

Southern Bulletin

A PUBLICATION FOR FRIENDS OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SOUTHERN SEMINARY OF LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2020

FEATURES

Lenoir-Rhyne University students learn outside the classroom in study abroad to Israel

Dementia through a Pastoral lens

Student Spotlight: Yancy Martin

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Letter from The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore

The Rector Reads

Calendar of Events

Fun Facts

GET IN TOUCH

The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore
Rector and Dean
803.461.3240
mary.shore@lr.edu

© 2020 Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, NC. Lenoir-Rhyne, founded in 1891, is a private liberal arts institution affiliated with the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Southern Bulletin is a publication of Lenoir-Rhyne University and produced for friends of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary.



Students and faculty stopped at the Church of the Pater Noster, which tradition holds to be the site where Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer to his disciples. Tablets of the Lord's Prayer in 62 different languages line the walls of the cloister.



The class visited the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

Lenoir-Rhyne University students learn outside the classroom in study abroad to Israel

The goal of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary at Lenoir-Rhyne University is to teach, form and nurture leaders in public ministry so when they leave these walls, they can make an impact.

Both near and far.

One way the Rev. Dr. James Thomas is doing that is through experiential learning by taking a group of seminary students to the heart of it all – the holy land.

“I think we have to get out of the classroom,” he said. “Get outside of our boxes, outside of our own explanations about life, turn a page and go someplace where the people have profoundly different realities and world views. It makes better people of us; it makes better Christians of us.”

Over holiday break, Thomas and accompanying faculty member the Rev. Dr. MarySue Dreier led a

“I think we have to get out of the classroom. Get outside of our boxes, outside of our own explanations about life, turn a page and go someplace where the people have profoundly different realities and world views. It makes better people of us; it makes better Christians of us.”

THE REV. DR. JAMES THOMAS

group of students on a cross-cultural studies course throughout Israel and Palestine that visited holy sites, met with locals and learned what it's like for 21st-century citizens living under occupation.

Students had the chance to go through security check points and see the discrepancy between some of the modern Israeli settlements and the lifestyles of

Palestinians who have to ration water that is provided to them by the state.

“We forget that Jesus' homeland was occupied all the while he lived in it,” said the Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, rector and dean of LTSS. “The students in

CONTINUED PAGE 2

Lenoir-Rhyne University professor seeks to address ‘Dementia through a Pastoral lens’

There shouldn't have been any significance to Kenneth and Linda Carder saying they loved one another. In 58 years of marriage, they'd said it countless times.

Throughout a lifelong journey that included innumerable stops, trips, conferences and callings as a bishop, now retired, in the United Methodist Church and distinguished theology professor, they had gone through it all together.

However, that lifetime of togetherness was put to the test after Linda was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia and, gradually, as memories of everyday experiences, a lifetime of marriage, family members and even simple expressions of affection were forgotten.

“Linda was not able, toward the end of her life, to noticeably respond to my loving her,” he said. “But I learned to love her without expecting anything in return.”

Nearly 6 million people each year in the United States live with dementia, according to the Alzheimer's Association. Countless more are affected by its debilitating effects.

As an adjunct professor with Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Carder has sought to address some of the social and theological issues resulting from the disease in his class, *Dementia Through a Pastoral Theological Lens*.

“We live in a highly cognitive society,” Carder said. “In the academic world, we evaluate people, rank people, and value people according to their cognitive functioning and communication skills. It's very easy for us then to assume that their identity and worth lie in their mental and communicative capacities. Dementia strips away our cognitive and communicative capacities. The real question then is – ‘who am I when I forget who I am?’”



Bishop Carder gives Communion to a participant in an adult day program visited by the class.

A distinguished pastor and professor throughout the South and East Coast, Carder was teaching at Duke's Divinity School when Linda was diagnosed.

“It sent us on a journey of learning about dementia,” he said. “For me, it meant how do I live out my baptism, my ordination and my calling in the context of this journey with dementia?”

At Duke, Carder had developed a course on prison ministry and restorative justice, which included engaging inmates in discussion. With his wife's diagnosis, and after significant research on her behalf, Carder was encouraged by his daughters to share this new knowledge with a similar approach.

CONTINUED PAGE 3

LETTER FROM THE REV. DR. MARY HINKLE SHORE



The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore
Dean and Rector

My college sat across the street from a seminary campus. As I started to imagine that I might someday go to seminary, I looked across that street, but I did not actually step onto the neighboring campus and look around. I couldn't do it.

I imagined a seminary campus as too holy and myself too much of a "normal person" to fit in there. Seminary seemed like a monastery to me. It was a place set apart from the world and filled by people who were more wise, prayerful, and pious than the rest of us.

Whether my young adult understanding of seminary was ever accurate, to be at seminary now is to move not away from "normal people" and "real life" but toward them. In this edition of Southern Bulletin, you will read about classes and other learning experiences that are happening beyond the walls of our buildings. A pastoral care class meets on the campus of an extended care facility, learning from a chaplain, residents, and staff people as well as their professor. A church in context class files through a West Bank checkpoint and experiences other realities of daily life in Palestine as they study the religious experience of Christians and Muslims there. A spiritual

formation class spends a week at Mepkin Abbey learning how close to real life actual monks turn out to be!

Leaders of the church must have theological depth and biblical imagination. They must also have opportunities to connect their academic learning with contexts different from the traditional classroom. We hope the stories in this Bulletin give you a sense of how LTSS students are capitalizing on opportunities offered by your seminary.

You help to make these learning experiences and others possible. The New Life fund, for instance, is our annual fund that supports seminary instruction in all its forms. Thank you for your gifts in support of Southern. Thank you also for your prayers for us and our work. Above all, thanks be to God for the Spirit's work to draw the church and the seminary beyond our walls and into the world God loves.

Grace and peace,

Mary Hinkle Shore, Rector and Dean

Study abroad, continued



Dr. MarySue Drier looks upon an archaeological dig from the walls of Jerusalem.

the class came away with a vivid sense of life under a different occupation in the same geography. The experience will inform the way they see not only the scriptures, but also their own contexts for ministry."

The group departed Charlotte Dec. 26 and arrived in Tel Aviv, Israel, the following day when the group of eight went to work on an extensive itinerary that included a tour of and meeting with the CEO of the Augusta Victoria Hospital.

"They give primary care to Palestinians, many of whom are children," Thomas said. "The children aren't allowed to come to the hospital with their parents because men and women between the ages of 15 and 40 are suspected of being terrorists. So they have to travel with grandparents or elderly aunts and uncles."

The class also visited Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jerusalem, which has services catering to English-, German- and Arab-speaking congregations.

"While it's valuable to walk in Jesus' footsteps, it's very important not to just do that historical walk, but, in so doing, to remember why Jesus came and to carry on his mission of both mercy and justice today."

THE REV. DR. MARYSUE DRIER

Other points of the trip included visiting holy sites such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Temple Mount, a church in Nazareth where tradition holds Jesus' family lived, as well as visit the place of his birth in Bethlehem and the Via Dolorosa where he walked to the crucifixion.

"It's very valuable for seminarians who are going to preach the gospels to have this walk and this experience," Dreier said. "I think it definitely enlivens one's ability to preach about these places when you've actually been there... It's life changing in a number of ways to visit those sites and walk where Jesus walked, to go into the River Jordan where Jesus was baptized and go to the Garden of Gethsemane and contemplate on Jesus' suffering.

"However, while it's valuable to walk in Jesus' footsteps, it's very important not to just do that historical walk, but, in so doing, to remember why Jesus came and to carry on his mission of both mercy and justice today. That is the two-pronged value of such a pilgrimage to the West Bank to examine life under occupation."



Will Altman stops for a photo at the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Learning outside the classroom was an opportunity for both students and staff to undergo an intense educational and personal transformation, and is becoming a key component in the academic experience for LTSS students.

Last summer, Dr. Susan McArver took students on a two-week immersion course to the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation near Havre, Montana, and the Rev. Dr. Mark Fitzsimmons is teaching a class this spring on the connection between climate change and Christianity with educational experiences in Asheville, North Carolina and Atlanta.

Other courses focusing on Christian ethics have taken students to interact with non-profits, historical sites and more in an effort to give students and immersive educational experience before heading out into the mission field.



Yancy Martin visited the Church of St. Lazarus with his classmates. History holds it as the second resting place for Lazarus after he was raised from the dead by Jesus.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

YANCY MARTIN

Before Yancy Martin was even enrolled at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, he hoped he would travel to the holy land as an LTSS student. Friends in the Master of Divinity program had shown him pictures and encouraged him to go if he ever had the chance.

When Dr. James Thomas announced the trip in early 2019, Martin was excited to sign up. This trip to Israel and Palestine would be an opportunity to learn from an LTSS professor in a cultural context.

A trip like this one usually involves visiting the holy sites of the birth, life, death and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. This trip was a bit different. The focus for this trip, and the purpose of this class, was to experience holy sites where Christ's church is working to break the bonds of oppression and injustice.

Something in Martin shifted during the days they spent in Hebron. As he watched the Palestinians stand in long lines at the checkpoints, provide three pieces of identification, and be subject to searches, he saw first-hand what he had only heard about at home in Columbia, South Carolina. Witnessing the dedication of those who longed to get through the checkpoint to worship at the mosque opened

his eyes "to the faithfulness of those Palestinian Muslims, their dedication to worship and prayer."

The visit to Augusta Victoria hospital left an indelible mark on Martin's life. He will never forget how it felt to watch children on dialysis and a medical staff with not enough supplies to care for everyone. Standing there, feeling desperate to help, to change things, he wondered, "What can I do? Can money help change this? How can I be of service here?" He knew the ministry of their presence was meaningful, but he left with an aching spirit.

Martin knows seeing places like Augusta Victoria hospital, the checkpoints, and the various communities they visited will help him be a better minister.

"It helps me understand the dynamics of social injustices, the plight of every individual," he said. "My understanding of the cultural context in Israel and Palestine gives me a different view of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. We are all God's children."



During a “Commissioning Service” at the completion of the course, Bishop Carder (left) presented the students with handmade stoles that raise awareness for Alzheimer’s. They include the phrases “Clergy Against Alzheimer’s” and “Faith United Against Alzheimer’s.”

Dementia cont’d

Carder and his wife had moved to The Heritage at the Lowman Retirement Community in Columbia, South Carolina, to be closer to their children.

“I was engaged with two Lutheran institutions,” Carder said. “One, where I was teaching part time, and the other a continuing care community with a memory care facility. It seemed appropriate that we bring the resources of these two institutions together in this class.”

The class meets on Thursdays with the first half being devoted to discussion and poring over reading assignments. Students must present their own insights from their reading and reflection and they provide at least one question for the class to consider. Then, they spend the second half of the class relating to the residents and staff of the memory care unit, leading singing and devotions and interacting one-on-one with residents.

“By teaching us to be still and be in the moment, dementia patients gift us with the joy of being with one another and with God,” said LTSS alumnus Pastor Bryan Pigford ’19 of Stallville United Methodist Church in Charleston, South Carolina, who took the class in 2017. “In this way, they remind the busy pastor to be present with everyone we encounter, rather than rushing from one need to the next as if working down a to-do list.”

Carder teaches the class every other fall semester with the most recent class being his third since joining the faculty of LTSS.

Linda Carder spent a year and a half in the Bethany memory care unit, where she met the first LTSS group to take the course, before going to hospice. She passed away Oct. 3, 2019, while the fall class was in session.

“I studiously tried to avoid exploiting my own situation; nevertheless, my own journey gives the class some authenticity,” Carder said. “The class is not an academic abstraction for me; it is a lived experience.”

“This class offers a different lens to view human identity. We are more than our brains. We are more than a collection of mental capacities or physical capacities.”

For some students, the class is an uncomfortable experience. They’ve never had a friend or family member with dementia. For others, it takes them back to their own encounters with the disease.

The Rector Reads

A series on book recommendations by The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, Rector and Dean

In her new book, LTSS adjunct professor of Lutheran Confessions, Anna Madsen, connects the dots for Christians between justification and justice. Her book offers theological and historical arguments for Christians to work in the political realm on behalf of the good of others.

Madsen begins by reminding us that the gospel is the good news that Jesus, who was crucified, is risen. God has raised Jesus from the dead, and Christ’s resurrection clarifies that God is on the side of life. The resurrection is a validation: Jesus’ work to bring healing and wholeness—that is, salvation—is God’s own will and work. In this good news of resurrection, Martin Luther found the promise that we are justified—made right with God—as a free gift. Through no

effort of our own, Christ’s righteousness and his risen life are ours.

When Madsen reviews Luther’s central insight, she notices that justification frees us from fear of eternal punishment and also frees us for participating in the ongoing life of Jesus and work of God to make the wounded whole. Our gift and call is to practice the reign of God ahead of time. Words from her teacher, Walter Bouman, are instructive here: “Now that you know that death doesn’t win, there is more to do with your lives than preserve them” (19). Madsen writes, “We are in a moment when we are being collectively called to realize that the gospel is about more than personal forgiveness, more than going to church, more than believing that Jesus will meet

“We did a lot of talking about why people with dementia are treated differently and what theology says about that,” said senior Rebekah Swygert, whose grandmother was a resident of the memory care unit at Bethany until passing away in February. “We are weak and vulnerable, and that may be us one day. But if we dwell on ourselves, then we’re focusing on the wrong things.”

Carder said his personal experience has impacted the direction of the class; however, he also takes examples from other sources to give his students a well-rounded experience.

“Two students had therapy dogs. We incorporated those dogs in the visits with Bethany residents. The presence of those animals made a significant difference for the residents, and all they did was be present,” he said. “They illustrated a major learning: the importance of just being present!”

“It isn’t what you say or do with people with dementia. It’s being with them and being present in the moment. Pastors are so conditioned to want to fix or want to do or say. Just being present with a person with dementia matters. The people may not remember what you say. They may not remember your name or that you were there, but your presence leaves a feeling that lingers.”

Carder said one of the most surprising and rewarding experiences hasn’t been learning what memories the residents have lost, but rather the ones they’ve kept. Each week, they have devotions and sing hymns with the residents. Some residents who struggle to have a conversation can still recite Bible verses and sing hymns.

“Those practices were embedded, so even when they’ve lost their cognitive functioning, those memories and cognitive abilities are still there,” Carter said.

“Our memories are not contained within the bounds of our brains. Folks remember things about me that I don’t remember. When my mother died, I lost a host of memories about my childhood that I’ve forgotten. I still receive cards and expressions of sympathy for Linda with memories that I didn’t know about and that she had long forgotten. We hold each other’s memories in community, and I think the students learn the importance of that.”

us in heaven. Rather, it is about actively participating in personal and communal repentance, rejecting ways and systems that foster inequity or oppression. In short, it is about believing in and participating in the agenda revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus” (xvii).

Lutherans have traditionally been more quiet (one might even say quietist) than our Methodist, Presbyterian, or Catholic brothers and sisters with respect to civic engagement on behalf of others. Madsen’s works within the Lutheran tradition to connect what is arguably Luther’s greatest gift to the church—his clarity about God’s free gift of justification—with a vision for courageously and joyfully seeking justice for all those for whom Christ died and rose.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

26

Columbia Campus Open House

APRIL

16

Columbia Campus Open House

APRIL

22

Scholarship Luncheon for donors and scholarship recipients

APRIL

23

Alumni Day

APRIL

28

Spring 2020 semester ends

APRIL

29

Closing Eucharist in Christ Chapel

MAY

6

Baccalaureate Service

MAY

7

Columbia Campus Commencement

AUGUST

1

Application Deadline for Fall Entry

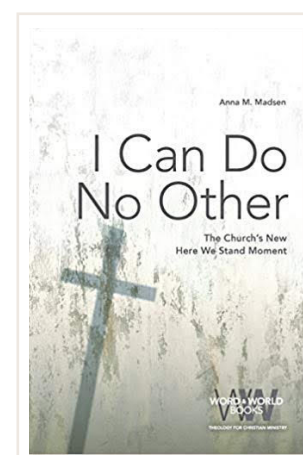
AUGUST

24

Fall 2020 Classes Begin

In Memoriam

The Rev. Glenn A. Yount ’44, 10/10/2019
 The Rev. Dr. Harold F. Park ’49, 4/28/2019
 The Rev. Dr. E. Armand Shealy ’54, 9/5/2019
 The Rev. Carl L. Ritchie ’57, 10/23/2019
 The Rev. William Jackson Kite ’58, 3/22/2019
 The Rev. Kenneth H. Ribe ’63, 6/8/2019
 The Rev. Ronald Glenn Smith ’68, 7/6/2019
 The Rev. Charles A. Sellman ’69, 2/20/2019
 The Rev. David B. Schaeffer ’77, 3/2/2019
 The Rev. April Lee Hall ’89, 6/14/2019
 Master Sergeant Ordice A. Gallups ’92, 3/14/2019
 The Rev. Donald Edward Vollenweider ’95, 7/18/2019
 The Rev. Donald C. Fritz ’98, 2/5/2019
 The Rev. Clyde Cauthen ’00, 11/14/2019



Anna M. Madsen, *I Can Do No Other: The Church’s New Here We Stand Moment*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2019. \$18.99. 203 pages.

Save the Date



SCHOLARSHIP DAY

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020



ALUMNI DAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2020

ir.edu/ltss



4201 North Main Street
Columbia, SC 29203



Gifts to Lenoir-Rhyne's New Life Fund impact the lives of seminarians at LTSS each day. Through the New Life Fund, those committed to the mission of LTSS can make a major difference in the training of future servants of the church.

Join the many supporters of LTSS in making sure the needs of the seminary and our seminarians are met. Please make a gift prior to May 31, 2020, for an approved tax credit.

LTSS is truly thankful for the loyalty and support of the ELCA's seminary in the South. A gift of any size expresses faith in the seminary's continued prosperity and demonstrates the value and commitment LTSS and its supporters have for its students.

Visit ir.edu/givetoLTSS

FUN FACTS

EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM AT LTSS

FACULTY TRIPS LED BY

The Rev. Dr. Melanie Dobson:

Ten students in Christian Ethics gardened in raised beds with the children and leaders of Koinonia of **Columbia** (nonprofit) as part of a class on Creation Care.

Ten students in Christian Ethics, in partnership with Historic Columbia, learned about landscapes of enslavement on the state Capitol grounds and in the Historic "Horseshoe" of **University of South Carolina**.

Ten students in Christian Ethics, in partnership with the nonprofit ColumbiaSC63, walked **Main Street** and learned of significant sites of Civil Rights protest. They then gathered in historic **Sydney Park CME Church** with two leaders of Civil Rights protest to hear their stories; the class concluded with the sharing of the Eucharist.

FACULTY TRIPS LED BY

Dr. Susan McArver:

The name of the course was "Native American Ministry" and she took two students to the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation near **Havre, Montana**. They spent two weeks there in an immersion course in June 2019.

FACULTY TRIPS LED BY

The Rev. Dr. James Thomas:

Rev. Dr. James Thomas did two learning beyond our walls things besides the **Israel/Palestine** trip: one in the city of **Columbia** in May, a learning in cultural context Maymester class; and one in **Washington, DC**, this fall, a conference on anti-racism.

FACULTY TRIPS LED BY

The Rev. Dr. Mark Fitzsimmons:

Dr. Fitzsimmons is leading a course that looks into preaching, the church and climate change. The first week takes place in **Arden, North Carolina**, with easy access to Pisgah National Forest, NOAA's National Centers for Environmental information, the French Broad River, North Carolina Arboretum, and two eco-friendly businesses (Biltmore Estate and Sierra Nevada Brewing Company). The second week involves attending the Festival of Homiletics in **Atlanta**.

FACULTY TRIPS LED BY

The Rev. Dr. MarySue Dreier:

Dr. Dreier annually takes students to a mission developers conference. This year is in **San Diego**.

