career at Candler, she has amassed honorary doctorates, prestigious fellowships, and multiple awards for outstanding teaching. She’s written or edited 15 books, scores of articles and book chapters, encyclopedia entries, translations, and reviews. She’s made history as the second woman to hold a tenure-track position at the institution, and the first to be appointed to a chaired professorship.



EMORY PHOTO/VIDEO

Despite this remarkable career, Newsom, who retired in 2019 as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Old Testament, still thinks of her vocation in simpler terms: as that of a biblical matchmaker. “I have these students, and I know these great texts, and I am positive that they will fall in love with each other if I introduce them,” she says. “Watching students make connections with the texts is what makes teaching worthwhile.”

According to Amy Chatelaine 20T, Newsom’s teaching style helps students make meaningful connections with the text. “Through the final course of her teaching career, Dr. Newsom approached biblical studies with the same inextinguishable

sense of wonder, curiosity, and delight as one who was encountering the material for the first time. Her enthusiasm is contagious, and opens her learning partners to anticipate new revelations from both the biblical texts and people we assume we have ‘figured out.’”

Described by Associate Professor of Old Testament Joel LeMon as “the most consequential scholar of

her generation,” Newsom is a widely respected expert who has been recognized numerous times for her scholarship. She has published 76 articles and book chapters, dozens upon dozens of reference works, and ten books as author and five as editor, including co-editing the acclaimed *Women’s Bible Commentary*, now in its third edition. She has received honorary doctorates from Virginia Theological Seminary, the University of Copenhagen, and Birmingham-Southern College, and her research fellowships include grants from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Henry Luce Foundation. In 2015, she was presented with two *Festschriften* from former students. And in 2016, she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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

Along with her impressive status as a scholar and leader, Newsom is known for her dedication to her students, as evidenced by honors including the 1998 “On Eagle’s Wings” Excellence in Teaching Award given by Candler’s senior class, and the 2009 Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award given by Emory University.

According to LeMon, Newsom’s students often mention the same trait when describing her: “They

say that Carol made them feel that she had all the time in the world for them. Her commitment to each conversation reinforced the value of who they are and what they thought.”

Evan Bassett 24G, who served as Newsom’s research assistant, seconds this sentiment: “To me, one of Carol’s most impressive qualities is her ability to listen well. She listens to her students with undivided attention and unwavering curiosity, as if we might say something worth hearing. And indeed, that is the effect: When you have Carol’s attention, it makes you want to say something worth saying. Her voice of wisdom has been a great gift to the Emory community, but as her student, her listening ear has taught me just as much.”

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

While Newsom says it’s hard to pick a favorite moment from her Candler career, she does have a special affection for Cannon Chapel, which she describes as both a “challenging” and an “awe-inspiring” space. “I have always liked the fact that it is a space that only fully comes alive when it is filled with people. When the congregation is there and you look

up from the floor, you see people’s heads and shoulders—and they look just like the medieval paintings of the ranks of angels in the heavenly choir.”

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

### STEVEN M. TIPTON Intellectual Curiosity for the Common Good

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

For Candler professor Robert Franklin, this was an actual scenario, the real-life version of phoning a friend on a high-stakes game show. In 1996, Franklin, now the James T. and Berta R. Laney Professor in Moral Leadership, was about to meet with then-President Bill Clinton. He needed to verify some information, so he called one of the most remarkable scholars he knows: **Steve Tipton**.

Tipton came through, and Franklin’s meeting went well. That’s par for the course with Tipton, who came to Candler in 1979 as he was completing his doctoral studies and retired at the end of the spring 2016 term as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Sociology of Religion. His vast knowledge impresses both his accomplished colleagues and his students.

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



COURTESY OF U. OF OREGON

Letitia Campbell 17G, assistant professor in the practice of ethics and society and a former teaching assistant for Tipton, describes him as “intellectually expansive.”

“The range of things that he’s interested in and about which he has thought or written is enormous,” notes Campbell. “I don’t think I ever found the edge of what he’s curious about.”

Candler alumnus Jermaine Pearson 16T experienced Tipton’s intellect in action in multiple classes and as an advisee, and marvels at the way his mind works. “I’ve never met someone who knows something about everything,” says Pearson.

A noted expert on the work of eminent sociologist Robert Bellah, Tipton authored the monographs *Getting Saved from the Sixties* (1982) and *Public Pulpits* (2007) as well as a number of collaborative publica-



tions with fellow scholars, including Bellah. His work has been sponsored by such institutions as the Guggenheim Foundation, Lilly Endowment Inc., the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Louisville Institute, and the Ford, Rockefeller, Luce, Danforth, and Sloan Foundations, among others.

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

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

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

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

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

Tipton, who directed Emory's Graduate Division of Religion from 1998-2003, has retired from full-time teaching but not from being a scholar. His most recent book is a case of life imitating art: He researched and wrote about retirement in *The Life to Come: Re-Creating Retirement* (Wesley's Foundry Books, 2018). Tipton interviewed retirees in Atlanta and Silicon Valley about their plans for and realizations about retirement, and found that the pursuits of those he interviewed range widely: Some are getting in shape; others are falling in love. A few are working to check items off their bucket lists.

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

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

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

"He's a friend to the institution who gives his best for the common good." —VL

### **BISHOP WOODIE W. WHITE** *A Pioneer with Powerful Prayers*

Bishop **Woodie White** is far too humble to tell you himself, but he is a pioneer.

That's how his colleague Anne Burkholder describes White, who served as Candler's bishop-in-residence

from 2004 to 2016. Burkholder, associate dean of Methodist studies, is amazed by both White's humility and his accomplishments.



CINDY BROWN OPT

His first pastorate was a cross-racial appointment in Detroit in the 1960s. He served as a delegate to five General Conferences, including the 1968 gathering that birthed The United Methodist Church. He worked tirelessly to integrate the church, becoming the first General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race in 1969. Elected bishop in 1984, he led the Indiana Conference in building four dormitories at Africa University in Zimbabwe. Both a dormitory and a bridge are named in his honor there. And even in his (second) retirement, he is still active in the field of social justice, serving as chairman of the mission board of The Joseph and Evelyn Lowery Institute for Justice and Human Rights at Clark Atlanta University.

When White retired from the episcopacy, he accepted the post of bishop-in-residence at Candler expecting to stay four years. Instead, he stayed 12,

witnessing several milestones at the school, including new leadership, curriculum, and facilities.

"It's been amazing," he reflected as he retired. "It's been a very decisive 12 years for the school. I've enjoyed every minute of it."

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

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

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

One of those transformed students is Natalie Wilson Faulkner 18T, who describes the tour as "life-changing."

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

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

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

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

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

"That's probably the most striking thing about Bishop White," Brian Tillman 11T says. "His prayers get right to the heart of the matter."

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

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

Former students like Tillman can talk at length about gifts White has given to them. Tillman first met White during his time as bishop of the Indiana Conference. Tillman, then a teacher, was wrestling with a call to ministry, and the two met to talk. Till-

man continued to teach school and later moved to Atlanta, where he reconnected with White at church. It wasn't long before Tillman decided to follow his call and enrolled at Candler. He is effusive in praising White for his guidance and compassion.

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

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

"What's it like? I never understood what it meant when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples," Tillman says, his voice breaking as he recalls a Maundy Thursday service during his time as a Candler student. "Bishop White was washing feet. I never felt that Scripture like that before. Bishop White washing my feet? No!

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

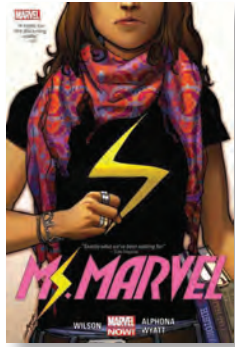
As for White, he says he will never forget the zest that Candler students have for ministry and their genuine excitement in serving.

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



# REQUIRED READING

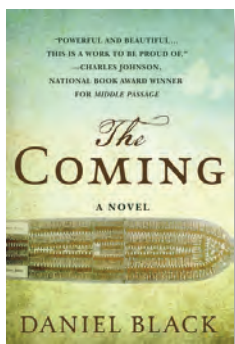
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR GREAT TITLES TO ADD TO YOUR READING LIST, CHECK OUT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF CANDLER'S FACULTY.



The graphic novel *Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal* by G. Willow Wilson hooked Assistant Professor in the Practice of History of Religions and Multifaith Relations DEANNA WOMACK from the start. The story's shape-shifting superhero is teenager Kamala Khan, who struggles with her Pakistani Muslim heritage and the desire to transform into the blond, fair-skinned original Ms. Marvel. Praising Adrian Alphonso's captivating illustrations and Wilson's sharp and relevant storyline, Womack says, "The overarching message resonated with me most: When it comes to American identity, there should be no imposed paradigm of normalcy."



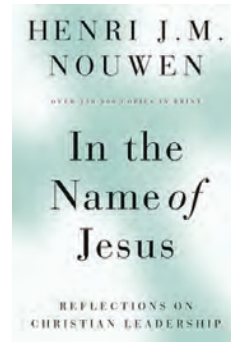
Scholar-in-Residence MARIE MARQUARDT recommends Cristina Henríquez's novel *The Book of Unknown Americans*, which also addresses identity in the United States. It's the story of the Rivera family, immigrants who come to America to get help for their teenage daughter, who has sustained a traumatic brain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



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



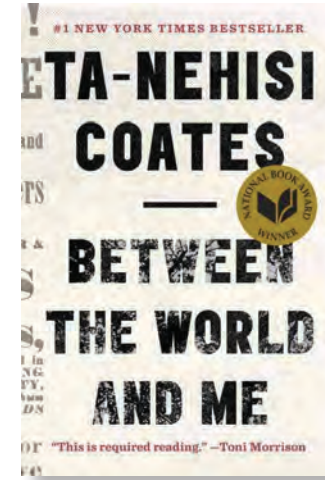
Assistant Professor in the Practice of Practical Theology and Director of Candler's Women, Theology, and Ministry Program ELLEN SHEPARD had high praise for Amy Greene's novel *Long Man*. It's the story of a woman in the fictitious town of Yuneetah, fighting the Tennessee Valley Authority to save a river and its surrounding land for her toddler daughter. "This book reminds the reader of the beauty, strength, and passion that lies within people and creation," Shepard says.



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



First published in 1997, Sallie McFague's *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* recently resurfaced for Associate Professor of Religious Education JENNIFER AYRES. In it, McFague, former dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School, crafts a Christian spirituality focused on nature as humans' primary encounter with the divine. "This book is important for religious leaders and educators in particular because it asks not only what the Christian should do in response to our environmental context, but also who we should be," says Ayres. "When we cultivate a loving eye toward the earth, we develop a different relationship not only to God's world, but to God."



## TWO FOR ONE

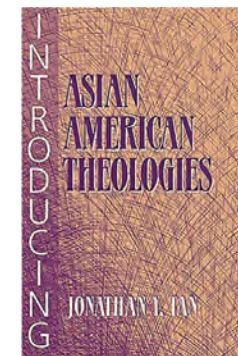
Two faculty members—and millions of others across the globe—heartily recommend the same book: 2015 National Book Award winner *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

NOEL L. ERSKINE, professor of theology and ethics, read *Between the World and Me* alongside Paul's second epistle to Timothy. Both books take the form of letters penned by father figures to their sons—Paul to Timothy with final instructions on living and preaching the gospel, and Coates to his teenaged son Samori on being a black man in America. Though separated by twenty centuries, Erskine notes that each writer evokes similar life touchstones. "Resources in the struggle to birth a better world are faith, family, friends, and awakening to a new consciousness that transcends fear. Both letters are required reading."

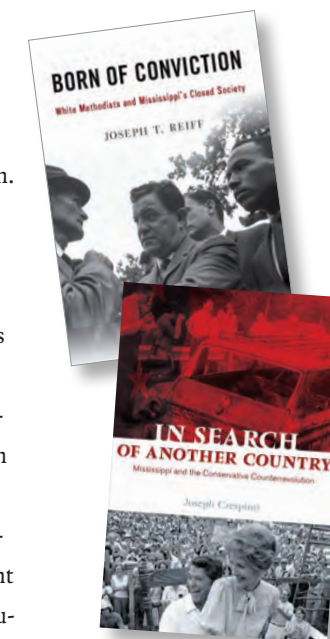
Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture NICHOLE PHILLIPS also felt the power of *Between the World and Me*—so deeply, in fact, that she made it a reading assignment in her class on African American religion and culture. "Given the strain in the relationship between police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



CC-BY: THE JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION



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



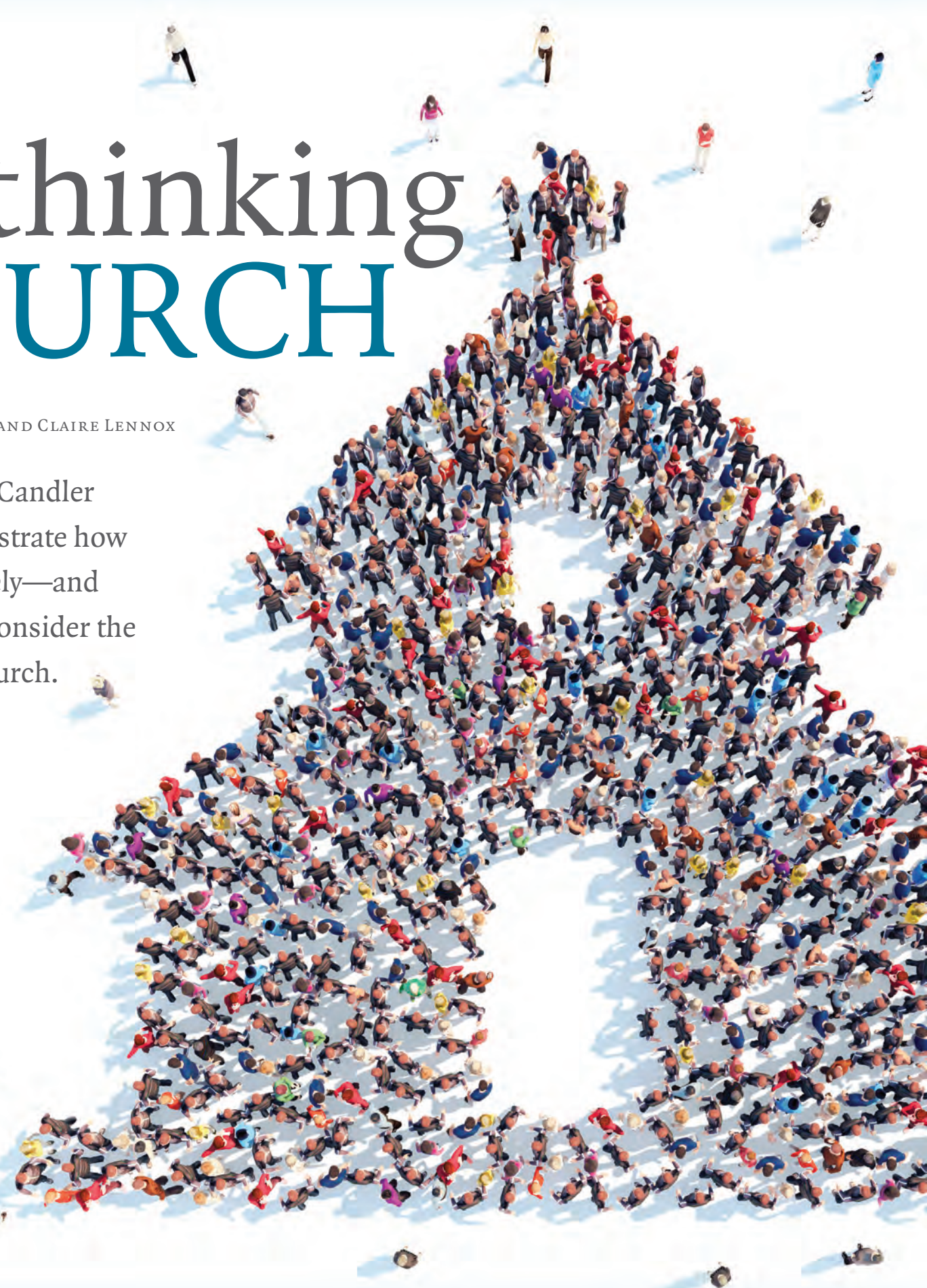
Assistant Professor in the Practice of Ethics and Society LETITIA CAMPBELL has also been reading about race in America, and was moved by two books with Emory ties: *Born of Conviction: White Methodists and Mississippi's Closed Society* by Joseph Reiff 8oT 92G, and history professor Joseph Crespino's *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution*. "Together, these books have been a powerful reminder that our movements toward racial justice have been advanced steadily by people of great creativity and moral courage. They have deepened my appreciation for the many unsung people and everyday decisions that are part of the larger civil rights story."



# REthinking CHURCH

BY MOLLY EDMONDS AND CLAIRE LENNOX

A sampling of Candler alumni demonstrate how we can creatively—and faithfully—reconsider the meaning of church.



Imagine you're playing the game Pictionary, and you're tasked with drawing "church." To get your teammates to guess this word, you might draw a square, representing a building, with a pointed steeple on top. Perhaps you'd draw a cross, or a pulpit with a speaker behind it to represent a minister.

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

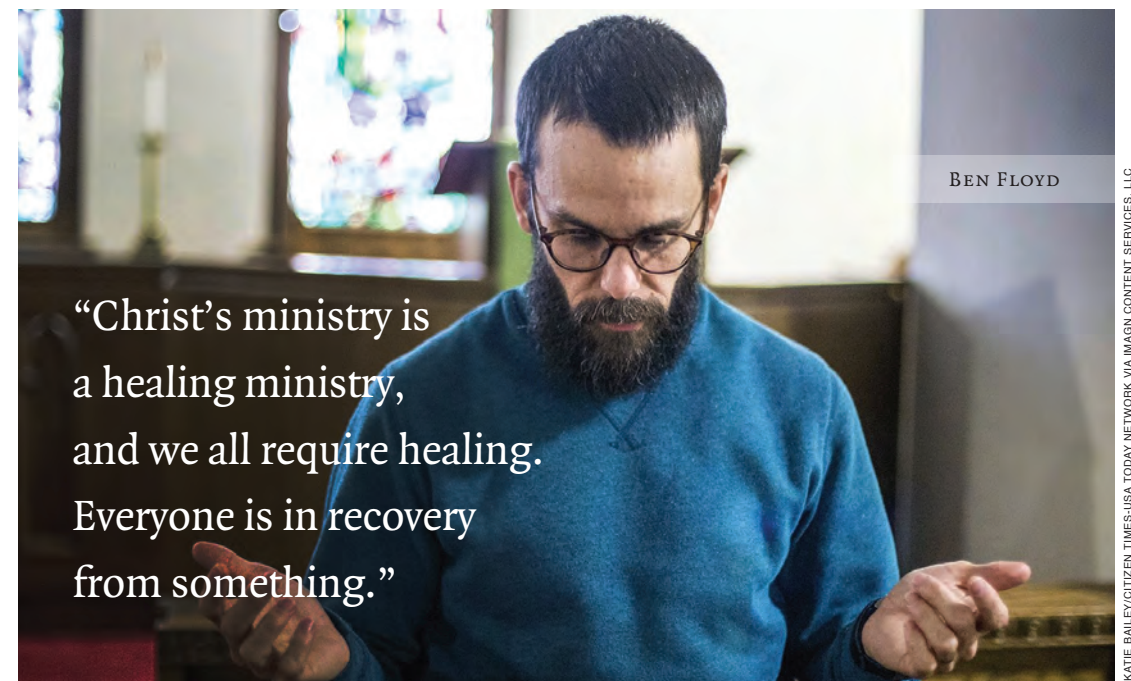
And yet, because of Candler alumni like **Ben Floyd 17T**, **Karen Webster Parks 16T**, **Tyler Sit 14T**, and **Matt Miofsky 02T**, the above scenarios are now part of valid descriptions of church. For these visionaries, "rethinking church" began with an observation of what was missing from church in its current form, and then grew as they imagined how to fill in the gaps.

### *We're all recovering from something*

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

Before he began his studies at Candler in the fall of 2014, Floyd had already begun working on a new kind of church in Asheville, North Carolina. Called Daybreak Fellowship, it was conceived as a faith community that applies ideas from 12-step recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) to help hurting people find community, comfort, healing, and hope.

The language of addiction recovery is familiar to Floyd, who is up front about his former alcohol and drug abuse. At typical recovery groups, he says,



BEN FLOYD

*"Christ's ministry is a healing ministry, and we all require healing. Everyone is in recovery from something."*

there is a mix of faith categories, with religious people working their 12 steps alongside atheists and agnostics. While the philosophy is based on the concept of a higher power, "some people need something that's more Christian than the spirituality that AA offers," says Floyd.

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

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

"There are plenty of churches, and there are plenty of free meals in Asheville," says Floyd. "It's the small group component that made us different."

The small group format allows for the confidential sharing of stories that can provide strength and support. Floyd relished seeing people who weren't familiar with the power of the group dynamic work through their issues.

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

As Floyd was fostering these groups on the weekends, his weekdays were spent in classes on Methodism with Candler professors Kevin Watson and Rex Matthews, which he says reinforced his vision for Daybreak.



“Methodism started with small groups, where you’d be asked, ‘How have you fallen? If you have sinned, how can we help you?’ Wesley’s theology maps onto the 12 steps directly,” Floyd says. “The concepts of repentance, forgiveness, and sanctification—these are what we work on in our small groups.”

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

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

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

### Breaking the color barrier

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

Parks read *Breaking the Color Barrier: A Vision for Church Growth through Racial Reconciliation*, by Kevin Murriel rT, senior pastor at Cascade United Methodist Church in southwest Atlanta, where Parks is a member. As she was reading, she thought of news headlines about police shootings of unarmed black men. She also thought of all the United Methodist churches she passed on her drive to Cascade, and

wondered what was going on with the congregations inside of them. Were they concerned, too?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parks and her mentors set a goal of registering 50 to 60 people, but more than 100 people from the



COURTESY KAREN WEBSTER PARKS



five churches registered, and weekly attendance remained steady at 70 to 80.

“So many people told us this would never happen,” says Parks. “It’s a tough topic, and folks are busy. But I felt God. Even when I had those moments that were like, ‘why me, God?’ When God is in it, it’s going to happen.”

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

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

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

### Planting justice

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

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

Prayerfully walking through Minneapolis led Sit to the Powderhorn, Phillips, and Central neighborhoods in the southern part of the city. He was drawn to the racial diversity there and the ecological work the area had already taken on, such as fighting for the removal of a factory that was causing asthma in local children and planting

community gardens. Sit quickly found out, though, that the term “eco-church” did not resonate with his new neighbors, who swiftly told him it sounded like something “expensive” and “white.”

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

“So many times I hear, ‘I guess I’m too poor to live in a nice neighborhood,’” says Sit. “But God wants a place where all tribes live together—that’s what we read in Revelation 21. There’s no violence, and the earth is renewed. It’s a new city that has come to earth.” And so, in biblical fashion, Sit’s church plant received its name—New City Church—and its mission: environmental justice, the idea that God wants diverse groups of people to live together peacefully in a safe and green space.

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

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





TYLER SIT

COURTESY OF TYLER SIT

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

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

It seems that everything at New City is growing. A director of community outreach joined the staff in 2016, then came a minister of public witness, a director of worship, a project manager, plus interns. And programs have grown, too. The fruit tree ministry has blossomed into a backyard farms ministry where New City works with residents to plant organic gardens using permaculture design principles. This experiment in urban micro-farming gives families access to healthy food and possibly a new revenue stream through selling produce at farmers' markets or to local restaurants.

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

"Our biggest success is providing inspiration for people to consider the kingdom of God's imagination," he says. "Everyone knows we should do church differently, but it's important to actually see someone do it. When the Holy Spirit moves in the



COURTESY OF NEW CITY CHURCH

world, it breathes new life into the church in every creative way we can imagine."

**Go forth and multiply**

Echoing Toni Morrison's advice to writers to write the book they wanted to read, Matt Miofsky created the church he wanted to attend.

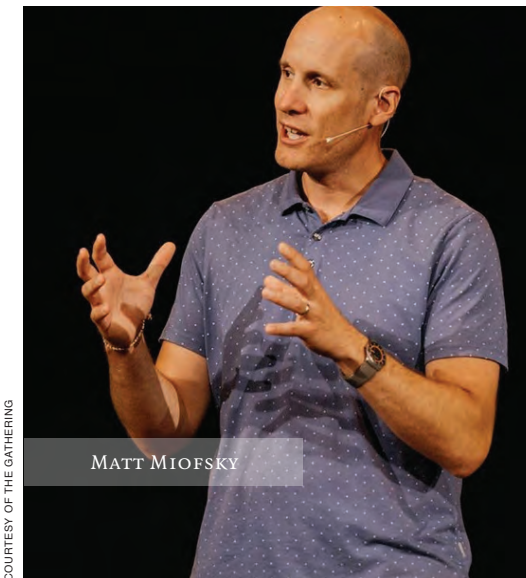
After graduating from Candler, Miofsky was appointed to a mid-sized United Methodist church in a St. Louis suburb. "While the church had all the markers of what we would consider a 'healthy church,' it wasn't a place that my non-churched friends were interested in going," he remembers. "And so I found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

What Miofsky's friends did attend, though, was a small group he hosted in his living room. The group contemplated what "church" meant to them, and

how to bring in new people who wanted to follow Christ but hadn't found a church home. With the support of his bishop and annual conference, Miofsky's growing group became The Gathering, which held its first worship service in 2006 in a historic Methodist sanctuary. In the years since, additional locations have opened: one in a school, one in a newly built worship center, and online.

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

Miofsky says the multiple sites were due to organic growth, but also a response to the strength of various neighborhoods in St. Louis. "There's a movement here to invest in the neighborhood you live in. Eat local, shop local, and to some extent, go to church local. We also thought it was very Wesleyan,



MATT MIOFSKY

COURTESY OF THE GATHERING



COURTESY OF THE GATHERING

since that's how the movement started—small sites growing and multiplying."

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

It's been more than a decade since The Gathering started, and in the years since, Miofsky says his role has shifted dramatically. "Every year it changes. Now, my role is largely teaching, preaching, leader-

ship development, and managing the vision for our multi-site church. I'm responsible for equipping and mentoring our other pastors"—including **Yvi Martin** '07 '09T, another Candler alum.

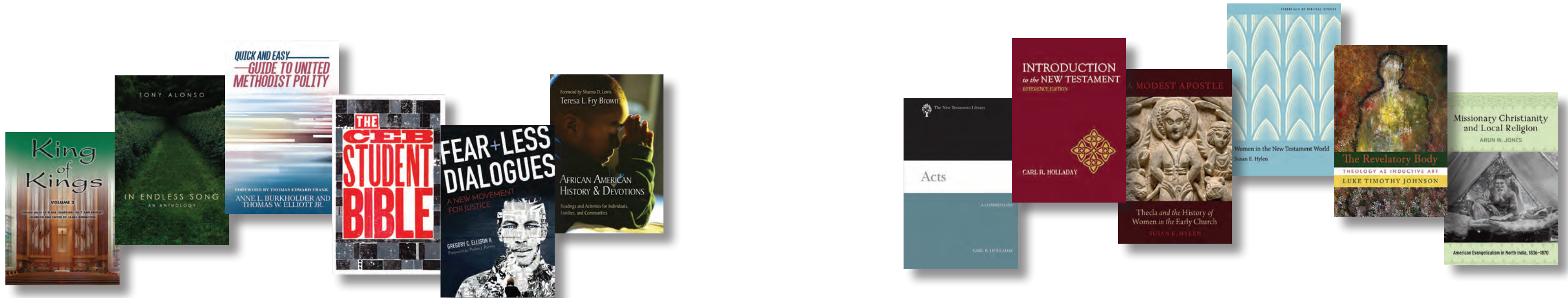
Two core challenges include ensuring that the "feel" of The Gathering remains the same from site to site, and helping those who fell in love with a small group format to understand growth.

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



# RECENT BOOKS BY FACULTY

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## KING OF KINGS: ORGAN MUSIC BY BLACK COMPOSERS, VOL. 3

**James Abbingdon, Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship, editor.** Whether it's a church service or a concert, the latest edition in the King of Kings series features arrangements and original works by some of the preeminent black composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. [GIA, 2017]

## IN ENDLESS SONG: AN ANTHOLOGY

**Antonio Alonso, Assistant Professor of Theology and Culture.** The accomplished composer and liturgist presents this compilation of his favorite liturgical compositions and arrangements, intended to facilitate personal prayer and reflection. [GIA, 2018]

## QUICK AND EASY GUIDE TO METHODIST POLITY

**Anne Burkholder, Associate Dean of Methodist Studies and Professor in the Practice of Ecclesiology and Church Leadership, and Thomas W. Elliott, Jr., Associate Professor in the Practice of Practical Theology and Methodist Studies.** With more than 250 entries, Burkholder and Elliott provide a comprehensive, annotated guide to the United Methodist Discipline for pastors and church leaders, district superintendents, bishops, agency staff, and others who need a quick reference guide to issues that arise in ministry. [GBHEM, 2018]

## THE COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE STUDENT BIBLE

**Elizabeth Corrie, Associate Professor in the Practice of Youth Education and Peacebuilding.** Corrie served as editor on the project, which brought together scholars, youth ministers, and YTI alumni to craft more than 400 articles, questions, and activities designed to help teenage students engage with the text. [Common English Bible, 2015]

## FEARLESS DIALOGUES: A NEW MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE

**Gregory C. Ellison II, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling.** Ellison explains and explores his groundbreaking program "Fearless Dialogues," walking readers through the steps to find common ground in our divided communities and implement genuine and lasting change. [Westminster John Knox, 2017]

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & DEVOTIONS

**Teresa L. Fry Brown, Bandy Professor of Preaching.** Twenty-eight devotions for individuals, families, or small groups, including a Scripture verse, a reflection on the Scripture, related activities for each day, and a prayer. This intergenerational, interactive devotional celebrates heritage, deepens faith, and builds community. [Abingdon Press, 2018]

## ACTS: A COMMENTARY

**Carl R. Holladay, Charles Howard Candler Professor Emeritus of New Testament.** In this work from the acclaimed New Testament Library series, Holladay offers a theological, contextual, and literary interpretation of Acts, presenting it as a rich narrative that accounts for the development of the early Christian church. [Westminster John Knox, 2016]

## INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT: REFERENCE EDITION

**Carl Holladay.** Rooting each of the New Testament's 27 writings in their historical, literary, and theological contexts, Holladay provides detailed overviews, background material, and textual analysis, intentionally connecting the New Testament to issues facing its readers today. [Baylor University, 2017]

## A MODEST APOSTLE: THECLA AND THE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE EARLY CHURCH

**Susan E. Hylan, Associate Professor of New Testament.** Tracing the story of the biblical and apocryphal character Thecla, Hylan challenges the common narrative that women were excluded from active leadership in the early church, arguing instead that they served as leaders in their own Greco-Roman cultural contexts. *The Christian Century* selected the book as "recommended reading" in its 2016 Fall Books issue. [Oxford University, 2015]

## WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WORLD

**Susan Hylan.** Part of Oxford's Essentials of Biblical Studies series, this 232-page volume offers a new interpretation of the conflicting evidence for women's roles and authority in the culture that shaped the New Testament, intersecting with contemporary discussions of women's roles in churches. [Oxford University, 2018]

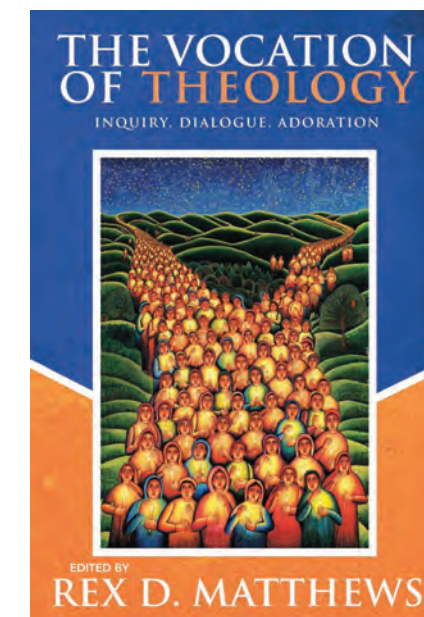
## THE REVELATORY BODY: THEOLOGY AS INDUCTIVE ART

**Luke Timothy Johnson, Robert W. Woodruff Professor Emeritus of New Testament and Christian Origins.** Johnson argues that "the human body is God's preferred medium of self-revelation," and in order to sense God's presence through the body, theologians must be willing to engage in actual human experiences rather than abstract conceptualizations. [Eerdmans, 2015]

## MISSIONARY CHRISTIANITY AND LOCAL RELIGION: AMERICAN EVANGELICALISM IN NORTH INDIA, 1836-1870

**Arun Jones, Dan and Lillian Hankey Associate Professor of World Evangelism.** Jones documents how preexisting indigenous bhakti movements and western missionary evangelicalism met to form the cornerstone of North Indian Christianity, a movement that was both evangelical and rooted in local religious and social realities. [Baylor University, 2017]





## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A THEOLOGIAN?

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

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

These essays, sermons, and speeches shed light on the vocation of theology in a changed and changing world, a topic worthy of perennial reflection.

**PASTORAL CARE, HEALTH, HEALING, AND WHOLENESS IN AFRICAN CONTEXTS**  
**Emmanuel Lartey**, *Charles Howard Candler Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spiritual Care*, co-editor. This collection by pastoral theologians from Congo, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe draws on biblical, theological, social scientific, and cultural contextual perspectives to offer insights on pastoral care and counseling aimed towards healing, health, and well-being. [Wipf and Stock, 2017]

**IMAGE, TEXT, EXEGESIS: ICONOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION AND THE HEBREW BIBLE**  
**Joel M. LeMon**, *Associate Professor of Old Testament*, co-editor. This volume addresses how images reflect the cultures that produce them, and the nature of the relationship between images and texts among different cultures. [Bloomsbury, 2015]

**REFORMED SACRAMENTALITY**  
**Steffen Lösel**, *Associate Professor of Systematic Theology*, editor. This book by the late Graham Hughes contends that to counter the Reformed tradition's vulnerability to a cultural colonization by secular modernity, Reformed theology needs to amplify its appreciation for God's omnipresence in creation with a re-appropriation of the condensed symbols of faith. [Liturgical Press, 2017]

**DREAM THINGS TRUE**  
**Marie Marquardt**, *Scholar-in-Residence*. Inspired by her work with Mexican immigrants in Georgia, Marquardt's first young adult novel centers on the love story between an undocumented teenage girl and the white nephew of a senator. [Macmillan, 2015]

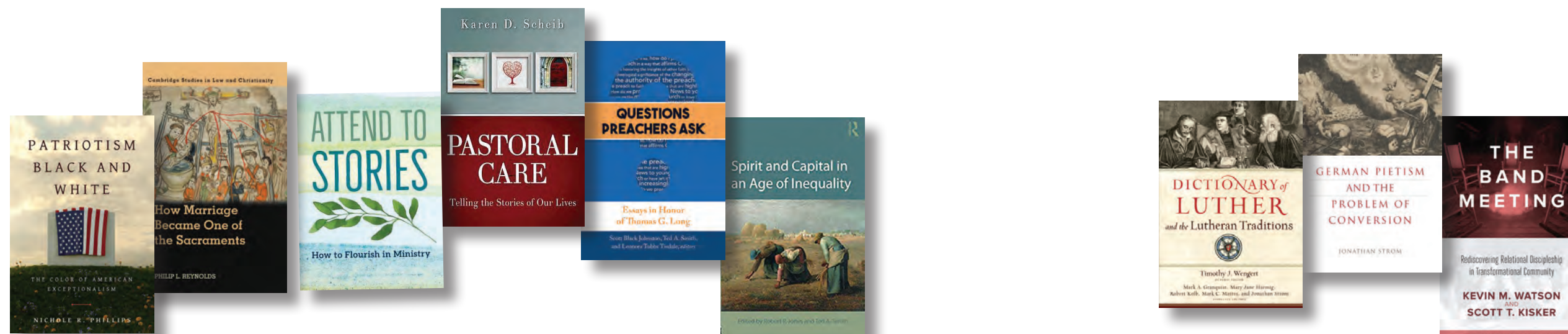
**THE RADIUS OF US**  
**Marie Marquardt**. In her second young adult novel, Marquardt provides a glimpse into the causes and devastating impact of Latino gang violence, both in the U.S. and in Central America, and explores the risks that victims take when they try to start over. [Macmillan, 2017]

**FLIGHT SEASON**  
**Marie Marquardt**. Described by Booklist as a "poignant story of grief, healing, and finding balance and purpose," Marquardt's third young adult novel explores immigration, love, and loss. [Macmillan, 2018]

**CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND RELIGION: ESSAYS ON FAITH, POWER, AND RELATIONSHIP**  
**Ellen Ott Marshall**, *Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Conflict Transformation*, editor. Contributors to this collection—including fellow Candler faculty members Beth Corrie and Liz Bounds—describe ways that conflict and their efforts to engage it constructively shape their work in classrooms and communities. [Palgrave, 2016]

**INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS: CONFLICT, FAITH, AND HUMAN LIFE**  
**Ellen Ott Marshall**. Understanding that difference is often the origin of conflict, Marshall uses the inevitable reality of difference to center and organize her exploration of the system of Christian morality, asking, "What does the good life look like in the context of conflict?" [Westminster John Knox, 2018]





**PATRIOTISM BLACK AND WHITE: THE COLOR OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM**  
 Nichole R. Phillips, Associate Professor in the Practice of Sociology of Religion and Culture. Phillips examines a community of black and white evangelicals in rural Tennessee, exploring how racial identity influenced differing responses to the War on Terror and the Obama administration, and eventually led to a crisis in American national identity that opened the door to new nativistic and triumphalist interpretations of American exceptionalism. [Baylor, 2018]

**HOW MARRIAGE BECAME ONE OF THE SACRAMENTS: THE SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE FROM ITS MEDIEVAL ORIGINS TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**  
 Philip Reynolds, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Medieval Christianity and Aquinas Professor of Historical Theology. Reynolds examines in depth the intellectual and institutional developments of marriage as a sacrament through the centuries, from the ancient precedents to the Council of Trent. [Cambridge University, 2016]

**ATTEND TO STORIES: HOW TO FLOURISH IN MINISTRY**  
 Karen D. Scheib, Professor of Pastoral Care and Pastoral Theology. This book invites readers to rekindle a passion for ministry by helping others revisit their stories—keeping in mind that to do so effectively, we must be willing to revisit our own stories, connecting them to God and each other. [Wesley's Foundry Books, 2018]

**PASTORAL CARE: TELLING THE STORIES OF OUR LIVES**  
 Karen Scheib. Scheib contends that the purpose of pastoral care is to generate stories that promote growth in love of God, self, and others. With a grounding in Wesleyan theology, she re-envisioned pastoral care as a rhythm of life within the whole church, rather than a sporadic action taken only in moments of crisis. This book was tapped for “recommended reading” in *The Christian Century*'s 2016 Fall Books issue. [Abingdon, 2016]

**QUESTIONS PREACHERS ASK: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF THOMAS G. LONG**  
 Ted A. Smith, Professor of Preaching and Ethics, co-editor. A Festschrift honoring Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching Thomas G. Long, this volume offers guidance from some of the country's best-known preachers, scholars, and authors—including Barbara Brown Taylor, Anna Carter Florence, and Thomas Lynch, among others. [Westminster John Knox, 2016]

**SPIRIT AND CAPITAL IN AN AGE OF INEQUALITY**  
 Ted Smith, co-editor. This Festschrift honoring Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics Jon Gunnemann brings together a diverse group of scholars, activists, and public intellectuals to consider one of the most pressing issues of our time: increasing income inequality that grates against justice and erodes the bonds that hold society together. Contributors include Candler faculty members Tim Jackson, Liz Bounds, and Steve Tipton. [Routledge, 2018]

**DICTIONARY OF LUTHER AND LUTHERAN TRADITIONS**  
 Jonathan Strom, Professor of Church History, co-editor. This major reference work co-edited with five other prominent scholars of the history of Lutheran traditions contains nearly 600 articles, providing a comprehensive overview of Luther's life and work and the traditions emanating from the Wittenberg Reformation. [Baker Academic, 2017]

**GERMAN PIETISM AND THE PROBLEM OF CONVERSION**  
 Jonathan Strom. Grounded in archival research, Strom's latest book uncovers the varied, complex, and problematic character that conversion experiences posed for Pietists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, shedding new light on the development of piety and modern evangelical narratives of religious experience. [Penn State University, 2018]

**THE BAND MEETING: REDISCOVERING RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP IN TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMUNITY**  
 Kevin M. Watson, Assistant Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, co-author. Watson and co-author Scott Kisker explore the richness of the traditional Methodist band meeting and introduce a practical approach for growing toward an authentic, transformation-oriented small group experience. A step-by-step guide for groups is included. [Seedbed, 2017]

## BOOKS BY EMERITI FACULTY

These books were published after the faculty author retired.

Luke Timothy Johnson  
**MIRACLES: GOD'S PRESENCE AND POWER IN CREATION**  
 [Westminster John Knox, 2018]

Rex D. Matthews, Editor  
**MINISTERIAL ORDERS AND SACRAMENTAL AUTHORITY IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND ITS ANTECEDENTS 1784-2016**  
 [Wesley's Foundry Books, 2018]

Russell E. Richey  
**METHODISM IN THE AMERICAN FOREST**  
 [Oxford University, 2015]

Luther E. Smith, Jr., Lead editor  
**UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE BELIEVE: A COMMENTARY ON THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION, CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (REVISED)**  
 [CME Publishing, 2016]

Steven M. Tipton  
**THE LIFE TO COME: RE-CREATING RETIREMENT**  
 [Wesley's Foundry Books, 2018]

Theodore R. Weber  
**JOHN WESLEY'S "PERFECTION" QUESTIONS**  
 [Mudie Press, 2015]

Theodore Weber  
**WAR, PEACE, AND RECONCILIATION: A THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY**  
 [Cascade, 2015]





# Changing THE GAME

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

BY CLAIRE ASBURY LENNOX

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

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

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

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

Enter "Crossing Borders," an early career pastoral leadership program Long designed to help Candler alumni become game-changers. Funded by Lilly Endowment Inc., the program focuses on major

transitional challenges facing not only pastors, but also their congregations and communities—challenges like immigration, education, transportation, communication, and religious pluralism.

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

In the spring of 2017, the first cohort of ten Candler alumni of various denominations wrapped up their two years of continuing education and pastoral formation through the program. During those two years, they gathered for eight educational sessions, one about every three months. Most sessions took place at Candler and addressed transitional challenges specific to Atlanta, home turf for the participants yet also a city that mirrors larger cultural trends that impact ministry.

Those game-changing trends include population growth, a lack of efficient public transportation, and a shift in economic focus. At the time of the 2010

census, metro Atlanta was the ninth most populous area in the U.S., and it has only continued to grow since. A 2014 Brookings Institute study found Atlanta to have the widest income disparity between rich and poor of any American city. And general population shifts have triggered changes in racial and cultural demographics as well. "Whites are returning to the city center while the suburbs are becoming multi-racial and multi-cultural," Long says.

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

—TOM LONG

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

Each session explored one of these challenges in depth, intentionally including the voices of those





The group shares Communion with fellow Christians through the fence at the U.S.-Mexico border in El Paso.

COURTESY OF KATHE STASKO

deeply involved in the issue, who offered context, inspiration, and know-how. “The program brings young pastors into contact with seasoned and courageous community leaders who have experience sailing confidently through uncharted waters,” Long says.

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

“Preparing leaders for ministry in changing environments is in our institutional DNA... As pastors

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

It certainly embodied that conviction for participants in the first cohort. **Josh Amerson** <sup>10T</sup> says the program was eye-opening. “At the close of each and every session, I felt like I left with a better understanding and a greater hope for how the church can be good and healing news for the world.”

For **Jenny Anderson** <sup>06T</sup>, the program came along at just the right time. “I was entering year ten of ministry as a pastor-in-charge, and this experience challenged me to have thoughtful conversations with my congregation on important civic questions of today.”

**Gad Mpoyo** <sup>08T 09T</sup> was struck by the breadth and depth of the speakers at each session. “Dr. Long pulled together an excellent team of academicians, civil servants, and community and religious leaders to share their knowledge and experience,” he says. “This program challenged me to think about public life and Christian life holistically.”

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

One of the most powerful moments during the trip was a service of Holy Communion held directly on the border, the elements administered through a

chain-link fence. “We were surrounded by border patrol agents,” Mpoyo recalls. “Despite the fence that separated us, we were able to share Communion, pray, and sing with our brothers and sisters in Christ from Mexico. It was, for me, a powerful symbol that shows that our unity in Christ transcends geographical and political boundaries.”

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

## PROMOTING INTERFAITH UNDERSTANDING

When it came time for Josh Amerson to develop his Community Ministry Action Plan, he thought back to the program session on religious pluralism. He was particularly drawn to the concept of scriptural reasoning, a format for engaging people of different faiths with each other’s sacred texts. During that ses-

sion, he was in a group including Protestant Christians, Muslims, and Jews, who together examined Scripture passages from the Gospels, the Qu’ran, and the Torah.

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

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

Currently an associate pastor at Dunwoody United Methodist Church just outside Atlanta, Amerson has noticed that millennials in his congregation gravitate strongly toward opportunities for connecting with people of different faiths. One outgrowth of their enthusiasm comes in the form of a monthly multifaith panel hosted by Dunwoody’s young adult ministry and held in a local restaurant. A rabbi from a neighboring temple is a frequent panelist, along

with representatives from Atlanta’s Islamic Speakers Bureau, Buddhists, and Christians. “There are typically 30 to 40 people of all ages who gather for that month’s forum, and the topics range from miracles, to heaven and hell, to why we all look the same at church on Sunday morning,” Amerson says.

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

## DRIVING EDUCATION ADVOCACY

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

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

—JOSH AMERSON



The Rev. Andrew Chappell <sup>15T</sup>, Rabbi Max Miller, and Ms. Noor Abbady at one of Dunwoody UMC’s panel discussions on interfaith issues.

COURTESY OF DUMC YOUNG ADULTS



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

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

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

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

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

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

### IMMIGRANTS, INTERRUPTED

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

Mpoyo pastors Clarkston’s Shalom International Ministries, a multicultural congregation founded in 2011 by immigrants, refugees, and the Tri-Presbyterian New Church Development Commission. People from more than 16 countries gather for worship in space provided by Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church. The congregation also has an after-school program for children and music ministries.

Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mpoyo says that after the November 2016 election, he began to notice an increase in stress and worry among his immigrant community—himself included. “For the first time, I heard many immigrants and refugees expressing fear, feeling unsafe and unwelcome in this country, when they had come here with hopes to live a better life and prepare a better future for our children. The election cycle created in many a feeling of not being treated with worth and dignity as people created in the image of God.”

In response, Mpoyo and Shalom International Ministries have been taking measures to show the wider community the positive impact that immigrants and refugees have on America, and vice versa. This included creating a YouTube video featuring refugee children involved in Shalom’s “Inspire” After School Initiative sharing their thoughts on why welcoming refugees is important. Mpoyo also took part in a panel on “Who is My Neighbor?” hosted by the nonprofit Friends of Refugees and the Clarkston

“...we are creating a platform that provides a space to learn from each other’s cultures.”

—GAD MPOYO

Community Center. Shalom even organized the “Celebrate Shalom Fashion Show Fundraiser,” where immigrants and refugees donned their cultural finery to celebrate their homelands and raise money for Shalom and its after-school program, refugee children’s program, and youth scholarships.

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

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

Mpoyo’s Community Ministry Action Plan focuses on a demographic he encounters often at Shalom:



The Shalom Fashion Show celebrated immigrants’ diverse cultural backgrounds while raising money for the church’s programs for children and youth.

immigrant and refugee students. Almost one-quarter of the 102,000 students in the DeKalb County School System where Clarkston is located are international. They hail from 150 countries, and many of them have experienced what Mpoyo calls interrupted education. “At some point on their journey, they stopped going to school because of war, political or economic instability, or because they were getting ready to come to the United States.” This puts the students at a distinct disadvantage when they arrive in Clarkston, not to mention the fact that they are also trying to learn English. Plus, Mpoyo explains, the school system in the U.S. is not fully equipped to receive them, compounding the difficulty.

Mpoyo’s study explores the classroom experience from the angle of both students and teachers, with particular focus on cultural sensitivity and care of students. It involves not only the DeKalb County

School System, but also resettlement agencies and other Clarkston nonprofits, and, of course, parents and their children. “It is my hope that the findings will help teachers, parents, community members, and education policymakers to have a better understanding of the experience of students who come to the U.S. with interrupted education, and help them succeed.”

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



The Rev. Jenny Anderson shuttles teachers to their teacher training at the start of the school year.

COURTESY OF JENNY ANDERSON

COURTESY OF GAD MPOYO



# Giving

The ongoing generosity of Candler’s alumni and friends creates opportunities for current and future students to be transformed by their Candler education, and use their experience and knowledge in service to God, the church, and the world. We are grateful to our partners who strengthen our mission, and are pleased to highlight some of the remarkable gifts of the past few years that are inspiring innovation and advancing excellence in our community.

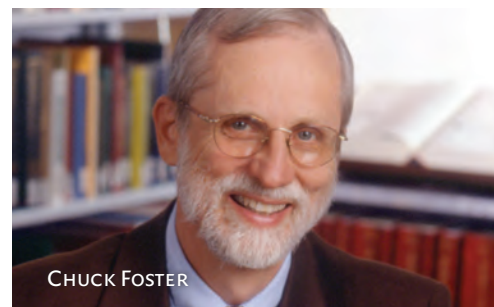


KAY HINTON | EMORY PHOTO VIDEO

## Building Lasting Legacies

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

Professor Emeritus of Religion and Education **Chuck Foster** and his wife, Janet, have established the **Charles R. and Janet T. Foster Endowment for Engaging Religion and Education in Forming and Transforming Faith Communities and Public Life**. This endowment will support the field of religious



CHUCK FOSTER

COURTESY OF BIOLA UNIVERSITY

education at Candler, including initiatives preparing youth, seminary students, clergy, and scholars for leadership in theologically grounded educational ministries of ecclesial and public formation and transformation. Foster taught at Candler from 1988 to 2001, serving as director of the Christian education program, associate dean for faculty development, and interim dean (1999-2000). He also taught in Emory’s Graduate Division of Religion and chaired the organizational team behind Candler’s Youth Theological Initiative (YTI), now in its 27th year.

Dean Emeritus and William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church History **Russ Richey** and his wife, Merle, have established the **Russell E. and Merle Umstead Richey Professorship in Methodist and Wesleyan Studies**, which will provide support for a faculty professorship. Richey has made enormous contributions to Methodism in his lifetime through both the church and the academy.

He has authored, co-authored, or co-edited some 20 books on the denomination, as well as dozens of articles and reviews, and served as principal writer of the report of the UMC Task Force to Study the Episcopacy, which included recommendations to assist bishops in providing visionary leadership.

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



RUSS RICHEY

CINDY BROWN '09T

by their generosity in supporting future generations of Candler students and faculty.”

## Partnering in Possibility

Candler is committed to making seminary affordable by offering one of the most robust financial aid programs in theological education. In 2018-19, the school awarded \$6.3 million in financial aid, with 95 percent of all students and 100 percent of master of divinity students receiving scholarship assistance. And this year, we’ve expanded the financial aid program even more—read about it in the News sec-

tion of this issue. The possibilities continue to grow thanks to generous gifts such as these:

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

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

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

**Karen Webster Parks 16T and Kenneth Parks** established the **Karen Elaine Webster Parks and Kenneth D. Parks Endowment** to provide stipends for students enrolled in Candler’s master of religion and public life degree program.

The **E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation** has funded six cohorts of incoming master of divinity



ORLANDO EVANS '19/BROWNTIE PHOTOS

students identified as **Carpenter Scholars in Community Engagement**. Selection is based on proven academic excellence and a deep passion for social transformation.

The above photo of happy 2019 graduates who received scholarships confirms it—these gifts and others like them make a huge difference!

## Honoring Singular Commitment

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

**Mary and Jim Wesley** were awarded the Dean’s Medal in January 2016. The Wesleys—faithful United Methodist laypeople, civic leaders, philanthropists, and visionaries—established two scholarship endowments providing financial support for master of divinity and doctor of ministry students. They also



directed a gift to name the Wesley Teaching Chapel in honor of the 11 members of Mary's family who entered Christian ministry. Mary Wesley died only a month after receiving the medal. The Candler community celebrates her memory and gives thanks for all she and Jim have done for Candler.

Bishop **B. Michael Watson 74T** received the Dean's Medal in June 2016 in honor of his extraordinary leadership and service to Candler. He was bishop of the North Georgia Annual Conference of the UMC from 2008-2016, and bishop of the South Georgia Annual Conference from 2000-2008. He served on the board of Emory University, as chair of Candler's Board of Advisors, as a member of Emory's Presidential Selection Committee, and as chair of Candler's Campaign Committee during Campaign Emory, the most successful fundraising effort in the university's history. Watson and his wife, Margaret, established the **Allie and Excell Watson Endowment**, a fully-funded scholarship endowment at Candler, in memory of his parents.

**Elisabeth Hardin** received the Dean's Medal in August 2017, in recognition of the Hardin family's longstanding commitment to Candler, particularly in providing generous scholarship support to students from the North Alabama Annual Conference of the UMC.

The Rev. **James W. Giddens, Jr. 87T** received the Dean's Medal in June 2018 upon his retirement as senior minister of Skidaway Island United Methodist Church. A longtime member of Candler's Committee of 100, Giddens was an early recipient of the

Sherman Scholarship at Candler, which supports students preparing for local church ministry in The United Methodist Church. As pastor of Skidaway UMC for 30 years, he returned the favor for generations of Candler students who followed, encouraging his congregation to fund scholarships for students who are responding to God's call to Christian ministry. To date, members of Skidaway Island UMC have directed more than \$500,000 to Candler for scholarships.

Bishop **Woodie W. White** received the Dean's Medal in October 2018 in recognition of his twelve years as Candler's bishop-in-residence and his steadfast commitment to civil rights and racial inclusivity across a long career in The United Methodist Church. A scholarship at Candler also has been named for White. Read more about it in the News section of this issue.

The Rev. **Edward Ducree 68T** received the Dean's Medal in October 2018. Ducree came to Candler as a transfer student and graduated with a bachelor of divinity degree in 1968, the school's first African American graduate. He has served in numerous



EDWARD DUCREE 68T

CINDY BROWN 08T

capacities in churches and nonprofit organizations across the United States, and is known and respected for his ongoing work for social justice, especially within marginalized communities.

The Rev. Dr. **Otis Turner 69T 74G** received the Dean's Medal in November 2018. He enrolled at Candler in 1965 as the first African American student admitted to the school. He graduated in 1969 with a bachelor of divinity degree, and then continued his studies at Emory's Graduate Division of Religion, earning a PhD in social ethics in 1974. He was the first black faculty member at Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and later worked in racial justice and legal aid ministries of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

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

### Enhancing Worship and Ecumenism

The worship of God is at the heart of life at Candler, sustaining our students for witness to the world. A recent gift from the Floyd family, given in loving memory of their parents **William R. Floyd 54C 57T and Joyce H. Floyd**, now supports the important ministry of Candler's Office of Worship and Music, where students, faculty, and staff work together to design and implement meaningful worship experiences.

The **Solon P. Patterson and Marianna R. Patterson Catholic-Orthodox Endowment** has been established by **Solon P. Patterson 57B 58B and Marianna R. Patterson 61C** to support the programmatic

efforts and activities focused on Catholic-Orthodox dialogue and understanding through Candler's Aquinas Center of Theology.

### Advancing Reformation Research

2017 marked the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, and the 30th anniversary of the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection at Candler's Pitts Theology Library. Supported by the vision and resources of **Richard and Martha Kessler** and partners throughout the Southeast, the Kessler Collection provides a rich resource for scholars and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of the Christian faith. It now contains nearly 4,000 documents written by Martin Luther, his colleagues, and his opponents, all printed during their lifetimes.

In honor of the collection's 30th anniversary, the Kesslers worked in partnership with Candler, the **William I.H. and Lula E. Pitts Foundation**, and other donors to raise \$300,000 for its advancement, ensuring that the collection will continue to benefit Candler, Emory, and the broader world as it enters its fourth decade.

### Leveraging Technology for Learning

Candler's Rita Anne Rollins Building and Pitts Theology Library are instrumental resources in our educational mission. Our 128,600 square feet of state-of-the-art facilities support teaching, research, community life, and spiritual formation for students, faculty, staff, the wider Emory community, and our many visitors. A gift from the congregation of St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Orlando

honored the ministry of their longtime senior pastor **William S. Barnes 73B 76T** on the occasion of his retirement by underwriting Candler's distance learning classroom in his name. The room's technology allows instructors to conduct remote video lectures, bringing in scholars from around the world by using the latest web-based conferencing tools.

### Endowing the Deanship

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



EMORY PHOTO VIDEO

The generosity of members from every corner of the Candler community continues to fuel our mission to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. Your gifts make a difference. Thank you.

## MEET YOUR CANDLER ALUMNI BOARD

The Candler Alumni Board (CAB) works collaboratively with Candler's administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to assist strategic efforts of the school in the areas of development, recruitment, lifelong learning, student programming, and leadership formation. Members prayerfully and financially support Candler and provide a representative alumni body that advises the Candler Alumni Association.

### Current CAB members are:

- The Rev. Susannah Davis 95T, Chair
- The Rev. Dr. Dedric Amad Cowser 11T 17T, Vice Chair
- The Rev. Nathan William Attwood 02T
- The Rev. Dr. Emory Berry, Jr. 06T
- The Rev. John Sherrod Boggs 79T
- The Rev. Thomas William Dyer 08T
- The Rev. R. Lee Fullerton 74T
- The Rev. Brandon Harris 16T
- The Rev. Stacey Irene Harwell-Dye 10T
- The Rev. Juan Carlos Huertas 05T
- The Rev. Dr. Ricky James 17T
- The Rev. Susan P. Leonard-Ray 89T
- The Rev. Dr. Jay F. Smith 88T
- The Rev. Richard Mosson Weinberg 17T
- The Rev. Guhyun Kwon 06T, Ex Officio
- The Rev. William Joseph Conner 12T, Ex Officio, Nominating Committee Chair



# CLASS NOTES

These Class Notes run through July 2018. For the very latest alumni news, be sure to read Candler's monthly newsletter emailed to alumni and friends on the first Thursday of the month. For those who prefer print, we'll pick up where we left off in the next issue of *Connection*.

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



## 50s

**Thomas A. Summers 59T** was presented with the 2018 Public and Community Service Award by the Atlantic Institute on April 11, 2018 at its Peace and Dialogue Conference in Columbia, South Carolina.

## 60s

**Willis H. Moore 64T** was recognized for 26 years of service in the United States Air Force Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in a ceremony at Moody Air Force Base.

**Emma Mae Richardson 68T** spoke at a luncheon honoring the 20th anniversary of ordained clergy deacons during the 2016 Oklahoma Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. She, along with 23 others, played an integral role in ensuring the recognition of deacons as full clergy members in the denomination.

## 70s

**Beth Adams Bowser 71T** was named "Distinguished Alumni of the Year" at Reinhardt University in March 2017.

**James A. Baskett 72T** presided over his last meeting as the mayor of Decatur, Georgia, in December 2015, after serving on the City Commission for 20 years.

**Gerald D. Lord 74T 86G** retired as Associate General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. During his time with GBHEM, he created partnerships with Methodist education leaders in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, championed reform in the

University Senate, and worked to improve the quality of education at Methodist-related schools.

**B. Michael Watson 74T** was elected Ecumenical Officer of the United Methodist Council of Bishops.

**Robert McCoy Gibbs 76T** retired as a member of the Florida Annual Conference of the UMC in June 2016. Before retiring, he served as District Superintendent of the North West District of the Florida Conference.

**Richard A. Williams 77T** retired from the Episcopal Church in December 2015. He served for 38 years as a priest at St. Paul's Church and as Vicar for 5 years.

**Janice S. Heseman 78T** retired after serving 39 years in the Indiana Conference of the UMC.

**Steve Stone 78T** of Heartsong Church and Dr. Bashar A. Shala of the Memphis Islamic Center jointly received the 2017 Franklin D. Roosevelt Freedom of Worship Medal for their courageous work to foster unity between the Christian and Islamic communities in Memphis, Tennessee.

**Enoch L. Hendry 79T** retired from historic Trinity United Methodist Church in Savannah, Georgia, in May 2016. He served in ministry for 40 years.

## 80s

**[01] Joseph Tillman Reiff 80T 92G** released *Born of Conviction: White Methodists and Mississippi's Closed Society*, the first full-length scholarly account of a civil rights-era statement written by 28 white Methodist pastors in Mississippi and its tumultuous aftermath.

**Carroll A. Flack 81T** retired in 2018 after serving First United Methodist Church in Dallas, North Carolina, for 18 years.

**Wright Adams Culpepper 85T** was awarded the Georgia Hospital Hero Award at the 2015 Georgia Hospital Association's Annual Meeting. He was recognized for his work in the community through FaithWorks, a faith-based organization that partners with the health system, church, and businesses.

**David Lee Davis 87T** is the new executive director of the Intentional Growth Center at Lake Junaluska.

**James Giddens, Jr. 87T** retired in 2018 after 30 years as senior minister of Skidaway Island United Methodist Church in Savannah, Georgia.

**Scherry Fouke 88T** received a 2018 Community Builder Award at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast at First Presbyterian Church in Morristown, Tennessee.

**Brenda L. Iglehart 88T** is the founder and dean of Coastal Georgia Bible Institute, which was founded in partnership with First African Baptist Church on St. Simons Island, Georgia. The school had its grand opening on July 23, 2016.

**Janice Riggie Huie 89T** retired in August 2016 after 12 years of service to the Texas Conference of the UMC.

**Rosetta Ross 89T 95G** was one of two inaugural recipients of the Bishop Forrest C. Stith grants awarded by the African American Methodist Heritage Center to individuals doing historical research or projects on African Americans in Methodism. An ordained elder in the South Carolina Conference of

the UMC, Ross is a professor of religion at Spelman College, and is conducting research for a biography of Methodist laywoman and NAACP administrator Ruby Ruffin Hawkins Hurley.

## 90s

**Mark Youmans Alex Davies 92T** is one of the 22 inaugural members of the UMC's academic publishing imprint, New Room Books, which offers Methodist scholars and students a reviewed academic monograph series.

**Rosetta Rena Bryson 95G 95T** was consecrated as a bishop of the Kingdom Fellowship Covenant Ministries in July 2016.

**Susan Laraine DeHoff 95T** was ordained to Pastoral Counseling Ministry as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in November 2014.

**John Robert Moeller, Jr. 97T** was appointed as the CEO of Lutheran Services of Georgia in February 2017. He formerly served as president and CEO of Action Ministries.

**Bridgette Woodall 97T** is the new archivist for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford in Connecticut. She is responsible for the collection, management, and preservation of all materials chronicling the legacy of the archdiocese and its parishes, offices, and ministries.

**Stephen H. Persons Parkes 98T** graduated from the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology with a Doctor of Theology in homiletics in May 2016.

**Stacia Marie Pelletier 98T 07G** released a new book, *The Half Wives*, in April 2017, and

was a presenting author at the 2017 AJC Decatur Book Festival.

**[02] F. Douglas Powe, Jr. 98T 04G** was named director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership. He currently serves as Wesley's James C. Logan Professor of Evangelism (an E. Stanley Jones Professorship) and as managing director for The Institute for Community Engagement and director of its Urban Ministry Program.

**Shelley Young Thompkins 98T** received her PhD in business management from Capella University. Her dissertation focused on a leader's level of emotional intelligence and its impact on employment engagement.

**Thomas Jay LaPorte 93C 99T** curated "It's After Malcolm: Islam and the Black Freedom Struggle," which was featured at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta in February 2016.

## 00s

**William James Abbott 01T** married Rachel Abbott.

**Victor Gomez 01T** has been appointed by Bishop Sharma Lewis of the Virginia Annual Conference of the UMC to serve as District Superintendent of the Harrisonburg District. He is the first Latino in Virginia to serve in this role.

**[03] Leah Tanika Gunning Francis 01T** joined Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty. Previously, she served as Associate Dean of Contextual Education at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. She also published *Ferguson and Faith:*

*Sparkling Leadership & Awakening Community*, examining how St. Louis-area clergy supported and aided emerging young leaders in today's civil rights movement.

**Birgitte Thaarup French 01T** received her Doctor of Ministry from Memphis Theological Seminary in May 2016.

**Patricia J. McKee 02T** graduated from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary with a PhD in art and religion.

**Justin Wayne Miller 02T** recently founded a non-profit organization called Slingshot Memphis, Inc. Their mission is to disrupt poverty by applying investment principles to the charitable giving landscape.

**Matt Miofsky 02T** has published two new books, *Happy? What It Is and How to Find It* and *Fail: What to Do When Things Go Wrong*.

**[04] Melva L. Sampson 02T 16G** joined the faculty of Wake Forest University School of Divinity in fall 2016 as Assistant Professor of Preaching and Practical Theology.

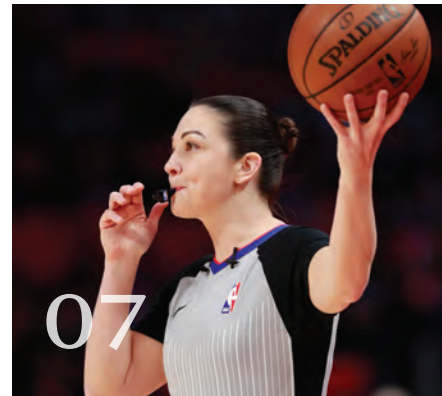
**Leslee Jane Samuelson 02T** is now a hospice chaplain at NorthShore University Health System in Skokie, Illinois.

**Kathleen Weber 95C 03T** has been appointed to serve as District Superintendent of the Crest to Coast Missional District in Washington state, a newly formed district comprising all the churches in the current Vancouver District and fifteen churches from the southern end of the Tacoma District.

**Moatemsu Imchen 04T** completed his PhD in Hebrew Bible from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.

**Darrio Traman Melton 04T** was elected mayor of Selma, Alabama, in the fall of 2016. He formerly served as a State Representative.





**[05]** [Dena Renae Mellick 05T](#) joined the Board of Visitors of Emory University in fall 2016 after being nominated for this position by Candler School of Theology.

[Emory Berry, Jr. 06T](#) serves as pastor of Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia. He previously served at Fourth Baptist Church in Church Hill, Virginia, and was recently inducted into the Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers at Morehouse College.

**[06]** [Shelvis Smith-Mather 06T 07T](#) and [Nancy Smith-Mather 08T](#) welcomed a daughter, Nicole Kristi Smith-Mather, on October 13, 2016. She joins big brother Jordan and big sister Addie. Shelvis and Nancy were also selected for Emory's 2018 list of "40 Under Forty" in recognition of their mission work in South Sudan.

[Sara Toering 06L 06T](#) was selected for Emory's 2018 list of "40 Under Forty" in recognition of her work as general counsel for the Center for Community Progress in Atlanta, a national nonprofit focused on transformational change in communities struggling with vacancy, abandonment and disinvestment.

[Julie Boone 07T](#) has been appointed to Marietta First United Methodist Church in Marietta, Georgia. She is the first female senior pastor in the church's 185-year history.

[Austin Dickson 07T](#) was selected for Emory's 2018 list of "40 Under Forty." He joined the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country as Executive Director in May 2017.

[Bridget Cabrera 08T](#) has been named Executive Director of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

[Daniel Gulden 08T](#) serves as Vice President of Client Relations for the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indianapolis, Indiana.

[Kevin Joel Hankins 08T](#) married Jessica Bryant on June 27, 2015, in Atlanta.

[Avis Evelyn Williams 78OX 98C 08T 18T](#) was the keynote speaker for the Oxford College Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration held on January 18, 2017.

[George C. Payne 09T](#) joined the Willow Domestic Violence Center as a case manager. [Sunggu \(Paul\) Yang 09T](#) is now Assistant Professor of Christian Ministries at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon.

## 10s

[Kent Burel 74C 10T](#) married Jeanette Adams Gravino on June 28, 2015. The couple lives in Hayesville, North Carolina.

[Sharad Hasseini Creasman 10T 18T](#) was the guest chaplain opening the United States Senate floor on March 2, 2017. He currently is the campus minister at Brevard College in North Carolina.

[Brett Hains Harris 10T](#) was recently named one of *Hattiesburg American's* "Top 12 Under 40." He is currently the director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Southern Mississippi.

**[07]** [Lauren Holtkamp-Sterling 10T](#) received the 2017 Young Alumnus Award from her undergraduate alma mater, Drury University, for being the third woman ever to be hired as an NBA referee. She is married to fellow NBA ref Jonathan Sterling. AP photo by Carlos Osorio.

[Dominique Ayesha Robinson 10T 11T](#) won the Beatitudes Society's 2015 Brave Preacher Award. The Beatitudes Society recognizes and encourages emerging preachers who address social justice issues through the lens of the current cultural context and the biblical story. [Paige Katherine Swaim-Presley 10T](#) is now the director of the Center for Ministry at Millsaps College, which oversees Course of Study, Continuing Education, and Spiritual Formation for the pastors of the Mississippi Conference of the UMC.

[Benjamin James Gosden 11T](#) was appointed pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Savannah, Georgia, in June 2016.

[The Rev. Dr. Kevin Rashad Murriel 11T](#) received the Emerging Prophet Leader Award from Gammon Theological Seminary in December 2017, and was recognized as the 2017 Outstanding Spiritual Leader at the Inaugural Atlanta Circle of Influence Awards. He was also selected for Emory's 2018 list of "40 Under Forty" in recognition of his work to translate the methods of the civil rights movement into a modern day strategy for social justice and racial reconciliation.

[Quentin Samuels 11T](#) joined the Candler staff in August 2017 as Assistant Director of Student Life.

**[08]** [Duncan Eric Teague 11T](#) was recognized as an Atlanta LGBTQ trailblazer at the second annual "Our Founding Valentines" event, sponsored by Atlanta Pride and Touching Up Our Roots. Teague was honored for his work as an HIV educator and researcher. He was also honored by the Georgia House of Representatives for his advocacy and leadership in the African American Gay and Lesbian Alliance (AALGA).

[Laura K. Brekke 12T](#) is now Benfield-Vick Chaplain at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, West Virginia.

[Adam Mathes 12T 21G](#) was promoted to the rank of Major by Secretary of Defense James Mattis. Mathes has served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and a chaplain in the U.S. Navy Reserve, and is an elder in the North Georgia Conference of the UMC.

[Michael Todd Salmi 12T](#) was selected as a 2016 Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Pastoral Leadership for Public Life Fellow.

[C. Mark Batten 13T](#) has been named Program Officer for the Clemmons Community Foundation in North Carolina.

[Tyler Askew 14T](#) has been named International Student and Scholar Advisor for the Office of International Student and Scholar Services Department at Emory University.

[Sabrina Tindal Cherry 14T](#) was selected as a 2015 American Public Health Society Leadership Scholar and served as a graduate assistant with the Archway Partnership at UGA.

**[09]** [Sally Sarratt 14T](#) (at left in photo) and her wife, Maria Swearingen, were called by unanimous vote in January 2017 to serve as senior ministers and co-pastors of historic Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, DC. [Matthew P. Cavedon 14L 15T](#) is a Constitutional Litigator for the Institute for Justice in Washington, DC.

**[10]** [Hannah Drey Landgraf 15T](#) and [Eric Joseph Rucker 14T](#) were married on April 1, 2017, with [Brandon Maxwell 14T](#) officiating. Photo by Mattie Belle Photography.

**[11]** [Alisha Lynette Gordon 15T](#) is the National Director of Faith-Based Initiatives for Mike Bloomberg's presidential campaign. [Theodore Adriel Goshorn 15T](#) and his wife, Dana, welcomed their second son, Carter Arlen Goshorn, on September 8, 2015. [Jeania Ree Violet Moore 15T](#) was appointed in June 2016 as Director of Civil and Human Rights at the UMC's General Board of Church and Society in Washington, DC. She was also named to Emory's inaugural class of "40 Under Forty" in 2017 and the Center for American Progress's "10 Faith Leaders to Watch in 2018."

[Janelle Adams 16T](#) is the community engagement coordinator for Lutheran Services of Georgia's Immigration and Refugee Services programs, one of Candler's long-term Contextual Education I sites.

[Angelo Luis 16T](#) is the staff chaplain at St. Anthony Regional Hospital in Carroll, Iowa. He completed his chaplain residency at Unity Point Health in Des Moines.

[Brenna Nicole Lakeson 16T](#) serves as Program Assistant at Central Outreach and Advocacy Center in Atlanta.

[Dominique Q. Lester 16T](#) is Minister of Youth & Young Adults at Greater Centennial AME Zion Church in Mount Vernon, New York. He is also pursuing a Master of Arts in History and Education at Columbia University.

[Josué Quintanilla 16T](#) has joined Lutheran Services of Georgia as a bilingual case manager for unaccompanied immigrant children living with sponsors.

[Ashley M. Wilcox 16T](#) is pastor of the Church of Mary Magdalene in Decatur, Georgia.

[Taylor Claire Bean 17T](#) has been appointed Associate Pastor of The United Methodist Church in Madison, New Jersey, and also serves as Chaplain at Drew University.

[Lawrence West Gipson 17T](#) has served since August 2017 as Associate Pastor at Old South Union Church in Weymouth, Massachusetts.

[Noelle Marie York-Simmons 99C 17T](#) is the 28th rector of historic Christ Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

[Sh'Kur Francis 18T](#) is the first African-American senior pastor of Grace United Methodist Church and Lynwood United Methodist Church in Lancaster, South Carolina.

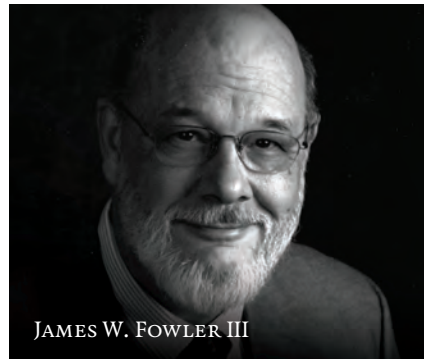
[Lorenzo Harmon 18T](#) has been named a Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellow. The highly competitive program focuses on preparing top-quality educators for Georgia's most underserved public schools.

[Kristi Painter 18T](#) has begun a two-year stint as a Global Mission Fellow of the UMC, serving as a community organizer at Arch Street UMC in Philadelphia, in collaboration with the city's New Sanctuary Movement.

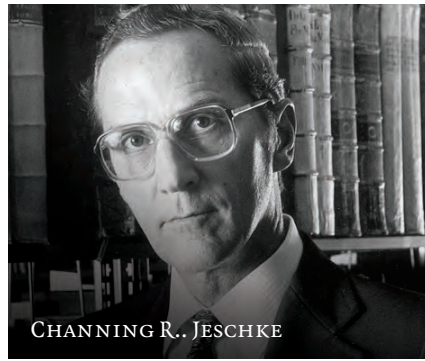
[Five Candler alumni](#) have been selected to receive 2018 Doctoral Fellowships from the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE). [Whitney Bond 16T](#) (Chicago Theological Seminary), [Eunil David Cho 15T 23G](#) (Emory University), [Diana Rodriguez Click 14T 23G](#) (Emory), [Ericka Dunbar 13T](#) (Drew University) and [Rachelle Green 14T 22G](#) (Emory) were selected as part of the largest class of Doctoral Fellows since FTE began offering the fellowships 50 years ago.



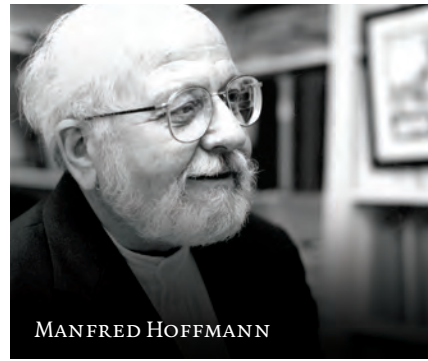
## FACULTY REMEMBRANCES, 2015-2018



JAMES W. FOWLER III



CHANNING R. JESCHKE



MANFRED HOFFMANN



THEODORE H. RUNYON, JR.



GENE TUCKER



L. BEVEL JONES III



GAIL R. O'DAY



JOHN LYNN CARR

**James W. Fowler III** died on October 16, 2015. He came to Candler in 1977 and served as the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Theology and Human Development, as well as the director of the Center for Research on Faith and Moral Development and the founding director of Emory's Center for Ethics, where he worked until his retirement in 2005. His 1981 book, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, has gone through more than 50 printings in its U.S. edition and remains required reading in many college and seminary courses. He was an ordained elder in the Western North Carolina Conference of the UMC.

**Channing R. Jeschke** died on January 13, 2016. He was Margaret A. Pitts Professor of Theological Bibliography and served on the Candler faculty from 1971 to 1994. He received the Candler Dean's Medal in recognition of his role in shaping Pitts as a world-

class theology library by acquiring 220,000 volumes from Hartford Seminary, crafting Pitts' collection development strategy, and nurturing relationships with notable donors. In 2014, Jeschke received Candler's Centennial medal for extraordinary service to the school, society, and church.

**Manfred Hoffmann** died on March 15, 2017. He served as professor of church history and historical theology and was on Candler's faculty from 1960 to 1997. When he arrived at Emory, he joined a cadre of young scholars including Bill Mallard, Ted Runyon, Ted Weber and Hendrikus Boers, who helped transform Candler from a regional, denominational seminary into an international, ecumenical school of theology. After retiring, he became Theologian-in-Residence at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church in Atlanta. He was an ordained elder in the UMC.

**Theodore H. Runyon, Jr.** died on May 11, 2017. A member of Candler's faculty from 1958 to 1998, he served as professor of systematic theology. His 40 years at Candler were integral to the school's growth as a leader in university-based theological education, including the establishment and cultivation of an exchange program with the University of Göttingen, and the development of Emory's Graduate Division of Religion as one of the premier programs in the nation. Runyon was the first recipient of the Campus Outstanding Faculty Award (1967), and also received the Emory Williams Award for Distinguished Teaching at the Graduate and Professional Level (1973).

**Gene Tucker** died on January 4, 2018, at the age of 82. A professor of Old Testament, he taught at Candler from 1970 until his retirement in 1995. When he joined Candler, he was already recognized as a warm and engaging teacher, an accomplished scholar, and a highly respected administrator, having previously taught at the University of Southern California and

Duke Divinity School. An ordained elder in the North Texas Conference of the UMC, he authored or co-authored four books, including *Form Criticism on the Old Testament*, widely used in colleges and seminaries. In 1981, he joined the New Revised Standard Version Bible Committee. From 1985 to 1990, Tucker chaired the Research and Publications Committee of the Society for Biblical Literature, and later served as SBL president.

**L. Bevel Jones III** [46C](#) [49T](#) died on March 6, 2018. Jones pastored six churches in the North Georgia Conference of the UMC and was elected bishop in 1984, serving the Western North Carolina Conference until his retirement in 1996, when he returned to Candler as bishop-in-residence. In 1957, he was among the signatories of the famous "Ministers' Manifesto," a statement issued by 80 white members of the Atlanta Christian Council discouraging city officials and citizens from pursuing a course of massive resistance to federal authority in the integration

of public schools. A longtime member of Emory's board of trustees, Jones also served as a special assistant in Candler's development office and a trustee emeritus of the university. Candler established the L. Bevel Jones III Chair in the Practice of Ministry in his honor.

**Gail R. O'Day** [83G](#) died on September 22, 2018, at the age of 63. She taught at Candler from 1987 to 2010, serving as A.H. Shatford Professor of Preaching and New Testament and Sr. Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs. An authority on John, O'Day contributed numerous books and articles to New Testament studies and preaching that are widely used by scholars and ministers, including *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel*, commentary on the Gospel of John in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, and *The Word Disclosed: Preaching the Gospel of John*. She also served as the general editor of the international *Journal of Biblical Literature* and on the editorial board of *The New Interpreter's Bible*. In

2010, she became dean and professor of New Testament and preaching at Wake Forest University School of Divinity.

**John Lynn Carr**, associate professor emeritus of church ministries and former director of Continuing Education, died on October 9, 2018. He served at Candler from 1976 to 1998, focusing on the pastor as educator and adult education, especially teaching the Bible. He and his wife, Adrienne, also on faculty, co-authored nine adult education programs used by small groups around the globe, along with other notable writings for the United Methodist Council of Bishops. Together, the Carrs led new initiatives at Candler for integrating theological theory and ministry practice across the curriculum, strengthened the school's program in Christian education, and nurtured relationships between Candler and local churches. He was an ordained elder in the UMC.

## IN MEMORIAM, 2015-2018

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# AND SHALL A LITTLE CHILD LEAD US? *Benediction*

ELIZABETH W. CORRIE, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN THE PRACTICE OF YOUTH EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING AND DIRECTOR OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

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

This is because he is a leader in our church.

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

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

And our church really does need him, and his friends. This year, our congregation, an in-town

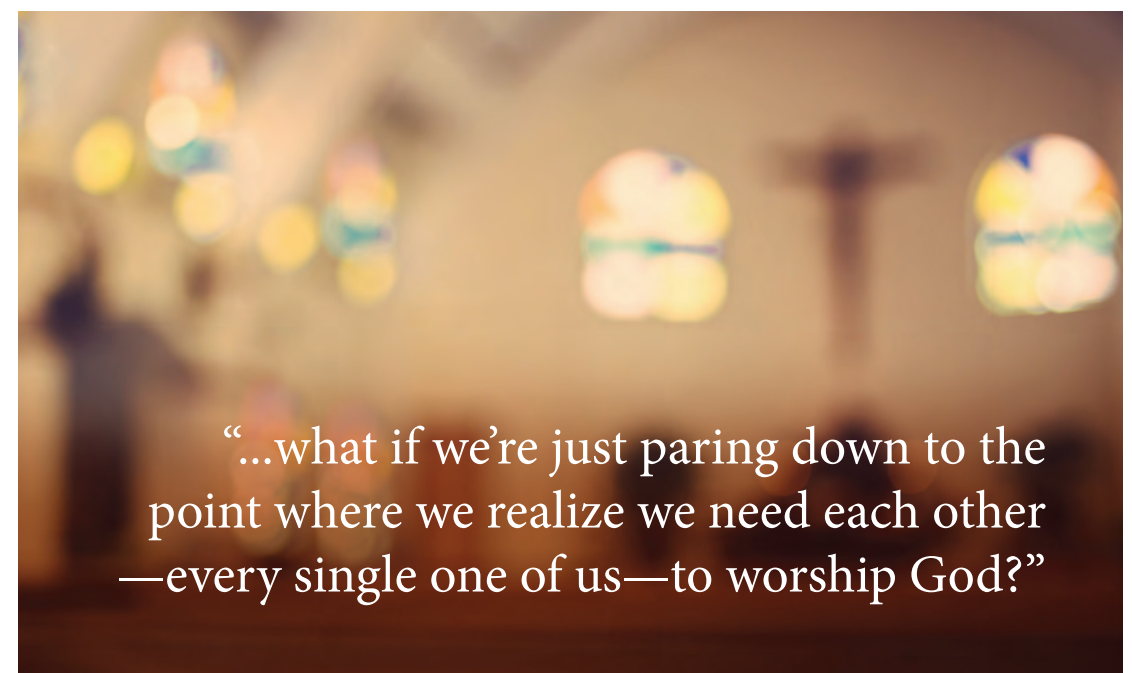
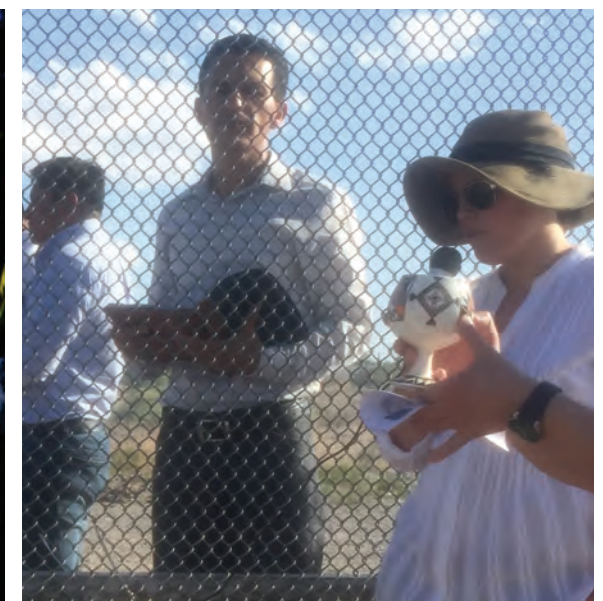
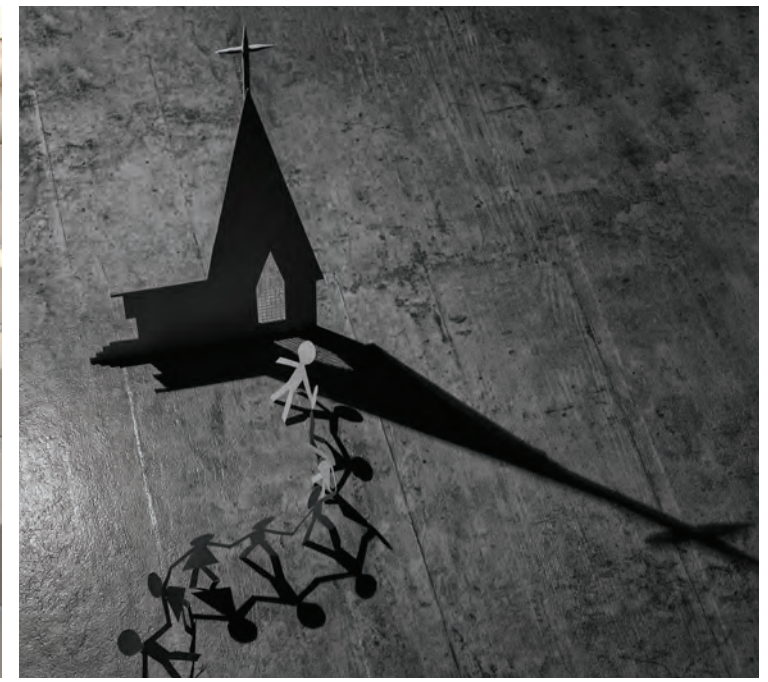
church whose building was built in the heyday of Christendom and before white flight, and whose membership has been declining ever since, finally closed its doors. Along with another in-town church a mile away—also built during a time in which having multiple churches of the same denomination within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

The problem of church decline is complex, and I do not have the definitive answer. But I do wonder if part of our problem is that we don't really believe—not deep down—that we need youth and children. Yes, we believe that "children are our future." But this belies our assumption that they are full members of the Body of Christ only when they become adults. As children they are cute—particu-

larly during children's sermons when we set them up to say silly things so we can laugh at them—but if they are loud or restless, we prefer they leave for children's church. As youth they are problems, so we keep them separate in the "youth wing," except for the occasional "Youth Sunday." We tolerate them or display them, and even occasionally enjoy them, but we don't rely on them.

The institutional church is becoming small, and it feels like we're dying. But what if we're actually just paring down to the point where we realize we need each other—every single one of us, regardless of age—in order to worship God? What if giving up our separate children and youth services is a good thing, something that pushes us to become a truly intergenerational, interconnected Body of Christ, in which "the eye can't say to the hand, 'I don't need you,' or in turn, the head can't say to the feet, 'I don't need you.'" (1 Cor 12:21)? What if the death we are facing is an invitation to die to our hubris in thinking we can't grow spiritually by walking alongside—and even following behind—children and youth?

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



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





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## GRATEFUL HEARTS

Emory Thanks is an annual event that gives faculty, staff, and students a chance to write notes of gratitude to the donors who support us each and every day.

Here's a close-up of a few notes of heartfelt appreciation written by members of Candler's community. They are a powerful reminder that your gifts really do make a difference to so many. Thank you!