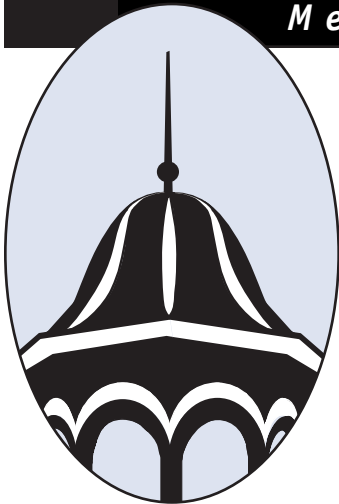


The Bridge

Memphis, Tennessee

Harding
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Graduate
School of
Religion

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Forum to Celebrate Hope and Reconciliation

The annual Ministry Forum is scheduled for April 8 with the theme "Hope and Reconciliation." Speakers include Dr. Richard Oster, Dr. Vernon Boyd and Colby Hill.

Reconciliation is the good news of redemption for humanity. Implied in the term is the idea of a former state of fellowship with God, a time of alienation, and a return to fellowship. We have all sinned and stood in need of such restoration. Through Christ, God provided it for us even while we were still in sin. When we respond to God's grace by faith, we are reconciled. At that moment we become agents of reconciliation for others. Therefore we seek to demonstrate reconciliation in our relationships with our fellow humans.

The Ministry Forum celebrates this theme by focusing on what the New Testament says about racial and ethnic reconciliation and congregational reconciliation. All of this is a celebration of God's gracious gift and an illustration of our responsive opportunity within the world.

The day begins with a devotional at 9 a.m. led by Spencer Furby, a candidate for the doctor of ministry degree. At 9:15, Dr. Oster will present "Keeping the Church Reconciled," followed by a 30-minute question and answer session. At 10:45, Dr. Boyd will begin a two-part

discussion of "Racial and Ethnic Reconciliation."

At the 11:45 luncheon, Dr. Evertt W. Huffard will present the Alumnus of the Year. The second part of Dr. Boyd's presentation will begin at 1 p.m. and will be followed by a 30-minute question and answer period. The final presentation

and the Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. His teaching responsibilities have included Paul's epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, Greek grammar and readings, survey of the New Testament, and New Testament backgrounds. His publications include a commentary of 1 Corinthians in the College Press NIV Commentary Series.

Since 1971, Dr. Boyd has worked with the Oakland Church of Christ in Detroit and has also ministered with churches in Illinois, Mississippi and Arkansas. He received the bachelor of arts degree from Lipscomb University, the master of arts degree in Bible from Harding University, and the master of theology and doctor of ministry degrees from the Graduate School of Religion. Dr. Boyd has taught Old Testament at Rochester College in

Michigan.

Colby Hill (M.Div. '00) graduated from Harding University in 1995 with the bachelor of arts degree in Bible. He now works as an urban church planter with the Suncoast Urban Ministry in Sarasota, Fla. He and his wife, Casey, have one son, Tyler.



Don Robinson's painting "He Is Risen" graphically displays the theme of hope and reconciliation through the risen Christ. The original is in color.

will be Colby Hill's message, "Hope — God's Weapon of 'Mass Reconstruction.'"

Dr. Oster has taught New Testament at the Graduate School of Religion since 1978. He received the bachelor of arts degree from Texas Tech University, the master of arts degree from Rice University,

Huffard to Speak at Missions Seminar

Dr. Evertt W. Huffard will teach "Gospel and Islam" at the first session (May 17-27) of the Abilene Christian University 2004 Summer Seminar in Missions. Dr. Monte Cox, assistant professor of Bible and director of the Center for World Missions at Harding University, will also teach a graduate course on "Missions in the 21st Century" May 25-June 9. Contact smcleod@hugsr.edu to register.

The Graduate School of Religion Wants You!

News about you anyway. We want to keep Harding University Graduate School of Religion alumni connected. So, beginning in the May issue, *The Bridge* will include a column about alumni news, including relocations, awards, accomplishments, publications, presentations, weddings, births and deaths.

Send submissions to Marcella Trevathan, editor, at mtrevathan@hugsr.edu.

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From the Dean

Close Encounters



The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program is a three-year degree that provides a broad basis for a lifetime of ministry. It is not easy, but very possible. It requires 84 semester hours. Approximately 65 percent of the 50,000 students in ATS-accredited masters programs in the United States and Canada are in an M.Div. program. About half of our 213 students this semester are in the M.Div. program, engaged in close encounters with the Word, the past and practical ministries.

With the Word

The M.Div. is the only degree that requires a year of Hebrew and a year of Greek. While some view it as an obstacle, others see this as a wonderful opportunity to encounter the text in a fresh way. They are not alone. According to a report by the Modern Language Association (*USA Today*, Nov. 6, 2003), the percentage of students in universities studying foreign languages is increasing in the United States. Ancient Greek and biblical Hebrew are number 10 and 11 on the list of the most widely taught languages.

With the Past

The demands of ministry and the fast pace of life allow little time for critical theological reflection. The M.Div. creates time for an encounter with our theological past. The systematic study of Christian doctrine, the history of Christian thought, and the American Restoration Movement allow students the opportunity to deepen their faith in God and enrich their relationship to Christ and His church.

With Ministry

When I arrived on campus as a new student in 1971, I was a missionary kid with plans to return to the mission field as soon as possible. So my first reaction to the M.Div. (M.Th. in those days) was, "Is it practical?" My felt needs focused on more effective cross-cultural communication and specific answers to the challenge of Islam. All I wanted was the master of arts in missions in one year and to get on with

my life. What I needed was integrated ministry experience. The courses in ministry were good, but it was the opportunity Ieene and I had to work with a local church that really blessed our lives. My decision to pursue the "longer degree" led to a closer encounter with the Park Avenue Church of Christ.

Many students have been given ministry opportunities to serve at churches like the Holmes Road Church of Christ or the church in Como, Miss. The Church of Christ at White Station and the Highland Street Church of Christ have been the closest churches to the Graduate School. They are currently celebrating milestones in their history at 50 years and 75 years, respectively. Their history has been shaped by the ministry opportunities they provided for faculty and students who have served as elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers, evangelists, worship leaders, youth ministers, missionaries, chaplains, campus ministers, apprentices and counselors. More than 95 alumni have attended White Station and 281 have attended Highland in the past 50 years. More than 20 of the staff at White Station and 30 of the staff at Highland are alumni. Hundreds have served churches in the Memphis area. These partnerships with churches are vital to the goals of the M.Div. degree.

What sparked these thoughts? A close encounter with the cross of Christ. The movie "The Passion of the Christ" has brought a lot of people to a closer encounter with the suffering of Christ than they ever would have had before. It is a powerful story, even in Latin and Aramaic. Our response to the cross motivates us to give our lives to God. For centuries, the cross has moved disciples of Christ to make radical decisions and lifetime commitments. One such decision has been that of servants who, for decades, have so committed their lives to Christ that they would go to such great lengths to equip themselves for a lifetime of Christian service.

— Evertt W. Huffard (dean@hugsr.edu)

The Graduate School of Religion Defies the Odds

by Mark Parker, assistant executive director

Larry Arick and I recently attended a national conference for advancement officers of theological graduate schools. We ate dinner with the director of advancement from Duke's seminary, who is in charge of that school's two billion dollar endowment. The seminar taught me several things, but one of the most important is the enviable relationship Harding University Graduate School of Religion has with its students, alumni and friends.

One development officer complained that his students would never speak on behalf of the school, even though those same students receive scholarships from those to whom they would be speaking. Happily, this is not the case at the Graduate School. I have students who are eager and willing to go with me to congregations that support us. Our students are grateful for the blessing they have to study here, and they want to thank those who sacrifice on their behalf.

Other advancement officers cannot count on their alumni to

provide meaningful leadership, especially when it comes to fundraising. Last year 53 percent of the Graduate School alumni gave to the school, a fact that would startle most of our counterparts across the nation. (According to ATS, 53 percent alumni participation is the nationwide high.) Our alumni often bear their own financial burdens as part of their sacrifice of ministry, yet the majority is able to find a way to put the Graduate School into their budgets.

In addition to giving themselves, many alumni go out of their way to connect the Graduate School to churches that put us into their budgets and to individuals who can bless the school financially. In many schools, this is not the case because the minister sees his alma mater as competition to the financial needs of his congregation. Our alumni, however, know that the investments made in quality ministry training only serve to strengthen the church.

The friends who support the

school financially are a blessing as well. Other schools have had to abandon the membership of their constituent churches to seek foundation support or support from people with no connection to the school's history. Harding Graduate School truly has an amazing relationship with churches, congregational leaders and members. Our students are connected to local ministry because the school

remains connected to individuals and congregations. Because we are supported by those whom we ultimately serve, we focus our energies on preparing students who are connected to the real work of ministry.

What Harding University Graduate School of Religion has become defies the odds. The service we are to the kingdom is humbling. Thank you for your part in God's work here.

Theme for 2004-2005 Chosen

"Campus Ministry" will be the theme for the 2004-2005 academic year at the Graduate School of Religion.

Most people today attend college. Campus ministries at state-supported colleges and universities provide a haven for Christian students amid an increasingly liberal and humanistic educational arena. Students find a place where their thoughts about God are respected and encouraged, not ridiculed or subdued.

These Christian students enter the classrooms with the presence of God and mingle with other students who are

seeking meaning in life, seeking hope, and seeking a Savior. Invitations to coffee, a meal or a Bible study follow. Thousands of students have come to faith in God through dorm Bible studies, meals, retreats and friendships made at campus ministries.

Tim Stafford, campus minister at the University of Memphis, will teach "Campus Ministry" (course number 5853) as an intensive study course July 19-24. Though it was scheduled months ago, the course is a fitting prelude to next year's theme. To register, contact Steve McLeod, registrar, at smcleod@hugsr.edu by May 19.

Sympathy Expressed to the Huffard Family

Evertt L. Huffard, father of Dr. Evertt W. Huffard, died on March 7. Mr. Huffard was a minister, missionary, and retired professor of Bible at Freed-Hardeman University. He attended Harding University and received the bachelor of arts degree in Bible from Abilene Christian University in 1946. He received the master's degree in Bible from Eastern New Mexico State University, and he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Freed-Hardeman in 1997.

Mr. Huffard and his wife, Elsie, were married in 1948 and

did local church work in New Mexico, Arizona and Texas before going to Jerusalem (1963-70), Beirut, Lebanon (1971-74), and Amman, Jordan (1975-79). Since then, the Huffards had served churches in the West Tennessee area and led mission efforts to Russia, Africa, Yugoslavia and the Philippines.

Mr. Huffard is survived by his wife, Elsie of Jackson; son, Dr. Evertt W. Huffard of Memphis; daughter, Elaine Denman of Virginia Beach, Va.; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.



Tim Stafford, campus minister at the University of Memphis, poses with Graduate School of Religion students who work in campus ministry (clockwise from top right): Mario Tobias, Steve Cloer, Joseph Watson, Amy Hagedorn, Jonathan Woodall, Cary McCall and Jonathan Grizzle.

Alumnus Earns Rare Honor

Craig Baugh ('84) received the Silver Honor Cross of the Bundeswehr in Germany. Baugh, a senior intelligence officer with the Defense Intelligence Agency, earned the honor for duties performed the past two years as he supported the DIA's exchange program with the German military. The award was signed by the German Minister of Defense, Herr Peter Struck.

The award ceremony was held in September 2003 during the joint United States-German Rhine cruise, the annual social event hosted by the United States for

the Bonn area. Col. Frank Richter, German Air Force and director of the German Military Liaison Group in Bonn, presented the medal. Approximately 200 people were present, along with Baugh's wife, Nancy.

Baugh became program manager for the DIA element in Bonn just before Sept. 11, 2001. Historically, the DIA element provided liaison between the DIA and the German military on a variety of intelligence exchange issues. Following the attacks on the United States, Germany became a coalition member in the global war on terrorism and partici-

pated in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Lt. Col. Bryan Hornsby, current DIA liaison officer in Bonn, said it is extremely rare for non-Germans to be recognized with such a high honor. Both the German Foreign Minister and Minister of Defense had to approve the award. According to Col. Peter Durr, DIA Army Attaché in Bonn, the Silver Honor Cross is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Legion of Merit and has been given to only a few Americans.

Craig and Nancy attend the Fredericksburg, Va., Church of Christ.

Fifth Annual Run for the Son



5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Walk

May 5, 2004, 8 a.m.

Register online at www.hugsr.edu