Our newest seminarians, members of the 2014 incoming class, took time out from Fall orientation to gather for the traditional photo on the steps of the Lark Building. It is a diverse group of individuals, representing 13 denominations, who have followed their call, arriving here for the rigorous academics and generous fellowship that marks a Lancaster Seminary education.

Many are from the Mid-Atlantic states, one hails from Texas, one was born in North Africa, another is a German-born U.S. citizen. They range in age from the early 20s to the late 60s.

Of our seven new students in the Doctor of Ministry program, six are pastors, balancing their full-time ministerial duties with their challenging doctoral course load. Rev. Peter Sanfilippo of Staten Island gets the prize for longest commute. He drives to Lancaster before dawn on Thursdays for his morning class, finishes his last class around 9:30 p.m. then heads out for the nearly three-hour drive home. After a 30-year career in the printing and publishing business, Peter followed his call to ministry, earned a Master of Divinity, and now pastors the Reformed Church of Metuchen, N.J.

Among the new 29 Master of Divinity and four Master of Arts in Religion students, five are recent college graduates while others have been in the workplace for many years. Among those with career experience, there’s a professional musician, two members of the Harlem Messengers international choir, a certified masseuse, an investigator for the US Department of Agriculture, and a retired owner of a vending machine business. There are five new students from the same church in New York, the nondenominational Rivers@Rehoboth.

We extend a warm welcome to 2014’s incoming class who now join the long line of seminarians who have passed through our doors to go on to lead lives of transformative action, serving God and the world.
I went to seminary because I didn't want to be a minister. In my senior year of college one of my professors nominated me for a fellowship to attend seminary, a fellowship funded by the Rockefellers designed to incentivize people who didn't want to be ministers but would attend seminary for a year if given an opportunity. I loved studying the Bible, so seminary interested me. But at that time in my life, I was conservative theologically. I didn't know if women should be ministers. In 1977, I'd only seen a few women ministers preach in my college chapel. I was more inclined to go into the overseas mission field and I was appointed to a position in Korea by the Presbyterian Church. My parents didn't want me to go off and become a missionary, so they encouraged the seminary alternative while also expressing doubts that I'd be able to do anything significant as a woman with a seminary degree.

I was selected for the fellowship and I went to seminary. I told the chair of Committee on Ministry, who shepherded candidates toward ordination, that I wasn't sure I was called and I didn't sign up to enter the candidacy process. Within a couple of months, I phoned him back and said I was ready. I was doing field education in a church where people were telling me I had a calling. At the same time, in seminary I was able to wrestle with scriptural understandings of gender and ministry and was satisfied that women could be ministers. At that time approximately 25% of the students in mainline Protestant seminaries were women.

Even though my story is idiosyncratic and out-of-date, some of the key elements are still relevant. A calling to ministry often involves 1) respected people who tap the shoulder of those who have gifts for ministry; 2) financial support; 3) family and friends who encourage (or don't completely discourage); 4) a structured process supports discernment of a call; and 5) church people who confirm the inward sense of God's call to the individual.

As a pastor, I always had at least one church member who was in seminary studying for the ministry. It was a great joy and honor to shoulder-tap gifted church members for ministry, assist them in their discernment, and build support for their seminary education. Pursuing a seminary education is one of the most exciting and transformative adventures a person can have. No one comes out untouched by God’s Spirit. After two or three years at seminary — when a person walks the aisle at the commencement ceremony, shakes hands with the president, and receives a diploma—he or she is prepared and eager to accept a high calling to lead in ministry and usher in the reign of God.

The church needs seminary-educated pastors who are prepared to “equip the saints” — the whole congregation — for the work of Christ’s church. We need educated persons who combine ministry with other professions to infuse other public settings with a theological vision. We come from a church tradition that loves God with our minds as well as our hearts. Please join me in inviting gifted, passionate people to accept God’s call, be educated for ministry, and be transformed in the process.

Dr. Carol E. Lytch, President
The Seminary’s Board of Trustees elected Dr. Anna Johnson-Winegar of Frederick, Maryland, to be a Trustee Emerita.

She chaired the Board of Trustees from 2010-13, during the Seminary’s period of transition to a new president, and even served as interim president for several months before President Carol E. Lytch was hired in 2011.

President Lytch said, “Anna brought her tremendous expertise and experience in board governance and leadership to us at a critical time, guiding our Seminary through some of its most challenging times with grace, dignity, and compassion. I am reminded of a quote from the Book of Esther: Who knows whether she was called into the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Dr. Johnson-Winegar, a lifelong member of Grace United Church of Christ in Frederick, held leadership positions in the UCC consistory, and UCC Central Atlantic Conference. Now retired from government service, she had worked as Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for all issues related to the highly critical Chemical and Biological Defense Program and was a biological weapons inspector in Iraq for the United Nations Special Commission. Dr. Johnson-Winegar was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Science and Engineering in 1998.

Rev. Dr. Bernie Zerkel, Jr., DMin ’79, Trustee Emeritus, died Nov. 13, 2014 in Westminster, MD. A loyal alumnus and friend of the Seminary who served for 20 years as a trustee, Rev. Zerkel was 89.

The meditation garden near the Dietz Refectory featuring the bronze statue of St. Francis of Assisi was named in his honor, as well as a scholarship that continues to support MDiv students in need.

He served congregations in Baltimore and Annapolis and for 24 years he was Associate Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Our prayers go out to his wife, Marjorie, and his family. The family has graciously asked those who wish to make a memorial contribution in Bernie’s name to please direct their gifts to Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 West James St., Lancaster, PA 17603, to the attention of Crystal Mills.

The Seminary’s new Stalfa Memorial Garden, funded in part by a gift from the Class of 2014, was dedicated during Fall Alumni/ae Day in October. It honors Rev. Dr. Frank Stalfa, our beloved professor of pastoral theology, who died in 2013. More information about interring ashes in the garden is forthcoming.
Jean DeLong Custer

Jean’s life fell apart in 2008. She had been, as she puts it “crazy/busy, but full of despair.” She was a fourth-generation farmer with a husband and children, but there was no joy in anything that she was doing. She was gripped by depression and uncertain of why she was living or what she was living for.

With the help of skilled professionals, Jean worked through her depression, and, in the midst of discovering that “depression lies,” she discovered a powerful relationship with the God whom she had known loved her as a child. She now is able to affirm in a new way that she is loved by God and called for a purpose to share that love with others. She originally came to Lancaster Seminary to explore chaplaincy. Now, because this second-year student is discovering something new about herself in her field education assignment, she is willing to consider parish ministry as an option, as well.

Jean says, “This is a time of discerning how I am to use my call. Meanwhile, I live for today and all the joys (and sorrows) that it entails, especially at Seminary, where I have been reborn.

—By Rev. Dr. Randy Riggs

Jonathan Queen

Jonathan Queen hopes to graduate in 2015. His call to ministry came from the pain and confusion of being raised in poverty and in an environment of drugs and gangs. He did not have the guidance of a strong family or role models that would assure him of God’s love, and he wound up making one bad decision after another. He eventually wound up in trouble with the law.

However, God used those bad decisions to guide him into a relationship with Jesus Christ that changed his life. He committed himself to follow Christ and to work with young people like himself who needed a faith that made sense of their lives, and he offered them a strong relationship with a positive role model. He was invited to build a youth ministry at Shiloh Baptist Church in York, Pa., where he ministered to more than 200 young people. It was the questions that those young people were asking which brought him to Lancaster Theological Seminary. He felt the need to be better versed in both the scriptures and theology in order to speak with some authority to their life situations.

At Lancaster, Jonathan’s call has been confirmed. He is now serving as pastor to youth and young adults at a “mega church” in Washington, D.C. of 20,000 members. His ministry reaches nearly 5,000 young people, many of whom come from the same life circumstances that he experienced, and he is one of the only formerly incarcerated men with visitation privileges in the local prison.

—By Rev. Dr. Randy Riggs

AND I SAID, “HERE AM I. SEND ME!”
—ISAIAH 6:8

GOD’S UNEXPECTED CALL
Rev. Ann Few, MDiv ’95

Spring 1990. I was wife, mother, music teacher, and more until a series of events began. It started with laryngitis (an unthinkable illness for a vocal music teacher) and a visit to my doctor who said, “Your problem is not an illness. Your symptoms are caused by stress. Go home, rest your voice for a week and examine your life.”

Examine my life? That simple phrase began my journey toward ordained ministry. I finished the teaching year then changed careers. I became the church secretary for a newly called minister. After a few months, he presented me with a book about women in ministry with the comment that congregation members came into the church office, not to see him, but to talk with me. “Ann, you need to begin to consider your call to ministry.”

The next two years my search took me through an extended CPE unit, a position at the Parish Resource Center and a Lancaster Seminary course, “The Church as a Healing Community” with Prof. Bob Webber. This awakened my awareness of the power of prayer in healing both physical and emotional hurts. Prof. Webber also affirmed my gifts for healing prayer in the process of the course. When the LTS Director of Admissions called: “Ann, I’ve heard you need to talk with me,” God’s call became clear. I enrolled as a full-time seminary student. As a new stage of my journey begins — retirement — I realize how blessed I have been in answering God’s unexpected call.

LIVES ARE CHANGED HERE
Rev. Dr. Martin Kuchma, DMin ’11

While studying for my Master of Divinity at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, I found a spiritual home with the United Church of Christ. I came to Lancaster Seminary when I was unable to coordinate the logistics of attending Andover Newton for my Doctor of Ministry. I remember showing up on campus and being struck by its simple beauty. People were friendly and quite welcoming. Lancaster could be where I got my doctorate but Andover Newton would always be “my seminary.”

Then a funny thing happened. I began to understand what a regional treasure the seminary is, and it captured my heart. I watched professors — brilliant, internationally respected scholars — share their wisdom with great skill, character, and commitment. I saw colleagues traveling to Lancaster to enhance their ministries, struggle with big questions, and enliven their work in the world. Lancaster made me a better scholar and a better pastor, exactly what the program aims to do.

When I completed my degree, I joined the faculty as adjunct instructor for the weekly DMin Seminar required of all incoming doctoral students, allowing me to engage in what amounts to the finest kind of continuing education, even as I watch the Seminary step boldly into the challenges of contemporary theological education, the church, and the world. There is a life-giving vibrancy on campus, a wonderfully dynamic atmosphere where diversity abounds and provides opportunities to celebrate life together and move toward life more abundant through conversations about important things. No doubt, lives are changed, as mine continues to be. Dare I say it? Lancaster Seminary has become “my seminary.”

www.lancasterseminary.edu
REMEMBERING THE JOURNEY’S FIRST STEPS

BILL ELLSWORTH, ’55

September 1952. Such a long time ago. My room in Richards Hall had a floor lamp left behind by Rev. Masatoshi Ogasawara ’52. It worked! I left it behind after using it for two years when I moved out of Richards. Never knew what happened to it. After college dorm life, it was the quiet in Richards that I appreciated. The building was full of seminarians, but after a certain time, a calmness settled in as we studied and prepared for the next day.

I remember the two dogs owned by Maggie and Ma Groff. I think it was on Mondays that the bells across the street at F&M rang. The dogs would walk out toward College Avenue and sit down and howl as the bells rang out.

There was a one-day retreat early in the year. We all traveled somewhere outside of Lancaster for the day just to get to know each other a bit better. It really worked.

Dr. Stonesifer, a librarian par excellence, had a simple system for taking books out of the library. Find the book. Take a piece of paper about the size of a Post-It, write your name and the name of the book on the paper, leave it on top of the index, and the book was yours almost as long as you need it.

Most of all I remember the chapel services. Everyone was present, including the professors. When we sang a hymn, all those men’s voices (I did appreciate the presence of the women) with the organ sometimes pulling us along, was really something to experience. Not that we were all in tune or had great voices, but it was often thrilling. It is good to remember.

Jack Seville, ’64 / ’73

Fanny and I were the first persons to move into the new married students dorm (Nevin Hall) that faced College Avenue in June 1960. I had watched the dorms being constructed as I attended Franklin & Marshall College across the avenue. We selected a third floor apartment because we were young and liked the idea of hiking the steps for exercise! What fun it was for us for this was the first and only time in our 56 years of marriage that we have lived in a “brand new home.” Fanny wore four-inch heels at that time, to reach up toward my height. The first time I cleaned and waxed the floors of our apartment I was disappointed to see little indentations in the floors that matched her heels. After that, we both took our shoes off at the doorway. It was “holy ground.”

My first experience as a student came later that summer when I was the only student to take the Koine Greek Test which was administered to students who had studied Greek in college. Much to my surprise, I passed the test and was excused from taking any further classes in Greek. Nine years later, after arriving in Lancaster to become Pastor of St. Andrew, UCC, President Moss asked if I would be interested in teaching Koine Greek to first year students at LTS. I informed him that I had never taken the course and he said he knew that ... I became Adjunct Professor of New Testament Greek. My first experience with LTS as a student led to a six-year stint as Adjunct Professor, a time of wonderful experiences with incoming students and great joy for me as a teacher.
As our new seminarians settle in, some grads reminisced about their first days on campus.

JACKIE LINGELBACH, MDiv ’06

Having lost a husband to cancer and going through five years of grief and 10 long years of discernment about my call to ministry, I prepared to move from Vermont to Lancaster to go to seminary. Many of my friends who had a hard time seeing a young widow alone made some off-the-cuff remarks about how I might find a husband at seminary. They didn’t know that part of my call and discernment for ministry had to do with Isaiah 54 and the message that I would remember my widowhood no more for God would be my husband.

In the fall of 2003, on the first day of new student orientation, I attended a reception for all the incoming students. There I met Paul Eyer, a fellow first-year student. “What did you do before you came to seminary?” I asked. “I was a practicing attorney,” he replied. I responded, “So how does a lawyer become a minister?” This led to a lively conversation about “call” and “vocation.”

Eventually we realized that we shared more than just an interest in faith-focused conversations, but neither of us knew how to do this “clergy couple” thing. So we sought the advice of Rev. Dr. Frank Stalfa and Rev. Dr. Bruce Epperly. Following their wisdom and our hearts, not only did we graduate in May 2006 but later that evening we were married in Santee Chapel with a reception following in the Refectory.

I had come to Lancaster Seminary trusting that God would lead me. How was I to know that on that first day I had just met my future husband? God is still speaking indeed! You never know where God might lead you!

JOHN FUREMAN, MDiv ’74 / DMin ’94

I entered seminary in September 1974 as a recent college graduate. My wife and I, full of excitement and some apprehension, moved into an apartment on campus. When we arrived, there was a flyer under the door with an invitation to a “beer bash” and picnic for the entire seminary community in Buchanan Park on the campus of Franklin & Marshall College. This was rather a shock, perhaps due to my naive Puritan ethic and family-of-origin attitudes. A beer bash on the first day at seminary was not on my radar screen at that time. Nevertheless, we decided to attend.

When we arrived the keg had already been tapped and to my greater surprise, one of the professors had brought along his own ample beer mug and was enjoying the “golden nectar of the gods” with apt enthusiasm. Everyone else, it seemed, was provided a plastic cup — the commoner’s stein. The event turned out to be a wonderful time to share food and fellowship and begin to know the members of the community with whom we would happily spend the next three years.

As I reflect upon that experience, now 40 years later, I realize how much I have grown and changed. I also realize that the “beer bash” at Buchanan Park was an incredible experience of community and that community has been a hallmark of my pastoral experience everywhere I have served. Christian fellowship is certainly one of the signposts of the beloved community of Christ. It is also Jesus’ invitation and promise to the faithful — to feast with him in the Kingdom of God. Who would have guessed that that first day at Lancaster Theological Seminary would be a foretaste of the beloved community feasting together in harmony and peace?

Care to share your stories or photos? We’d love to hear from you— Contact Rev. Paul Eyer, ’06 Director of Alumni/ae and Church Relations, peyer@lancasterseminary.edu.
Adjunct Instructor of Worship and Preaching, Pastor Nick Peterson, MDiv’13, was on the scene this summer during the demonstrations and violence in Ferguson, Missouri, that were ignited after police shot to death two young African American men within 10 days.

The events in Ferguson sparked public discussions of race, violence, and justice across the United States including here at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Nick grew up near Ferguson, and returned to his hometown Aug. 20 after Michael Brown, 18, was killed Aug. 9 and Kajieme Powell, 23, was gunned down 10 days later.

“What really prompted me to return was Kajieme’s death,” Nick explains. “He was shot 11 times by two St. Louis police officers. He had a Swiss Army knife keychain in his hand; he had stolen energy drinks and was acting erratically, he was likely autistic, and the storeowner and clerk called police. He was dead 15 seconds after police showed up. My wife and I are raising two of our cousins. Jamaury, the four-year-old, had significant language delays. After Kajieme Powell was killed, I had a dream about Jamaury being in a situation where he did not communicate what he was thinking, and he was perceived as a threat. I knew then that I needed to get back home.”

Nick was “surprised at the extent to which the Christian church was silent … and the extent to which American Christianity lacks the ability to see Christ in the abusing and misusing and torturing of black bodies by white systems and structures of power.”

“A large part of my formation has come from here, from faculty members, ethics courses, Christian worship, and course perspectives in black theology,” Nick explained. “Lancaster Seminary provided me with a way to synthesize things I understood from a secular standpoint as theology issues, and do the work of bridging context and articulating the UCC motto that God is still speaking.
“At Lancaster Seminary, my theology has evolved, and this includes the influence of Mercersburg theology, the deep sense that the church is Christ incarnate in the world.”

Nick's experience in Ferguson was reported in the Lancaster newspaper. After his return, he has been an invited speaker at various community, school and college gatherings, including the Seminary’s first community conversation, Testify: A Conversation About Ferguson, Race, and Violence, organized by Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton, assistant professor of Practical Theology.

Our target audience consists of Lancaster Seminary students, staff, faculty, administration, alums, and friends of Lancaster Seminary in the wider Lancaster community.

The conversations are underscored by the grassroots belief that it is important for the gathered community to define, own, lead, benefit from, and sustain any transformation we will experience around race and racism.
President Carol E. Lytch

Our President maintains a busy calendar that also includes speaking and preaching, including these engagements:

**November 2014** — Trinity United Church of Christ, East Petersburg, Pa., and Trinity United Church of Christ, Hanover, Pa.

**January 2015** — Presenter, The President as Educator, at the Association of Theological Schools Presidential Leadership Intensive, San Antonio, Texas.


Dr. Lee C. Barrett


**Fall 2014** — Presenter, half-day leadership workshop, “Theologizing After Pluralism: Babel or Pentecost?” with the Samaritan Center, Lancaster.


Dr. Greg Carey

**Fall 2014** — Presenter, “Paul’s Theologizing,” four-part Leadership series with the Samaritan Center, Lancaster.

**November 2014** — Presents two papers at the 2014 Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting in San Diego; is a panelist in the Women in the Biblical World Section; comments on The Interpretation of Revelation in the TV Series Sleepy Hollow; panelist in the Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Interpretation Section; and comments on Fernando Segovia’s *Hermeneutics of Otherness and Engagement: Impact and Future Directions*.


Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton

**Fall 2014** — Author, *A Womanist Pastoral Theology Against Intimate and Cultural Violence*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. The book is “about Black women’s search for relationships and encounters that support healing from intimate and cultural violence. The text is shaped around hearing Black women who teach readers that self-recovery from childhood sexual abuse, incest, molestation, rape, and partner violence isn’t just about the offense. It is also about recovering from a culture that normalizes violence against Black women in a particular way.”


**Fall 2014** — Community Forum Panelist, “Police and Community Unite,” Ray’s Temple Church of God in Christ, Lancaster.

Dr. David Mellott

**Fall 2014** — Presenter: “A Priest and a Minister Walk into a Bar...” Theology with a Twist, Maiden Creek Church, Kutztown Tavern.


Dr. Elizabeth Soto

**January 2015** — Elizabeth will be one of four speakers addressing the topic, Where Culture Blurs Theology: What is an Anabaptist Christian? at Pastors Week at the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.


**July 2015** — President over the Assembly at the Mennonite Church USA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri with the theme On the Way / En el Camino.
NEWS BRIEFS

Meck & Moss Awards

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

December 31 is the deadline to submit nominations for the Meck and Moss Awards for Faithfulness in Ministry.

The Allan S. Meck Award
is presented to an alumni/ae for distinguished service in the practice of pastoral ministry.

The Robert V. Moss Award
is presented to an alumni/ae for distinguished service in the practice of specialized ministry.

You can find the nomination criteria on the Alumni/ae page on lancasterseminary.edu.

Online Store is OPEN

Looking for logo stuff and more? Find it all in our new online store!

Lancaster Seminary spirit wear and gear are available for purchase through our new online store at lancasterseminary.edu. Seminary staff and the Seminarian Community Council researched supplier options for branded merchandise. The Peter Kleine Company, a national supplier located in nearby Lititz, offered exceptional service, selection, value, and pricing. The Peter Kleine Company handles the transaction process, fulfillment, and shipping.

Thanks to the Alumni/ae Council for helping to select the initial selection of popular items. We can always expand our inventory. If there is something you’d like to buy, let us know and we’ll research it.

LECTURES ONLINE

Wish you could have been here for one of our thought-provoking academic lectures? As a service to our alumni/ae, students, and friends of the Seminary, our website’s Multimedia channel now features lectures including Rev. Adam Hamilton’s recent talk, “Five Essential Principles for Effective Church Leadership,” and Prof. Lee Barrett’s Mackey Memorial Lecture, “Where Sparks Fly: When Mercersburg and Bonhoeffer Meet.”

Go to lancasterseminary.edu and click the Multimedia box.
In the spirit of giving this holiday season, we prayerfully ask you to consider naming Lancaster Theological Seminary among those organizations that will receive support once you or your spouse has passed on. A charitable bequest is the simplest of all planned gifts. Just a little bit of time today can create long-term impact.

If you would like more information on how your bequest might best be used to help strengthen the future of Lancaster Seminary and our students’ and graduates’ ministries, please call Crystal Mills, Vice President of Advancement, at (717) 290-8738.

If you’ve already named the Seminary in your estate plan, please let us know that as well, so that we might express our thanks and count you among those special members of our Faith Legacy Society.