“For capital campaigns, we recommend appointing a campaign manager.” My ears perked up when I heard this advice during a presentation from The Focus Group, the firm selected to provide campaign counsel to WTS.

Throughout my tenure in advancement, I’ve heard repeatedly about the energy a capital campaign generates, so serving as the manager for such an adventure intrigued me. I quickly expressed my interest and have been working in this capacity for the last 18 months.

Most of the work I’ve done has been behind-the-scenes: organizing a feasibility study, assisting with the creation of campaign materials, and serving as the liaison between the seminary and our campaign advisors.

Last May, after multiple revisions to arrive at a building design best suited for the seminary, the Board of Trustees approved the Our New Day capital campaign, and I am eager to share about this ambitious and necessary project.

Western Theological Seminary’s “new day” has been steadily dawning over the last twenty years. Our enrollment is approaching 300 students—more than double what it was in 1996—and is still growing. We have attracted talented faculty members, experienced greater diversity in our student body, and responded to the changing needs of the church with innovative programs and partnerships. In other words, Western is thriving and has a bright future.

Despite this good news, we face challenges. Our present facility, built in 1955, has deferred maintenance that cannot be postponed any longer. Also, to secure a healthy financial future for WTS, our endowment must grow.

This campaign, with two distinct projects, will transform the seminary’s physical plant and increase its endowment resources. The $25 million Our New Day campaign is the largest in the seminary’s history, and we fully recognize that it will not be accomplished without participation from people who care about what we do.
The Building Project—a $15 million goal

The original impetus for considering a building project was the need for a new library. After years of dealing with water problems that damaged both the structure and its contents, we learned that the library building’s issues would make its renovation cost prohibitive. As we imagined other possibilities, a comprehensive project affecting 70% of the seminary building developed. Instead of only replacing a library, what emerged is a plan that includes two areas of new construction in addition to significant renovation to parts of the existing building.

The first area of new construction is located at the front of the seminary. A new and more grand entrance will be constructed providing a well-defined “front door” to WTS. The two-story addition will house administrative offices for several departments and open directly to the reception desk making navigation of the seminary easier and more welcoming for our guests.

Extensive renovation will refresh several classrooms, upgrade the Commons with good lighting, sound systems, and (finally) air conditioning, and replace old windows with ones that have double panes and proper insulation. We will also expand and update the Commons’ kitchen which is used daily to provide meals to the hungry in our community.

The second area of new construction is located off the back of the seminary. A revitalized Semelink Hall will become a world-class learning center designed around the way people study and teach today. The learning center will be a welcoming, open space with collaborative settings that facilitate our growing student body and provide space for new ways of learning to come. This project will bring the seminary’s facilities into compliance with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), making WTS accessible to all.

We have secured $10.5 million in pledged commitments toward a cost of $15 million for the new construction and renovations. The Board of Trustees has approved beginning construction when we reach 90% ($13.5 million) in pledges. In the coming months, we hope to secure several more leadership gifts with a goal of breaking ground in the spring of 2017. After the leadership phase is complete, we will welcome wider participation in raising the necessary funds for the building project.

The Endowment Project—a $10 million goal

Although no blueprints exist to generate enthusiasm for the endowment project of the campaign, it is equally important to Western’s future. The $10 million addition to the endowment will allow us to provide more scholarships as we grow our student body, attract top-notch scholars to our faculty, and maintain our existing and new facilities.

We have already secured over $8 million toward our goal to raise $10 million for the endowment. These commitments have come through both cash pledges and planned gifts. Counting planned gifts toward the capital campaign is a unique feature of the endowment project. The campaign provides a great opportunity for donors to think intentionally about including Western Theological Seminary in their estate plans.

Of the $8 million raised for the endowment, more than $6 million represents gifts that will be realized in the future. If you are interested in discussing a planned gift to the campaign, I am eager to visit with you.

As the Our New Day campaign continues, I look forward to sharing progress reports. In the meantime, would you pray for this campaign and the ministry of Western Theological Seminary? We are grateful for the support and encouragement provided by those who care about WTS and her service to Christ’s church.
The Past Speaks to the Present

This past June, I had the incredible opportunity to participate in Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics (FASPE). Every year, FASPE selects small groups of medical, business, law, journalism, and seminary students to travel to historical sites in Germany and Poland to learn about the Holocaust through the eyes of the perpetrators. Throughout the program, fellows connect lessons from the past to ethical challenges today.

Our group of twelve seminarians included future Protestant pastors, Catholic priests, and Jewish rabbis. The founders of FASPE recognize the unique dynamics involved in the seminary group, as faith is intricately woven into the understanding of ethics.

The 12-day fellowship included touring historical sites and engaging in classroom lectures and discussions. We began our trip in Berlin and visited important Holocaust sites such as the Topography of Terror, House of Wannsee, Grunewald Track 17, and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.

A week later, we flew to Krakow, Poland. We toured the Jewish quarter and the site of the Jewish ghetto during WWII and considered the changing religious landscape of Poland since the Holocaust.

Finally, we traveled to Oswiecim and spent two days touring Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is difficult to describe the experience of being in a place where such unfathomable evil occurred. Our group gave each other a lot of grace to feel and express different emotions both during the tours and in our seminars afterward. It was a humbling honor to walk alongside new Jewish friends as their own history came alive in that place.

A couple of specific lessons from FASPE have been formative for my ministry leadership. First, FASPE gave me the opportunity to build relationships and engage in open dialogue with people of different faiths and religious traditions. Although our core beliefs differed, we discovered how much we have in common. We questioned but respected each other, learned from one another, and discovered beauty and truth in each of our faith traditions. Having to articulate my understanding of Scripture and Reformed beliefs sharpened my own theology and helped me identify areas I’d like to explore further. Because the FASPE interfaith experience was so powerful, our group continues to engage in conversation through round-robin emails.

FASPE also helped me recognize the importance of clergy prayerfully engaging matters of oppression and injustice. The reasons most German Christians remained silent in the face of growing anti-Semitism are complex, but also disturbingly similar to the reasons Christians do not fight injustice today. As a future pastor, I am called to encourage and equip the church to live out the gospel in everyday life. The gospel we embody should be good news indeed for the marginalized and suffering.

The entire FASPE experience was intense, challenging, and life-changing. Honestly, my faith was shaken at Auschwitz as I wrestled again with questions about human suffering and the sovereignty of God. Yet in the face of such evil, I realized I can choose despair or hope. I came home with a strengthened faith in a God who does and will bring redemption to our broken and sinful world.
You might not expect someone who has spent decades enjoying the distinctive landscape of New England to jump at the chance to move to West Michigan, but Alvin Padilla did just that.

“When you take into account what God is doing right here at WTS, it is undeniably the right place to be,” says Dr. Padilla. “The energy and passion to embrace what God is doing in the Church is so evident. I sense that God is about to do great things right here, and I simply want to be part of that!”

In July the seminary welcomed Dr. Alvin Padilla to campus as our new Academic Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Alvin was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, an important trading town resting by the Caribbean Sea and founded in 1692 by the great-grandson of Juan Ponce de León. When he was born, doctors said he wouldn’t live long; however, their diagnosis proved untrue, leading Alvin to grow up believing God spared him for a unique purpose.

His blue-eyed mother’s ancestry traced back to Spain, and his father was the grandson of a slave brought to the New World. His dad had a strong work ethic, instilling in his ten children that “one of the worst things in the world is a man who can’t provide for his kids.” He worked hard at the docks unloading ships, getting there by 5:00 each morning, often after having a cup of coffee with young Al.

Alvin’s father was also a medium, practicing Santería, a religion from West Africa syncretized with Roman Catholic elements. Al recalls accompanying his father as he performed séances all around the area. His father hoped Al would continue the Santerian tradition, but, by God’s grace, that was not to be.

Though baptized Catholics, neither Alvin nor his family attended Mass regularly. Being curious about spiritual matters, one day around the age of 11, Alvin walked into a Catholic Mass and watched it being held in Latin. He heard a voice say, “This is where you belong.” After that he started going to church. Soon the family migrated to the United States and settled in Haverhill, MA, where Al served as an altar boy in the local church until the age of 18. His family would attend Mass just to see him serve.

Alvin’s mother passed away his senior year of high school. She did not live to see him become the first Hispanic to graduate from high school in the town of Haverhill. Against the advice of his guidance counselor (who didn’t think he should go to college), he applied to numerous colleges and eventually entered Villanova University in Pennsylvania. Knowing his father wanted him to be a lawyer, he began school as a pre-law major. Sadly, during his freshman year his father passed away also. Shortly after that, Alvin switched his major to secondary education and minored in history.

After graduating from college, he returned to his hometown of Haverhill and became a community organizer, dedicating himself to improving the quality of life for the quickly growing Latino population and the wider community. Alvin had a secret ambition to become the first U.S. senator of Hispanic origin.

One day, while praying and walking around, he passed a Pentecostal church and heard joyous, celebratory singing. He heard God say, “Come and see!” Although skeptical, he walked in and sat in the back. The people there knew him and were so stunned that they stopped singing for a moment. That day, however, placed him on the path toward Protestantism and a deeper devotion to the church and God’s people.
That Pentecostal church had energy for the kingdom of God and an emphasis on service. Alvin was soon asked to participate in the church and was developed as a leader. He became ordained in The Assemblies of God. The church empowered people and relied on God’s gifts from the Spirit, putting men and women in leadership regardless of training. His continuing work as a local leader soon highlighted the need for more education. After one year at a Spanish language Bible institute, he enrolled at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where he met his wife, Cathy. (Al and Cathy have five children and two granddaughters.)

After graduating from seminary, Cathy and Alvin were called to established the Spanish Eastern School of Theology in Swan Lake, NY. The school’s singular purpose was to prepare women and men for ministry among and for Latinos in North America. Seven years later, Alvin and Cathy transitioned to Nyack College. While at Nyack, Alvin was ordained in the PC(USA) and called as solo pastor to the Fort Washington Heights Presbyterian Church in Manhattan. During this time he began and completed his doctoral studies at Drew University.

In 1997 Dr. Padilla shifted his full attention to a new position as Executive Dean and Associate Professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He led the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME—the Boston Campus) for 12 years. In 2010 he launched the Hispanic Ministries Program at Gordon-Conwell and became its dean, serving 400 students for the next six years and assembling an impressive faculty to teach the courses in Spanish and English. He remained connected to the church by serving two Presbyterian congregations as interim pastor during this time.

The faculty, staff and students of Western Theological Seminary are so pleased to have such an innovative and dynamic leader as our new academic dean. Dr. Alvin Padilla’s background and years of experience are sure to influence the future of this seminary in exciting and new ways.

Thanks for saying yes, Dr. Padilla!
From Latin *lux* (“light”) 

What does it mean to be a Christian in today’s day and age? Western is digging for the answer to that question by interviewing guests on a variety of topics that intersect with faith and culture.

These interviews are captured in The Luxcast, a new audiovisual podcast series available at www.theluxcast.org. The series engages topics like music, writing, justice, theology, food, drink, and more.

The Luxcast is available in both .mp3 and .mp4 formats. Viewers can subscribe to the video version through YouTube, or to the audio version on iTunes or Android podcasting apps.

Visit www.theluxcast.org to view/listen and subscribe.
“Allahhu Akbar” rang throughout the masjid’s (mosque’s) sound system as one of the Muslim men began to melodically chant the adhan, the call to worship. Those attending were about to observe the fard salat, one of the five daily and mandatory prayers, capturing a mere snapshot of the devotion, the tradition, the theology, and the identity of those who practice Islam.

And then there was me. As the prayer commenced, I remained seated in the back of the now crowded prayer hall, with men pressed in front of and on each side of me. I couldn’t help but smile when I thought through the events that brought me to the masjid that night. The ironic part was that I had just come from a prayer meeting of my own at Christ Community Church (CCC) in Denver, Colorado. It was only three days into my summer internship, and I was smiling because God was already answering my two prayers for the summer. First, that I would be more prayerfully minded and second, that I would have a hands-on opportunity to learn more about Islam.

Be careful what you pray for, I guess!

It all started on the way back to my apartment that night when I noticed that the car in front of me had blown out one of its tires. The driver obviously noticed the rubbery explosion and the vehicle’s extreme rattling, too, so as she pulled off the road, I decided to follow suit and help change the mangled tire. The driver’s name was Fitri and she was a Muslim woman heading to the masjid in which I was now sitting. I had swapped out her tire for the spare and offered to follow her to her destination, hoping in some way to ensure her safety and peace of mind. After we pulled into the parking lot, I stepped out of my car to part ways and wish her well, but Fitri caught me off guard when she invited me to come inside and meet her friends.

So I said, “Why not?”

Well, one thing led to another, and before I knew it, the leader of the masjid, Imam Karim AbuZaid, invited me over to his house for supper.

So again I said, “Why not?”

Imam Karim and I spent the next hour or so traveling to his house and sitting at the dining room table of his home. We shared a meal together while having a wonderful conversation about Christianity and Islam, the Bible and the Qur’an, and of course, Jesus and Muhammad. After supper he invited me to come back to the masjid to watch the Muslim community observe its last prayer of the day and to listen to a recitation from the Qur’an.

So, in “typical me” fashion, I replied, “Why not?”

That whole evening cost about five hours of my time, besides getting a little bit of oil and grease on my hands. It was so worth it. From that evening came friendships with Muslims and opportunities that I would never have imagined possible if God were not in the Kingdom business of answering prayers and spreading the Good News about the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting in Jesus’ name.

The rest of my internship was wrapped around the study of apologetics and making weekly trips to another masjid to be lectured on Islam by the presiding Sheikh there, Dr. Ahmad Nabhan. He kindly and graciously helped me to grasp the Muslim world view, gently responded to my probing questions, and gladly accepted my invitation to come to my church and participate with me in an interfaith dialogue; an event to which I am ever grateful to pastor Bruce and the people of CCC for hosting. They demonstrated genuine Christian hospitality and a love for their Muslim neighbors by opening their hearts and their doors to a conversation as important as this.

This is an important conversation to be having, especially now.

Now is the time to equip our congregations with a deeper knowledge of Islam and the challenges it poses both to our culture and to our faith. Now is the time to exhort our pastors and leaders to carefully and compassionately articulate the scriptural witness and historical person of Jesus Christ. Now is the time to give an account for the hope we have in him.

Now is the time to say, “Why not?”
Get out there and READ!

Western has become a partner organization of The Big Read - Holland Area this year. The Big Read builds literacy by bringing a community together around one book and the shared experience of reading and discussion. Although this is Western's first year as a partner, it is the third year of the Big Read in Holland, and over 7000 people participated in Big Read activities in the Holland area last year. The Big Read's primary sponsor is Hope College, with assistance from local libraries, the Holland Museum, and several other community organizations.

This year’s Big Read book, *Brother, I'm Dying*, by award-winning author Edwidge Danticat, is a multi-generational story of one family's life in Haiti and the United States. The book serves as a rich celebration of Haitian culture and history and also raises questions about how people with different backgrounds interact with each other in today’s world. One reviewer called it a “warm-hearted tragedy,” and it is rich with stories of familial bonds and love along with injustice and pain.

There are over a dozen Big Read activities planned for the first week of November in the Holland area. As part of this, Western is hosting an interactive Immigration Workshop at 7:00pm on Monday, November 14, led by the Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice. The workshop looks at immigration and refugee resettlement in the United States and explores how Christians may engage in these processes. All are invited. For more information about Big Read activities, visit the website blogs.hope.edu/thebigread.

On another literary note, I am pleased to announce that the seminary is co-hosting (along with Hope College Campus Ministries) a significant writing workshop next May. Headliners for the event are Barbara Brown Taylor and Rachel Held Evans. In addition, several other authors will be at the event, including Isaac Anderson, Patricia Raybon, Sarah Arthur, and Jana Reiss, as well as representatives from Christian publishing houses and magazines. Registration will open around Thanksgiving, and our website, westernsem.edu, will have more details. Our participation in this event is made possible by the James I. Cook Endowment in Christianity and Literature.

Reading is a passive activity, but according to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus began his public ministry in Nazareth by standing in the synagogue on the sabbath and reading. What he read, and what he said about what he read, ruffled more than a few feathers that day. Who knew reading could do that? Reading allows us to travel thousands of miles without leaving home, experience the wisdom of the ages in one lifetime, compassionately see the world through other eyes, and, more than that, reading can bring us into the very presence of God. That’s why we’re supporting The Big Read and sponsoring the Writer’s Workshop.

Join us in reading.

blogs.hope.edu/thebigread/

Nov. 1, 7:00pm - Kick-off at Knickerbocker Theatre. TED-talks on the historical and cultural context of the book.

Nov. 2, 1:00pm - Panel discussion on refugees, resettlement and integration at Herrick District Library.

Nov. 3, 5:00 & 7:00pm - Haitian cuisine at Cook Dining Hall w/ Olga Benoit. $15 adults, $10 students.

Nov. 4, 7:30pm - Geraud Dimanche concert of music and dancing, Jack H. Miller Center for the Musical Arts

Nov. 5, 11:00am - Story time with children's author Anne Sibley O'Brien, Herrick District Library

Nov. 5, 2:00pm - Hands-on Art Workshop at CultureWorks (710 Chicago Dr. Ste 200, Holland)

Nov. 7, 7:00pm - *La Belle Vie* at the Knickerbocker Theatre followed by Q&A with directors.

Nov. 9, 7:00pm - Lecture by immigration lawyer Sarah Yore-Van Oosterhout at the Howard Miller Library in Zeeland.

Nov. 10, 7:00pm - Poverty, Inc. screening with Q&A by Haitian entrepreneur Daniel Jean Louis.

Nov. 11, 7:00pm - Book discussion at Holland Museum

Nov. 12, 10:00am - Memoir writing workshop with Rhoda Janzen at Herrick District Library

Nov. 14, 7:00pm - Interactive Immigration Workshop at Western Theological Seminary, Mulder Chapel.

Nov. 15, 7:00pm - Keynote address by Edwidge Danticat in Dimnent Chapel, Hope College. Booksigning afterward.

Nov. 17, 7:00pm - Student exhibition at the Holland Armory
The Community Kitchen is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Since 1991, volunteers, donors, and staff of Western Theological Seminary and Community Action House (CAH) have worked side by side to provide the Community Kitchen, a place for people to receive free meals in a safe and welcoming environment year-round.

The Community Kitchen is housed at the seminary in the Commons and serves over 75,000 meals a year with the help of 1,000 volunteer hours. Over the past quarter century, CAH estimates that over 750,000 meals have been served and 130,000+ hours of volunteer service have been given.

The Kitchen was founded in the early 1990s when severe cuts to funding for government needs-based assistance created a hunger problem for many Holland families.

It all started with the class “Gospel, Culture, and Ministry,” co-taught by professors George Hunsberger, Chris Kaiser, and Tom Boogaart along with local pastor Andy Fiero. They taught students that engaging one’s own culture is necessary for sharing the Gospel. They asked students to read the Holland Sentinel and discuss issues happening around Holland.

A group of students set up the next all-seminary retreat, inviting speakers to talk about poverty and hunger in West Michigan. Students and faculty became inspired to connect with CAH staff and local churches, and just six weeks later the seminary opened the Community Kitchen. Today, the Kitchen continues to operate through those original partnerships.

According to one of the founders, Professor Tom Boogaart, the Community Kitchen has turned out to be better and far more important than anyone imagined. “It created the geography for organizations to connect, serve, and form a real community,” he says.

“We are extremely grateful to be part of this community program with over 25 churches, working together seamlessly to provide for those in need,” says Mark Tucker, executive director of Community Action House.

Hundreds of volunteers from local churches make each day happen—from donation delivery and food prep to greeting and dishwashing. Many churches take special offerings during the year to shore up the Kitchen’s non-perishable food stores.

Challenges at the Kitchen include limited freezer and refrigerator space and meeting the needs of an ever-growing number of patrons. “We’re serving 150-250 meals every day—space is always tight,” says Jim Piersma, Kitchen Manager.

The seminary’s capital campaign (see pages 1-2) includes updated facilities for Community Kitchen. The seminary remains committed to the Kitchen and hopes the renovations will allow it to serve more people than ever before.

“Our school and our students have been deeply impacted over the past quarter century by hosting the Community Kitchen,” President Timothy Brown says.

“This place has been a huge blessing to me and my family over the years,” says one patron. “We are so grateful for the warm welcome from Community Action House and Western Theological Seminary.”

communityactionhouse.org/community-kitchen/
On July 1, Rayetta Perez became the director of administration and human resources. Rayetta came to the seminary in 2000 to give administrative support to former president Dennis Voskuil, which transitioned to President Timothy Brown in 2008. As the seminary staff grew larger, she took on human resources duties, too. She now coordinates the seminary’s administrative functions, directs human resources activities, and serves on the President’s Council and Administrative Cabinet.

Travis West has been promoted to assistant professor of Hebrew and Old Testament. He is currently on sabbatical completing his dissertation at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, where he is a Ph.D. candidate in Old Testament.

After teaching as a visiting professor last year, David Komline has joined the faculty as assistant professor of church history. He is enjoying teaching at Western, preparing students for a life of proclaiming the larger story of God’s redeeming love for the world.


Ethics and Theology Professor David Stubbs is spending the academic year of 2016-17 researching, finishing several publications, and developing a new course on Christology. He is based at the Facoltà Valdese di Teologia, the Waldensian Seminary in Rome, studying the tradition, practices, people, and points of view of the Waldensians. He hopes to lecture there as well as at other places in Europe.

Joel Boyd, third year M.Div. student, has written an article on Cotton Mather’s original psalter (Psalterium Americanum) for The Congregationalist. Read it at: simplebooklet.com/september2016congregationalist

The Community Action House of Holland, MI honored Old Testament Professor Tom Boogaart at their 25 year celebration of Community Kitchen on September 29. Dr. Boogaart helped start the Community Kitchen at WTS, which has served 750,000 meals to those in need and is now serving 75,000 meals a year.


Five new members joined the WTS Board of Trustees July 1, 2016:

Rev. Eddy Alemán ’04 is the director of strategic leadership development and the coordinator of Hispanic Ministries for the Reformed Church in America.

Dr. Sandra DeYoung retired as the dean of the College of Science and Health at William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ.

Chris Crawford is the director of national client relations, Risk Placement Services, Inc., Itasca, IL.

Rev. Dr. Lisa L. Vander Wal is pastor of Lisha’s Kill Reformed Church in Schenectady, NY. She served as president of the RCA’s General Synod in 2012.

Carol Van Andel is the executive director of the David and Carol Van Andel Family Foundation, Grand Rapids, MI.

Save the date!

2017 Writer’s Workshop, May 16-17
Co-sponsored with Write for Your Life

presented by:
Western Theological Seminary
and Hope College Campus Ministries

with special guests
Barbara Brown Taylor
and Rachel Held Evans

details forthcoming

Events coming up:

Nov. 7: The Bast Preaching Festival with Dr. Frank Thomas
Nov. 14: The Big Read Interactive Immigration Workshop
March 20-21: The Osterhaven Lectures: “Sola Scriptura? Scripture and Tradition” with Dr. Edith Humphrey and Dr. John L. Thompson
April 20: “Resurrection Hope in an Age of Medicalized Dying” colloquy facilitated by Dr. J. Todd Billings
May 16-17: Writer’s Workshop (see ad at left)
Nov. 3-16, 2017: WTS Alumni Trip to Israel with Tom Boogaart, Marlin & Sally Vis, and Joshua Vis.

journey.westernsem.edu
Wesley K. Shao ’52
b. 1914
d. Jan. 2012, Philippines
WTS ’52
Churches served:
Davao Evangelical Church, Davao City, Philippines
United Evangelical Church, Manila, Philippines
Other service:
President, Biblical Seminary of the Philippines

Louis Brouwers ’53
b. 11/17/1926 South Holland, IL
d. 6/10/2016 Grand Rapids, MI
Central ’50; WTS ’53
Churches served:
(1953-56) Spring Valley, Fulton, IL
(1956-64) Community, Parma Heights, OH

William Jellema ’53
b. 6/25/1927 Ridgeland, WI
d. 8/9/2016 Mt. Pleasant, SC
Hope ’50, WTS ’53 ThM; UEdinburgh ’57 PhD
(1957-60) Prof., Dept. of Philosophy and Religion, Alma College, Alma, MI
(1960-67) MI Fellow in College Admin., University of Michigan
(1967-74) Assoc. of American Colleges, Washington, DC
(1974-80) President, Wartburg College, Waverly, IA
(1980-97) Professor, University of Connecticut

Paul Lupkes ’53
b. 1/21/1927 Austinville, IA
d. 5/31/2016 Rapid City, SD
Hope ’50, WTS ’53; ChTS ’68 STM; McCormickTS ’89 DMin
Churches served:
(1953-55) Emmanuel, Willow Lake, SD
(1955-61) Grace, Waterloo, IA
(1961-68) Keystone, Indianapolis, IN
(1968-69) Min. of Evangelism, PSW
(1969-74) Church of the Rockies, Denver, CO
(1975-76) Church of New Hope, Thornton, CO
Other ministry:
(1976-77) Hospital chaplain, Denver, CO
(1977-92) Campus ministry, Rapid City, SD
(1979-2000) Assoc. Prof. of Religion, South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
(1990-2000) Chaplain, Ft. Meade, Sturgis, SD

Robert Strain ’60
b. 8/8/1933 Castlewood, SD
d. 8/24/2015 Arlington, VA
WI State Coll ’55; WTS ’60
Churches served:
(1960-63) Forest Home, Muskegon, MI
(1964-68) Fourth Presbyterian, Bethesda, MD
(1982-?) West. Presbyterian, Washington, DC
Other service:
(1963-66) Staff, Int’l Christian Leadership

John Rozendaal ’61
b. 6/17/1936 Melvin, IA
d. 4/16/2016 Carroll, IA
Central ’58; WTS ’61; McCormickTS ’83 DMin
Churches served:
(1961-65) Community, Hopkins, MI
(1970-74) First Presbyterian, Hesperia, MI
(1976-80) Heritage Presb., Monmouth, IL
(1980-89) Old Kingsport Presbyterian, Kingsport, TN
(1989-92) East Side Presbyterian, Fremont, OH
(1992-2001) Interim pastor, Michigan & Iowa Other service:
(1966-70) Pastor to the deaf, Zeeland Classis
(1974-76) Dir. of Mich. Farm Worker Ministry
(2001-02) United Church of Manilla, Manila, IA

Philip Rauwerdink ’88
b. 12/31/1944 Sheboygan, WI
d. 4/1/2016 Sheboygan, WI
Hope ’68, WTS ’88
Churches served:
(1990-99) Glendale, Queens, NY
(1999-2016) Interim pastor in RCA churches
We just received word of the death of Thomas James Harris ’61 on Sept. 5, 2016. Details of his ministry will be in the next issue.

Wendell Karsen ’63 recently published The Lifestyle of Jesus: Living a Productive and Fulfilling Lifestyle in the 21st Century. He wrote the book for people who want to think seriously about life, sort out their beliefs, values and priorities, and commit to a lifestyle that is challenging and worthwhile. Wendell is a retired pastor, missionary and WTS adjunct professor and lives with his wife Renske in Penney Farms, FL.

On March 1, Roger Punt ’76 retired from chaplaincy with Presbyterian Homes and Services in Woodbury, MN. Prior to that, he was the pastor of Dumont Reformed in Iowa, The Reformed Church of Steen, MN and First Reformed of Sully, IA. Roger will continue a small chaplaincy role with pastoraﬁes and their widows in Minnesota and North Dakota. He and Judy are remaining in Woodbury near their daughter’s family.


Curry Pikaart ’74 has written his second book, When the Going Gets Tough...Turn Your Stumbling Blocks into Stepping Stones. It is a study of the life of Joseph from Genesis. See revpcikk.com.

On September 18, David Penning ’15 was ordained at the New Community Fourth Reformed Church in Holland, MI. He is working as a Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator for Grace Hospice in Portage, MI.

Dana Daniels ’16 (MA) was selected to participate in the 2016 Women Emerging in Leadership Development Institute held in Pittsburgh in October. It was hosted by the Association of Theological Schools and funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Calls to the Class of 2016

Jared Ayers, Pastor, Liberti Church, Philadelphia, PA
Adam Bailon, Director of Spiritual Formation, All Souls Church, Boulder, CO
Melissa Blankenship, Volunteer Mgr, City Hope Community Center, and Database Mgr, City Church, San Francisco, CA
Julia Brown, CPE, Advocate BroMenn Medical Ctr, Normal, IL
Bryant Brozik, Pastor, Pulneyville Reformed Church, Pulneyville, NY
Paul Burkhart, Clinical Service Coordinator, Pathways to Housing, Philadelphia, PA
Beth Carroll, Resident Pastor for Youth and Young Adults, Hope Church, Holland, MI
Grace Miguel Cipriano, Interim Assoc. Director of Formation for Ministry, Western Theological Seminary
Laura Claus, Mission Coordinator, Orchard Hill Church, Grand Rapids, MI
Murray Cooper, Chaplaincy Program, Bronson Hospital, Kalamazoo, MI
Gerald and Michelle DeBoer, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Kalamazoo, MI
Dustin De Vriend, Emerge Pastor, Christ Community Church, Carmichael, CA
Ross Dieleman, Pastor of Adult Ministries, Christ Memorial Church, Holland, MI
Paige Douglas, CPE, Gunderson Health System, LaCrosse, WI
Audrey Edewaard, Pastor of Discipleship and Youth, North Holland Reformed Church, Holland, MI
Timothy Fry, Mgr, Amy’s Kitchen (ministry), Santa Rosa, CA
Stephen Gundlach, Ministry Associate, City Church San Francisco, CA
Jordan Hall, Pastor, Trinity Church, San Francisco, CA
Jeffrey Hubers, Associate Pastor of Youth and Worship, First Reformed Church, Mitchell, SD
Alberto La Rosa Rojas, Pursuing Th.D. in Theology and Ethics, Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC
Kara Lepley, Children’s Ministries Director, Christ Memorial Reformed Church, Holland, MI
Steven Magnuson, Director of Student Ministries, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY
Brendan McElhanahan, Pastor in Residence, Victory Point Ministries, Holland, MI
Kyle Meynard-Schaap, Creation Care Coordinator, Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Laura Miller-Purrenhage, Chaplaincy Program, Bronson Hospital, Kalamazoo, MI
Tim Nelson, Young Adult Pastor, Ridgpoint Community Church, Holland, MI
Jeffrey Nine, Pastoral Assistant, First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood, Pittsburgh, PA
Arek O’Connell, High School Pastor, Hillside Community Church, Grand Rapids, MI
Brad Parrish, Pastor, Union Church, Quincy, MI
Annalise Radcliffe, Social & Digital Media Associate, RCA
Jennifer Ryden, Pastor, Embody Christ Fellowship, Holland, MI
Lindsey (Izzy) Sackett, Crisis Chaplain, Holland Hospital, Holland, MI
Caleb Schut, Youth Pastor, Grace Church Chicago, Chicago, IL
Diane Shircliff, Clinical Pastoral Care Residency, St. Vincent’s Hospital, Indianapolis, IN
Sharon Smith, Pastoral Care, Christian Community Development in Roosevelt Park neighborhood, Grand Rapids, MI
Jonathan Vanderbeck, Community Minister, First Reformed Church, Schenectady, NY
Jason White, Missionary work in Romania with RCA and CRC

In search process as of 9/30/16
Lisa Braunius, Chris DeHaan, Michael Hooker, Alexandra Lysdalh, Christopher Maki, Noah McLaren, Tyler Richards, Rob Sackett, Andrew San Nicolas, Jeff Vedders, Mitch Wagner, Jordan White
A Note from

PRESIDENT TIMOTHY BROWN

One of my great joys is teaching. With many duties of the presidency pressing on my schedule, I only get to do it every couple of years, but I am so glad when that time comes. This semester I am teaching a class on memorizing Scripture for our distance learning students. It is a new challenge to teach this subject in an online format, but I am determined that our students know the power and blessing of taking God’s Word into their hearts.

In Psalm 1 we are told, “Blessed is the person… who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.”

That’s as grand of a reason for memorizing that I can think of! We live in a cultural moment called post-modernity that has left people with a kind of allergic reaction to the Bible. Also, they won’t listen long if they don’t think a message is heartfelt. The repetition of Scripture out loud moves God’s Word from the mouth to the ears and then it settles deep into the heart. When a student stands to lead worship or offer a prayer, those words can come from the heart, from the Book itself. People will listen!

I tell our students that when they meditate on the scripture in pastoral ministry, their “leaf will not wither”—they will have a sermon in them, a word from the Lord for a broken heart, counsel for the troubled, and confidence for all their days.

Memorization is simple, but it isn’t easy. Please pray for our students as they learn this incredible discipline that will bring power and blessing to their future ministries.