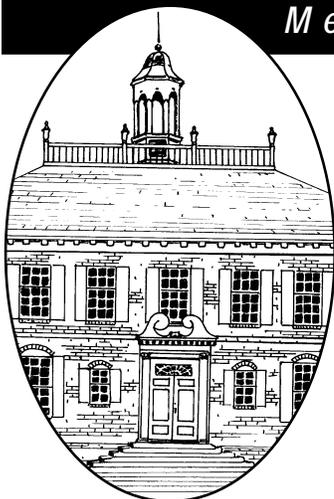


The Bridge

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Prayer: Bridging the Gap between Spirituality and Faith by John Ellas

I know of no one who believes we live in a Christian nation or doubts that our society is thoroughly secular. However, there is a new wind surging through America, and its force has captured the attention of numerous observers like social scientists, news writers, marketing specialists and religious leaders.

Few people do a better job of keeping tabs on the pulse of the United States than George Gallup Jr. In his 1999 book, *Surveying the Religious Landscape*, he reported that “the percentage of Americans who say they feel the need in their lives to experience spiritual growth has surged 24 points in just four years from 58 percent in 1994 to 82 percent in 1998.” While we have a secular society, now we also have a growing spiritual culture.

The topic of generic spirituality is ubiquitous. It has taken over the self-help shelves of bookstores. It has become increasingly important in television programs. Programs with a spiritual context like “Touched by an Angel,” “It’s a Miracle,” and “Beyond Chance” wouldn’t have been popular or politically correct 10 or 15 years ago.

The yearning for a richer inner life is felt among Christian

congregations, too. A comprehensive survey of 614 adults at my home congregation was deeply revealing regarding their concerns. Their number one felt need was a desire for “enriching their spiritual life,” and the number one need for which they were requesting church help was “starting a daily quiet time.” We compared the results to another congregation on the East Coast, and the findings were identical. I believe you could discover a similar result in your church — members are hungering to know how to draw closer to God and they want help.

The best way to span the gap between the secular context of most lives and a richer faith is to start a prayer ministry in your church. If you already have one, expand it and give it a very high priority. The resources I’ve listed below will help you study and plan. Remember, prayer begins with the church leaders and is imitated by the members.

A prayer ministry encourages each member to develop a personal quiet time with the Lord. Personal and corporate prayer is just the environment that allows God to break through and do extraordinary things in and for your congregation.

A prayer ministry can

encourage members to pray with and for their neighbors and friends who may consider themselves “spiritual” but who do not know the One to whom they pray. Gallup observed, “The vast majority of Americans believe in the power of prayer, pray frequently, and believe prayers are answered. The vast foundation for a revitalized faith therefore would appear to be in place.”

A dynamic prayer ministry can renew your members. Prayer builds a bridge for lost folks in a spiritually seeking culture. Let us pray!

Suggested Readings for Personal Renewal:

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline*. Harper & Row, 1988.

Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Nelson, 1999.

Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.

Suggested Readings for Church Renewal:

Fulenwider, Ray. *The Prayer Driven Church*. College Press, 2000.

Martin, Glen. *Power House*. Broadman, 1994.

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Mark Parker named director of admissions

Mark Parker has been named director of admissions for the Graduate School, effective May 15. Focusing on the opportunity Harding offers to integrate faith,



ministry and learning, Parker envisions his position as a way to connect ministers and coun-

selors with the resources they need for training. His sense of divine guidance and provision will flavor his efforts to help prospective students.

The former missionary to Croatia enrolled in 1996 as a master of divinity student at the Graduate School after studying

"The more I can help people see what I saw when I came to Harding — God leading me to this place — the better we can serve them."

— Mark Parker,
"My Recruiting Vision"

with several faculty members in Europe through seminars sponsored by Dr. Richard Oster's Ministry for Theological Education. He has been serving as the involvement minister for the Ross Road Church of Christ in Memphis since 1998.

Raised in Alaska and Oregon, Parker is married to Christine, a marriage and family therapy student at the Graduate School and a counselor with HopeWorks (a personal and career development ministry in midtown Memphis). They have two young sons.

Former admissions director Steve McLeod will remain as registrar full time.

From the Dean



Be Joyful in Hope

In a recent chapel service I was reminded that hope, as well as faith and love, are all decisions we make. It seems too easy to develop a pessimistic view about the future of the church. Generational and cultural differences can give us reasons to be concerned. Honestly, I have my days of doubt, but I know I must make a decision to exercise self-control over the fears that can destroy my ministry and influence for good.

Paul expected Christians in Rome to be hopeful intentionally as he admonished them to "be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12). This eschatological hope specifically refers to the eternal peace we have with God through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1) and the revelation of God's glory (Romans 8:18-27). However, since his admonition occurs in the context of brotherly love, honoring one another, remaining zealous, and practicing hospitality (12:9-16), hope must have something to do with my attitude toward those around me. This eternal hope gives me confidence in what God will do through another generation or cultural group. Without confidence that the Spirit works in those around me, I know my love, honor and zeal will diminish. As another translation states it, "let hope keep you joyful." Let me share some reasons to decide to be hopeful.

The commitment to the study of the Word, hard work and the spiritual growth of our students will give you hope. The 27 graduates this year would encourage anyone who saw the way

they have equipped themselves to take on tough assignments in inner-city ministry (Ohio and Florida), international mission work (Nigeria, Brazil, Uganda), campus ministry, preaching and counseling.

The dedication and quality of the faculty and staff will convince you that their "jobs" are a ministry. We care about our students and seek to cultivate their gifts for service. We are expanding our ministry with more faculty and extension courses. A record number of 40 courses will be offered in the fall on campus and through distance education that provide opportunities for training in Bible and ministry.

The development of a vision also gives hope. Two years ago, when I became dean, I set three specific goals: (1) 250 members on the Advancement Council, (2) the Lewis Scholar endowment that will provide 50 full scholarships, and (3) a two-year apprenticeship program so students can receive quality mentoring in ministry as they study at the Graduate School. God is blessing us with progress in all of these areas.

After 17 years of teaching graduate students in ministry, I am constantly blessed with joy as I watch graduates go out and make differences in the lives of people around them. All of us at the Graduate School are investing ourselves in these students and we invite you to share our joy in hope.

— Evert W. Huffard
(dean@hugsr.edu)

Deadline near for West's last class

This summer's offering of Dr. Earl I. West's "History of the Restoration Movement in America (B)" is the last opportunity students have to study with the respected church historian, who is retiring. The deadline to take the June 25-30 short course has been extended, but will be closing soon. Anyone

wishing to take this course should register immediately.

Also nearing the enrollment cutoff is "Preaching Christian Doctrine" with former Graduate School dean Harold Hazelip, July 9-14. For all summer course schedules, descriptions and costs, check the Web site at www.hugsr.edu.

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Faculty Update, 2001

Besides their on-campus duties, the faculty have had a busy year. Here is a wrap-up of their appointments and accomplishments during the past year.

Dr. Carisse Berryhill published "Scottish Rhetoric and the Declaration and Address" in a collection of essays edited by Thomas H. Olbricht and Hans Rollman. She completed an M.A. in Church History in May. She attended the Wabash Consultation on Teaching and Learning in Theological Libraries in Crawfordsville, Ind. She served as president for Tennessee Theological Library Association, Memphis Area Library Council, and Christian College Librarians. She taught a weekly Sunday morning Bible class for ladies at White Station church in Memphis.

Dr. Allen Black contributed a chapter to a festschrift honoring Clyde Woods. He spoke at the Freed-Hardeman Lectures on Romans 3 and at the Rochester College Lectures on Johannine Christology. He taught seminars on the Gospel of John and on 1 Corinthians (with Dave Bland) for the Ministry of Theological Education at Gemunden Camp, near Frankfurt, Germany, and in Stirling, Scotland. He served on the board of MTE and for the Restoration Theological Research Fellowship and organized the RTRF meeting. He continues to serve as middle adult minister at the Highland Street Church of Christ in Memphis, where he preaches occasionally.

Dr. Dave Bland wrote book reviews for the *Stone-Campbell Journal* and for *Restoration Quarterly*. He published "Iron Sharpens Iron" on preaching from Proverbs 27. During a sabbatical in Fall 2000, he published "Preaching from Luke/Acts" along with co-editor

David Fleer and prepared a new book manuscript on using Proverbs in character formation. He co-taught a seminar on 1 Corinthians for MTE in Stirling, Scotland, with Allen Black. He attended the Academy of Homiletics national meeting in Dallas. He continues to serve as one of the preaching ministers for the White Station church in Memphis.

Dr. Bill Flatt preached for 18 different congregations in six states. He published *Restoring My Soul: the Pursuit of Spiritual Resilience* and lectured 12 times in six states on healthy families and on growing through grief. He spoke at three college lectureships and was published in the Freed-Hardeman University lectureship book. He attended national conventions of AAMFT and APA in Chicago, and Washington, D.C., respectively. He maintained a private counseling practice.

Dr. Ed Gray co-chaired the Family Matters annual conference in Memphis, in 2000 and 2001. He served Highland Street as a family life consultant, teaching three lesson series and two classes on marriage and families. He directed two Prepare/Enrich workshops for premarital and marriage counselors. He attended national and state meetings of AAMFT and a local workshop on supporting families of MS patients. As supervisor of the Graduate School's Counseling Center, he consulted frequently with local ministers on counseling cases, made referrals, and provided counseling to area church members.

Dr. John Mark Hicks published a commentary on 1 and 2 Chronicles (NIV Commentary Series), five articles, and a chapter in a festschrift for Clyde Woods. He spoke 23 times on doctrine, suffering and themes

in 1 and 2 Chronicles for churches in nine states.

Dr. Evertt W. Huffard conducted retreats or workshops for eight churches, spoke at seven lectureships (Harding University, Heritage Christian University, Freed-Hardeman University, Let's Start Talking Seminar, National Campus Ministers Seminar, Medical Missions Seminar, and Spiritual Growth Conference), and was a guest speaker in four Wednesday night series (Holmes Road, Covington, Ross Road, and Southwest in Jonesboro, Ark.). He also co-chaired a delegation of scholars to Israel, hosted a tour group to Israel, and gave a series of lectures on spiritual leadership for the annual meeting of the missionaries in Brazil.

Dr. Jack P. Lewis published a book titled *The Ethics of the Prophets*, chapters in *Understanding the Times*, edited by Howard Norton, and a chapter in the festschrift for Clyde Woods. He spoke at the Freed-Hardeman and the Harding University Lectures. He presented papers at the Evangelical Theological Society meeting and at the national SBL meeting. He taught lesson series in Henderson, Tenn., and Wynne, Ark. He published 10 articles in *Gospel Advocate*, *Firm Foundation* and the *Bridge*. He taught a Bible class at White Station Sunday mornings and served as an elder.

Dr. Phil McMillion published abstracts in *Old Testament Abstracts* and traveled to Szolnok, Hungary, with the Ministry of Theological Education to teach on Amos and Hosea. He taught two lesson series on wisdom literature and on Isaiah at the Park Avenue congregation in Memphis, and preached there occasionally. He attended the national meeting of SBL.

Don Meredith was elected to serve on the board of the Restoration Serials Index. His

article "Bridging the Gap between the Real and Virtual Library" in the *Bridge* was adapted and reprinted by the Tate County Genealogical Society in Tate Trails. He attended the national meeting of the American Theological Library Association in Berkeley, Calif., and the national meeting of Christian College Librarians at Pepperdine University. He taught a Sunday morning Bible class every week at White Station church of Christ and served as an elder there.

Dr. Richard Oster organized speakers and programs for the Ministry of Theological Education, which provides seminars to enrich the work of missionaries in Europe. He traveled to Cologne, Germany, with MTE to speak on the Holy Spirit. He prepared the manuscript for a commentary on the book of Revelation. He spoke on Revelation in three series with churches in Tennessee and Texas. He is a regular Sunday morning Bible class teacher and also teaches occasionally on Wednesday nights at the Highland Street church in Memphis.

Sheila Owen began work as cataloging librarian at the Graduate School Aug. 15, 2000. She attended training workshops in Tennessee, Arkansas and Illinois on cataloging online resources and on library automation. She attended the fall meeting of Tennessee Theological Library Association. She taught the second and third graders at Park Avenue in Memphis.

Dr. Vernon Ray directed the Graduate School's Self-Study for Reaccreditation with the Association of Theological Schools and edited the self-study document. He completed a book manuscript on prophetic preaching. He traveled to preach, speak or consult on leadership with churches in 26 cities in 15 states.

Return Service Requested

Double Honor *by Vernon Ray*

On April 5, the Alumni Association of the Harding University Graduate School of Religion presented its Alumnus of the Year award to Oliver E. Rogers of Bloomington, Ind., during a special luncheon at the annual Ministry Forum.

Rogers was doubly honored that day. Not only was he recognized as Alumnus of the Year, but in a surprise gesture, his son, Sherman Rogers, presented a check to the Graduate School for \$240,000 to fully endow two scholarships in honor of his father's and late grandfather's lifetimes of ministry. The two named scholarships, part of the recently begun Lewis Scholar Program, are the Oliver E. Rogers Memorial Scholarship in Pastoral Ministry and Congregational Development, and the Cleaton F. Crosby Memorial Scholarship in Small Church Ministry.

It would be hard to find a more deserving recipient of our Alumnus of the Year award than Oliver Rogers. He epitomizes



Sherman Rogers presents Dr. Vernon Ray with a check in honor of his father, Oliver E. Rogers.

the kind of minister the Graduate School seeks to produce. After graduating in 1957, Rogers went on to more than 50 years in ministry, serving in only two congregations during that entire period.

The first ministry began with a handful of Christians meeting at the Masonic Lodge in West Chicago, Ill., and ended with a con-

gregation of several hundred, which at the time was the largest church of Christ in the state. He went from there to preach for the North Central Church of Christ in Bloomington, Ind. During his more than 30 years there, that congregation also grew to be the largest congregation among churches of Christ in Indiana at that time. Today, after retiring from the pulpit, Rogers still serves as an elder for the North Central body.

Rogers taught the gospel to and baptized more than 1,000 people during his 50 years of ministry, including several who now serve as foreign missionaries. He also mentored several preachers during his lifetime, including Dr. Jerry Jones and Dr. Vernon Ray (both of whom worked under Roger's tutelage during their first years of ministry). Through the generosity of his son and daughter-in-law, Sherman and Julie Rogers, Roger's legacy will continue to be — until Jesus returns — one of teaching and training Christians for a lifetime of ministry.

Associated Women names Taylor Outstanding Member

The National Council of the Associated Women for Harding named Barbara Taylor Outstanding Member of the Year. The award came during AWH's spring general meeting on the Searcy campus April 20.

Each local AWH chapter nominates its Member of the Year for the national award. Taylor is serving her second term as president of the Memphis chapter, which spon-

sors an annual 5K run fundraiser in April, as well as other local projects such as a fall dinner and pie auction. Harding afghans and cookbooks are among its national projects.

Taylor is truly a "volunteer extraordinaire," according to Tammie Hacker, president of the National Council. Vice president of property management firm Makowsky Ringel Greenberg, Taylor teaches

children at White Station Church of Christ, her home congregation; at La Iglesia de Cristo, the Hispanic congregation that meets on the Graduate School campus; and at Bible Study Fellowship. She frequently volunteers with ministries serving inner city residents, such as AGAPE Child and Family Services, HopeWorks, and Memphis Urban Ministry.