

THE ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# HERALD

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## LIFE OF DISCIPLESHIP



A community called to prepare *theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled* men and women to *evangelize* and to spread *scriptural holiness throughout the world* through the *love* of Jesus Christ, in the *power* of the Holy Spirit, and to the *glory* of God the Father.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3. **Letter from the President**  
The Life of Discipleship
- 4. **Wilderness Moments**  
Professor of Philosophy of Christian Religion, Dr. Joseph B. Onyango Okello, on the trials we face that humble us and teach us more about God.
- 6. **Discipleship and the Fruit of the Spirit**  
Professor of Biblical Studies, Dr. Joe Dongell, gives a deeper understanding of discipleship as it relates to the fruit of the spirit.
- 8. **Faculty Spotlight:**  
**Dr. Danny Román-Gloró**  
Director, Asbury Latino Center
- 10. **Alumni Highlight:**  
**M’Kenna Gillespie**  
Master of Divinity (2021)
- 12. **Alumni Highlight:**  
**Rev. Dr. Girma Bishaw**  
Founder and Director of the Gratitude Initiative  
Doctor of Ministry (2005)
- 15. **Hundredfold Initiative**  
Campaign update
- 16. **Your Generosity Impact**  
Read about how your giving led to a life-changing relationship between Dr. Carolyn Moore (1998) and Heather Hill (2023).
- 18. **Because of You**  
Thanks to your generosity, Asbury Seminary's global reach and influence continues to grow.
- 19. **From the Archives:**  
**Seasons of Spiritual Pilgrimage**  
An article from Dr. Frank Bateman Stanger taken from *The Herald*, Winter 1985.
- 20. **News and Events**
- 21. **Tennent Tour Date**
- 22. **Thrive with Asbury Seminary Podcast**
- 23. **Shepherd’s Fund Q&A with Dr. Robert Bickert (1968)**

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## THE LIFE OF DISCIPLESHIP



The Resurrected Jesus left his followers with a final command which we often refer to as the Great Commission. Jesus repeated this final commissioning in all four gospels (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-49 and John 20:21), but the one which concludes Matthew's gospel is probably the most well-known. It

is there that we hear those familiar words, "go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." What does it mean to "make a disciple"? It is sometimes said that a disciple is "someone who learns from another." But, at least in English, the word we use for that is the word "student."

Since Asbury Seminary is an educational institution, we know a lot about what a "student" is. The word "student" appears hundreds of times in our faculty and student

handbooks, syllabi and on our website. As an accredited academic institution, we have to report a whole range of things about our students to the government and various state licensure agencies. One of the many things is the numbers. In other words, we have to *count* students,

both current and past (alumni/ae). To do this, the government has to define exactly who or what a student is. The official government definition of a student is this: "An individual for whom an educational institution maintains educational records." That is not exactly an inspiring definition is it? But, it does help to raise the question... What does Asbury Seminary mean by the word "student" and how is it different from a "disciple"?

I think that the word "disciple" embraces everything we associate with a "student" but so much more. The word "student" is associated with someone who learns the teaching, information and content of another. However, the word "disciple" encompasses that, but also involves becoming intimately connected to the master, not just in our knowledge, but our life practice and our thought processes in a way which impacts the whole of our lives. In short, discipleship means to fully engage in a transformative process which completely reshapes us into the image of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

This meaning of the word "disciple" goes back to the ancient world as a way of referring to someone who, with great dedication, followed their teacher, master or mentor in every detail of their life so that they could eventually become what their master was. This is the reason Asbury Seminary exists. We bring together academic learning, worship, spiritual disciplines such as prayer and service, along with spiritual formation to help our students become true disciples of Jesus Christ. In other words, we have a goal which is far beyond the transmission of information, but rather transformation and formation for the purpose of mission.

Our theme for this academic year is the Life of Discipleship. This issue of the *Herald* will continue to explore some of what we are seeking to accomplish. In a nutshell, we are pursuing nothing less than the full formation of our students' hearts, minds and bodies for the kingdom, so that they might be disciples! Discipleship must embrace it all. True discipleship is nothing less than our hearts, our minds, and our bodies being fully given over to be formed, shaped and directed by our Master, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Dr. Timothy C. Tennent  
President, Professor of World Christianity

**We bring together academic learning, worship, spiritual disciplines, along with spiritual formation to help our students become true disciples of Jesus Christ.**

# WILDERNESS MOMENTS

*By Dr. Joseph B. Onyango Okello*



I wrote these lines while sitting next to my wife at an infusion center thirty minutes from home. Several weeks before, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She was, therefore, undergoing chemotherapy. The experience was intensely difficult to countenance, both as a husband who always tries to fix things and as a father who feels compelled to explain to his five-year-old son what his mother was experiencing.

I rummaged through these staggering realities mentally. I wondered why God would not immediately touch my wife with instantaneous healing. Surely, the path to direct instantaneous healing was much shorter, quicker, and more convenient. I found no easy answers to these questions. My assessment of the situation, however, revolved around the word I called the *wilderness*. We found ourselves in the wilderness contending with a situation bigger than ourselves.

How I perceived God to be in the details drew me back to a fascinating experience detailed in the Old Testament. God had a specific salvific plan for Israel. Using Moses as his link person, he delivered Israel from bondage. However, in order for them to arrive at their divinely designed destiny, they had to pass through the wilderness rather than through a shorter route into the Promised Land.

Analogously, I felt God had a specific destiny for my family he could, quite easily, accomplish through healing my wife directly. He could have used, if he wanted to, the shorter, quicker and more direct means of instantaneous healing. Seemingly, however, God accomplished this destiny through the wilderness of chemotherapy. After studying the book of Exodus and the book of Deuteronomy, I felt my family was walking through the wilderness.

Of course, I do not limit my application of *wilderness* to its literal meaning. I include, in that expression, the various unpleasant experiences in life that test us, humble us, teach us and shape us. I know of no Christians living their lives without those experiences. They come in various packages—in moments of spiritual drought, in moments of physical pain, in moments of relational challenges, in moments of financial difficulties and sometimes, in death.

I call such moments *wilderness* moments. Given the option, I want my life to be painless, comfortable and stress-free. I do not wish to feel the cruelty hitherto afforded by this universe. I know of no one who does. Most of the institutions we put in place in this life seem geared, on the one hand, towards eliminating the wilderness moments we live through and, on the other, toward promoting our wellbeing. Good fortunes rarely come unless you somehow work for them, but wilder-

ness moments often come when no one is looking for them.

The path to our spiritual destiny is afflicted with wilderness moments, and when they do come, we should expect them to test us, to humble us, to teach us, and to shape us. Though undesirable, they in some way produce the best in us. When we survive the tests, the humility, the lessons or the discipline brought about by them, we end up, in a certain sense, coming through them as better persons.

These moments often come in spite of sustained belief in God. The individuals seem to have their devotions regularly, praying and reading their Bibles without fail. Has God abandoned them? Many thought patterns in the Western world arrive not merely at this conclusion, but to the more radical conclusion that God does not exist. Hence, they lean toward some form of unbelief.

## **The path to our spiritual destiny is afflicted with wilderness moments, and when they do come, we should expect them to test us, to humble us, to teach us, and to shape us.**

How should we respond to the challenge presented by wilderness moments? Does the Bible offer any defense for itself? Easy answers remain unavailable. This fact does not mean *any* answers are unavailable. They *are* available, but extremely difficult to embrace without wrestling with certain facts about our world. For starters, I encourage the pilgrim

to be open to the reality of having a personal encounter with God's saving grace in Christ as a way of gaining assurance of Christ's presence. A daily walk with Christ in prayer, in worship, in hearing from God through reading his word, and in hearing testimonies of how others overcame such times do provide a starting point of assuring believers that God is with us, he is walking with us every step of our journey of faith—just as he walked with Israel in their forty-year pilgrimage to the Promised Land.

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<sup>1</sup>Excerpt modified from *Wilderness Moments: How To Live Victoriously Through Them* by Joseph Okello

<sup>2</sup>Exodus 13:17–18

<sup>3</sup>Deuteronomy 8:1–5



*Dr. Joseph B. Onyango Okello serves as visiting Professor of Philosophy of Christian Religion and is a two-time graduate of Asbury Seminary. Dr. Okello has served as a pastor and choral director at Africa Inland Church. He has published several articles and books, including Revisiting God: A Commonsense Approach to Theism (Xulon Press, 2008). In addition to his duties at Asbury Seminary, he is also an adjunct instructor at Asbury University and the University of Kentucky.*



# Discipleship and the Fruit of the Spirit

*By Dr. Joe Dongell*

How do “discipleship” and “the Fruit of the Spirit” relate to each other? We could satisfy ourselves with an easy answer, supplied by general Christian intuition, and say that “As we follow Jesus more closely (discipleship), we will begin developing various moral virtues (the ‘fruits’ of the Spirit).” While there’s nothing wrong in putting it this way, much valuable truth waits to be discerned.

I’ll start with the infamous “cluster of grapes” we’ve often seen depicting the “nine fruits of the Spirit” as enumerated in Galatians 5:22-23 (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control). While there is value in examining each of these separately for study and prayer, there is a growing and convincing consensus that (according to the larger logic and message of Paul’s letters) love is the singular fruit of the Spirit, and that each of the remaining elements listed is but a manifestation of love. Put positively, a heart filled with and ruled by love will

inevitably be joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, and so on. Put negatively, our failures in joyfulness, peacefulness, patience, kindness and so on, necessarily lead to this deeper diagnosis: we are deficient in love. This creates a radically simplified agenda for the Christian life, as I Corinthians 13 implies, and as I Corinthians 14:1 articulates: “Seek love.” It is this exact insight that John Wesley seized upon and preached with such urgency: “This love is the great medicine of life; the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world; for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this [love] is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand; there is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God.”

Regarding “discipleship,” our church-talk tends to move in two different directions. When we hear the mandate to “make disciples,” we typically think of “evangelism” and the moment conversion. But when we create a church staff position entitled “Minister of

Discipleship,” we typically think of cultivating believers toward greater connectedness, involvement, and maturity. As it turns out, the famous “Great Commission” of Matt. 28:16-20 inseparably binds these two projects together. As often noted, the main verb, “make disciples,” is followed by two instrumental participles explaining just how disciples are to be made: “by baptizing them,” and “by teaching them.” Baptism brings to culmination a person’s initial encounter with the gospel, as they respond through repentance and by faith in the Risen Christ. But in Jesus’ macro-vision of “making disciples,” the necessary second movement involves leading baptized believers into living lives of obedience to (not simply knowledge of) “all that Jesus had commanded them.”

Some years ago I decided to read through Matthew’s Gospel and tally up “all that [Jesus] had commanded” us, whether directly or indirectly. My count came to around 100 items, ranging across many topics (e.g. prayer, forgiveness, oaths, lust, justice, marriage, giving). Serious disciple-making must therefore involve us (both disciplers and disciples) in reshaping our lives in all of these particular ways, to conform ourselves to the will of God as revealed in the teaching of Jesus. Quite an agenda!

But as with Paul’s teaching, the same amazing simplification operates within Jesus teaching. Yes, we need the particular teachings of Jesus’ to help us face the challenges of life in its complexity. Yet above all of these particulars is the single matter of love, binding all particulars together, both to define and to empower them. Jesus summarized the entire revealed will of God (the Old Testament in his day) in terms of loving God and neighbor (Matt. 22:34-40), a summarization that the apostles embraced and forwarded throughout the NT as the central and controlling ethic of Christianity itself.

We can see now that the “second half” of the Great Commission [of obeying all that Jesus has commanded] is essentially the deeper project of being cleansed, filled,

and controlled by the very love of God, and that the “first half” of the Great Commission becomes the glad project of inviting the lost into a saving fellowship with our loving God and God’s beloved children. Expressed this way, we see that love stands as the radiant center of both “evangelism” and “spiritual formation,” joining them together into the one project of “disciple-making,” in the name of the one God who is Love.

This crucial footnote must now follow to protect “love” from becoming a flabby, permissive moralism: We cannot become people of love just by choosing it, or by gritting our teeth and willing our way forward. The love that expels the corrosive evil remaining in our hearts, that loves all neighbors (and especially our enemies!), and that honors in holy ways all relational boundaries of integrity (physical, sexual, emotional, economic, spiritual) according to the Creator’s wisdom... this kind of love ultimately comes “from God” alone (I John 4:7, James 3:17), is poured into our hearts through the Spirit (Romans 5:5), and therefore is “the fruit [coming from, produced by] the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16). As with all of God’s gifts, this supreme gift will come as we persist in “asking, seeking and knocking” (Matt. 7:7-11), and in walking expectantly within the graciously given and enabled Means of Grace.



*Dr. Joseph R. Dongell joined the faculty at Asbury Theological Seminary in 1989 and now serves as Professor of Biblical Studies, with primary responsibility in the Inductive Bible Studies Department. As an ordained elder in the Wesleyan Church, Dr. Dongell has maintained an active ministry in that denomination as an associate pastor, a regular adult Sunday school teacher; a one-time director and frequent advisor of the Wesleyan Seminary Foundation on Asbury Seminary’s campus, an instructor in regional Wesleyan ministerial training; and a representative to the annual Graduate Student Theological Seminar.*



## FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: DR. DANNY ROMÁN-GLORÓ

*Director, Asbury Latino Center*

**Dr. Danny Román-Gloró** serves others so that they can become kingdom builders. After graduating from college, Dr. Roman-Gloró experienced God’s call to preach. He served as a bi-vocational pastor and church planter for 26 years prior to coming to Asbury Seminary. Now, he serves as Director of the Asbury Latino Center, helping students learn to better understand theology, church history, biblical studies, hermeneutics, and preaching in order to become pastors, theologians and leaders who are able to help their congregations understand the world through the lens of scripture.

“My job is driven by my personal mission statement,” Dr. Roman-Gloró said. “I believe my mission is to develop men and women who will build the kingdom of God and become the men and women that God wants them to be. Everything I try to do is to move that mission forward.”

Even as Dr. Román-Gloró pastored, he also worked several jobs to help those in the vulnerable populations in which he lived. Throughout his 26 years as a bi-vocational pastor, he served within the federal prison system to help those struggling with addiction, worked to help prevent the spread of HIV, and worked for The Children’s Trust, an organization that uses county funding to create grants for private organizations to help children. With this organization, he managed contracts with organizations like YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, etc. for afterschool and Summer camp.

During that time, he also pursued a D.Min. in Preaching and Biblical Interpretation from Gordon-Conwell and a Ph.D. in Communications and Media Studies from Regent University. As he approached graduation, he started praying about why he had been pastoring, teaching, serving and preaching. He explored questions such as, “Why did I feel called to work on a Ph.D.? Why do I love preaching? And why did I choose to get a Doctor of Ministry degree?” As he prayed and listened to the Holy Spirit, he realized he did all these things because he wanted to help pastors be better preachers.

“I kept going back to the why, not the how or the what,” he said.

With each new opportunity, Dr. Román-Gloró looks for ways

to pursue his calling to make disciples. Although he currently works at Asbury Seminary, he believes it’s important to pursue and understand a calling that could be done anywhere, no matter your role in the world. For example, even while the apostle Paul was in prison, he was still being true to his calling by telling others about Jesus. Dr. Román-Gloró believes his calling is less about what he does and all about why he’s doing it.

“We have to reframe how churches mold and make disciples to learn to think about this mission that God has given us,” he said. “Our mission in Christ and what we feel called to do, we should be able to do it anywhere. If we can only do our calling in one place or in one way, then we need to re-think our calling.”

Now as director of the Asbury Latino Center, Dr. Román-Gloró helps students understand their identity in Christ, exegete the scriptures and teach their congregations sound theological doctrine. Through the Excellence in Preaching Initiative, he teaches workshops and leads retreats to support pastors in the Hispanic, Latino and African-American churches. His work with the Thriving in Ministry Initiative offers resources in pastoral training, self-care, and relationships for Latino/Latina bi-vocational pastors to help them navigate the challenges of working a full-time job and serving as a full-time pastor. This spring the Asbury Latino Center plans to release a new podcast called “Asbury Clave en Latina.” The podcast will release new episodes weekly about a variety of theological topics.

“The Asbury Latino Center is a bridge between the Latino community and Asbury Seminary,” he said. “We want to help the Latino community see the Seminary as a trusted resource and make those resources easily accessible.”

The Asbury Latino Center is a central place for all the Spanish-language and bilingual programs at Asbury Seminary. These programs are offered online, face-to-face and hybrid formats and reflect the best training and scholarship that the Seminary has to offer. The Asbury Latino Center houses the Bilingual Master of Arts in Ministry, a graduate certificate in Hispanic Ministry Formation, and the Latino Formation Program.

*Dr. Danny Román-Gloró is Director of Asbury Theological Seminary’s Asbury Latino Center, which serves as the bridge between the Latino/a community and Asbury Theological Seminary’s theological tradition, ethos, mission, and educational resources. To this end, the center seeks to create and sustain a set of educational program offerings (both credit and non-credit) that are contextualized, accessible and affordable, and culturally responsive to the ministry needs of the Latino/a church in the USA and the world.*





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## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT:

### M'KENNA GILLESPIE

*Master of Divinity, Asbury Seminary, 2021.*

**P**rior to coming to Asbury Seminary, M'Kenna had no idea what she wanted to do with her life. In fact, she changed her degree once before arriving on campus and again during her first year of Seminary. But her time at Asbury Seminary helped to ground her academically and spiritually. Her coursework, chaplaincy internship and formational experience as part of the Community of St. Anslem (CoSA) at Lambeth Palace in London, England, helped her know God personally, develop a prayer life and learn to love herself so she could love her neighbor.

During her clinical pastoral education (CPE) program at UK, M'Kenna completed clinical training, made hospital visits, responded to calls, and learned different aspects of chaplaincy care. After completing the program in 2018, she realized she had found her spot in ministry.

“For a long time, I felt like the only thing I was good at is loving people, but I struggled with that because I said, ‘Well, what good is that? You can’t put it on a resume,’” she said. “And then when I started doing CPE, I found the place where I could do just that. And it was the place where I finally felt like my passion and my calling and my gifts aligned.”

That fall, M'Kenna joined CoSA in London, England, for a year-long, immersive, structured season of prayer, rest, reflection and growth. CoSA was founded in 2015 by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend

Justin Welby and invites people ages 20-35 into one year of monastic life, or as they call it, life in God’s time.

M'Kenna’s cohort of 13 gathered three to four times daily for corporate prayer, daily eucharist and personal, silent prayer. On Wednesdays, the community participated in “desert mornings,” where each person remained silent until 2 p.m. This allowed for extra time to connect with God through prayer, art, outdoor walks and spiritual reading. The CoSA community also completed the tasks of daily living, such as cooking, laundry, planning and participating in group gatherings and choir practice together. Through this time, her faith transitioned from being merely academic to personal and her almost non-existent prayer life grew.

“It was a slow process because we had carved out time for multiple times of prayer throughout our day,” she said. “We had three to four corporate services and two different times of personal prayer. They would introduce us to different types of praying, different topics, methods. And it was a struggle for me, especially growing in the silent prayer.”

As the time for her seven-day silent retreat approached, she felt terrified by the impending loneliness if she didn’t learn to hear from God. But during one of her first prayer times, praying through Psalm 103, she discovered that she was actually having a conversation with God for the very first time.



“I realized that I was learning to discover the love of God in my life, was learning to discover his voice and actually believing that he wanted to talk to me,” she said. “It was a huge step in that I was just realizing that I did have access to God and that God wasn’t so distant from me after all.”

She also learned to connect with God through meaningful imagery. On a retreat, the Lord revealed to her that he was the gardener of her heart. On that same retreat, a nun reminded her that in all of life, but especially in her future work as a chaplain, she would love and lose people, but that their love is incarnated on her heart. M’Kenna began to see herself in a garden with the Lord, but the garden earth was cracked and desert-like. Within each crack, the seed of each person that she had loved or been loved by started growing into a beautiful garden.

“There’s a temptation in chaplaincy to take your work home with you,” she said. “And the truth is you just can’t do that. When I especially feel myself tempted to do so when I’m grieving someone, I try to go back to that place in the garden and to just plant a seed for them and to give them to the Lord, but also acknowledge that they

impacted me as well.”

M’Kenna planned to return to the Seminary’s Kentucky campus to complete her degree, but as her first year came to a close, she was invited to stay for a second year to serve the cohort behind her by facilitating retreats, leading teaching sessions, doing administrative tasks and serving as a role model. After making and praying through a pros and cons list, she realized all the cons were becoming pros. Her roommate and others encouraged her to apply, and during her prayer times, she felt the Lord affirming her calling, as well as the rest of the leadership team. In her second year, she learned to love herself, practice self-care, and appreciate the gifts she had been given to serve others.

“It was a gift that CPE and CoSA backed up to one another,” she said. “In CPE, I became aware of learning areas that I needed to pursue and CoSA gave me time to do that and put into practice one of the most important things in chaplaincy, self-care.”

M’Kenna expects to graduate with a Master of Divinity degree in Spring 2021 and plans to complete a chaplaincy residency at the University of Kentucky.



## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT: REV. DR. GIRMA BISHAW

*Founder and Director of the Gratitude Initiative in Britain  
Doctor of Ministry, Asbury Seminary, 2005.*

According to the National Science Foundation, an average person has about 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts per day. Of those, 80 percent are negative thoughts, and 95 percent are repetitive, forming our imaginations and behaviours. Rev. Dr. Girma Bishaw, Founder and Director of the Gratitude Initiative in Britain, seeks to share the gift of gratitude with others to change the social imagination and thought patterns to transform the way we see ourselves and others.

For Dr. Bishaw, a lifestyle of gratitude grew out of hardship. Fleeing civil war in Ethiopia, Dr. Bishaw left his family and home to immigrate to Britain in 1990. He arrived at the airport expecting no one to meet him and only with \$250 in his pocket. He soon became involved with the Ethiopian Christian Fellowship Church who helped him grow deeper in his new faith, affirmed his calling and eventually appointed him to serve as pastor of their church for over 18 years.

“It was a very natural progression, first an urge to disciple people, to have a heart for new converts,” he said. “As I gave myself to it, trying to disciple and teach follow-up classes, it naturally grew in me, and eventually I responded to that call.”

As Dr. Bishaw pastored, he sought ways to give back to his adopted country, which gave him so many opportunities and privileges. After ministering many

years among Ethiopians and Eritreans, the desire to reach out to the diverse local community and people of the host nation grew in him.

“I began to see the limitation and exclusiveness of our ministry, which bothered me a lot and led me to seek ways to collaborate with others,” he said.

As he wrestled with these things, he felt God place a burning question on his heart: What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in a diaspora context?

He longed to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers and other issues to unite the various congregations and ethnic churches within Britain. His congregation began partnering with the Church of England, ethnic churches and other denominations to reach out to the local community as one body, and as a result, Life Festival Enterprise was born.

Through Life Festival Enterprise, his pursuit of gratitude was strengthened as he realized there wasn't a platform to say thank you to the British people for their generosity and goodness to him. Through interactions with church leaders and wider conversations in society, Dr. Bishaw became aware of the negative narrative that created a toxic environment that made cross-cultural mission and genuine relationships difficult to form. He realized the need for true unity, rather than the pervasive false unity that avoided difficult conversations to prevent disagreement.

“Leaders were afraid to raise difficult issues, to engage with difficult conversations because there wasn’t a safe platform, environment or framework that will help us to have a heart-to-heart talk without being angry or condemning,” he said. “That became a burden to me as well, and I started to ask, ‘How can we build true unity, how can our relationship be deeper than just doing some kind of activity? What could help us create an environment where we can constructively discuss difficult issues?’”

In 2015, God called Dr. Bishaw to answer his burning question by starting the Gratitude Initiative to promote unity and thankfulness among the British people and help others use gratitude as a framework to talk respectfully and honestly about problems to move forward. The Initiative, which formally launched on November 28, 2020, aims to change the culture one conversation at a time as individuals learn the art of thankfulness and reap the mental, physical, emotional and relational benefits of gratitude.

Introducing and encouraging the concept of gratitude to his local borough, he said to community leaders, “Whenever we have a complaint about our services, we have a platform to do so. Whenever we want to demand the betterments of our services, we have a platform to do so. But where is the platform for us

to appreciate and celebrate and express our gratitude for the services that we have received from public and voluntary sector workers for years?”

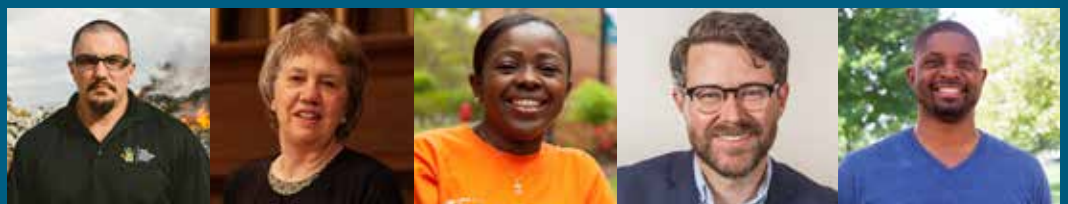
In 2018, the Gratitude Initiative hosted a large thank you dinner to celebrate those who work in charities and public sector organizations, such as cleaners, teachers, nurses, doctors, police and firefighters, etc. At the dinner, those attending were invited to write notes of gratitude to others to help them experience the joy of experiencing well-deserved gratitude from the community and the joy of giving gratitude to others.

“Gratitude helps us not only when things are good, but also when things are not good, especially in relationships, in our communities, and in our churches,” Dr. Bishaw said. “In his message to the seven churches, Jesus didn’t start by condemning them, but he started by acknowledging the good, appreciating and expressing his gratitude for what they have done for his name’s sake.”

In the coming months, Dr. Bishaw will be working to put together a curriculum to teach children the psychological, physical and relational benefits of gratitude through play and story to help them creatively engage in the practice. They are also planning to campaign for a national day of gratitude in Britain. Learn more by visiting [gratitudeinitiative.org.uk](http://gratitudeinitiative.org.uk).

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# Certainty in times of uncertainty.

Asbury Theological Seminary continues to move forward with our mission to prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world through the love of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit and to the glory of God the Father. In the midst of everything that is happening in the world, Congress enacted several tax law changes that we want to highlight here.

## CARES Act and Your Giving

This law includes several charitable tax provisions that you might want to take advantage of as your plan for your giving this year. These include:

- *An increase in the deduction limit up to 100% of a donor's annual income for cash gifts. This means that you will be able to deduct 40% more this year.*
- *A new deduction for people who do not itemize when filling out their tax returns. If you do not itemize but make a gift to charity, you will be allowed to take a special tax deduction up to \$300.*

**EXTENDED  
INTO 2021**



## SECURE Act and Your Giving

In December, Congress passed the SECURE Act, limiting stretch payments for IRA beneficiaries to 10 years.

### **What does this mean?**

*If you planned to benefit your children using your IRA, they will now pay higher taxes on the inheritance that they receive from you. You might want to consider revisiting your estate plan and use the IRA balance to fund a bequest and/or income for your family through a testamentary charitable remainder unitrust.*

# HUNDREDFOLD INITIATIVES

## FUNDRAISING UPDATE\*



**CAMPAIGN FUND:** Supporting strategic impact where needed most  
Raised: \$18,556,971



**CHURCH PLANTING:** Equipping 1,000 church planters  
Raised: \$8,910,127



**ENHANCING ESTES CHAPEL:** Improving the heart of our Wilmore campus  
Raised: \$1,561,928



**ENDOWING CHAIR OF THEOLOGY:** Confirming our commitment to biblical training  
Raised: \$2,500,000



**ENRICHING HISPANIC AND GLOBAL PROGRAMS:** Developing concentrated master's programs to serve growing populations  
Raised: \$1,383,050



**GROWING SCHOLARSHIPS:** Liberating students from debt to sow where God leads  
Raised: \$40,943,355



**SUPPORTING SEEDBED:** Resourcing clergy and laity around the world  
Raised: \$4,276,230



**DEFERRED GIFTS:** Providing gifts in the future through estate planning and life income plans  
Raised: \$37,729,338

\*As of 04/09/21

Heather Hill with  
Dr. Carolyn Moore  
*Photo by McKenzie Brown with  
"That Very Moment Photography"*



## YOUR GENEROSITY IMPACT

*If you supported Asbury Seminary between 1995-1998, your gift is being multiplied one life at a time, reaping a harvest that is one hundredfold, through the life and ministry of Carolyn Moore. Your gift helped equip Carolyn to plant and pastor Mosaic Church in Evans, Ga., where she reached out to Heather Hill in prison. Heather came to know Christ and is now Administrative Pastor at Mosaic Church and is discipling others.*

Carolyn Moore felt called to preach as a 13-year-old girl, but women in the pulpit were not exactly normal in the South. Years passed before she was able to turn that call into a reality. She came to Asbury Seminary in 1995 to pursue an M.Div. and after graduating in 1998, started a worship service in downtown Athens, Ga. She felt called to enliven those who had become spiritually deadened by “church as usual” and worked to create spaces so that others could have intimate encounters with the Holy Spirit.

“It was there that I discovered my gift for speaking, especially to those in the margins, who may have been raised in families much like mine, and who have never had the chance to become alive to Christ,” she said.

In 2003, she planted Mosaic Church in Evans, Ga., fulfilling her calling to form new expressions of church. At Mosaic, she continued to create a church that made room for those on the margins, focusing on healing and discipleship ministries. Here, Carolyn met Heather Hill.

Addicted to drugs and experiencing homelessness, Heather sporadically attended Mosaic Church with her parents. When she was arrested, Carolyn brought her a Bible, which Heather soon read from cover-to-cover.

“My spirit was infused with hope, and I knew that being in prison was a direct answer from God, so I felt a

responsibility to respond in a certain way. If I hoped to live a different life, I had to do my part,” Heather said.

After serving her sentence and participating in a drug rehabilitation program, Heather was released in 2013. In rehab and recovery, she had learned the importance of changing friends, locations and activities, but she worried about how to stay clean when faced with cravings.

The church welcomed and supported her, inviting her not only to attend services, but also to participate in small groups and the church’s Celebrate Recovery ministry. Eventually, she helped lead Celebrate Recovery and served on the church’s lay mobilization institute team with Asbury Seminary to stimulate church growth.

During that time, she had a relapse. She prayed for God to heal her addiction, but felt God telling her that she had to tell Carolyn. Instead of rejection, the church embraced Heather, supporting her in tangible ways, but also through prayer. That same night, her small group gathered around her, laying hands on her while Carolyn anointed her with prayer and oil. During the prayer, Heather felt a heat go through her body. She wondered, “Did God heal me?”

“Their response was a perfect physical picture of the grace of God, something that I could tangibly look at,” she said. “When I woke up the next morning, the desire



“I came out of prison with a lot of knowledge, but I didn’t have any context for the Christian life. How do you live it, and what does it look like to walk with Jesus every day? I found the answers to those questions in the connected Mosaic community.”

-Heather Hill

was gone!” she said. “And the mornings were the hardest. Now I’m seven years clean!”

Currently, Heather is the Administrative Pastor at Mosaic, caring practically for all the things that happen behind the scenes to help ministry happen. She also enjoys being part of the preaching team and leads a weekly small group. Because of God’s grace, she is able to share the hope she found with others, helping them learn to live out the Christian life every day. Often, she uses her own story as an icebreaker and as a gateway to mentor others.

“I came out of prison with a lot of knowledge, but I didn’t have any context for the Christian life,” Heather said. “How do you live it, and what does it look like to

walk with Jesus every day? I found the answers to those questions in the connected Mosaic community.”

And the story continues. If you’re supporting Asbury Seminary now, you’re investing in Heather’s life. Your gift will be multiplied one life at a time, reaping a harvest that is one hundredfold, through Heather’s life and ministry.

*Heather is a current student at Asbury Seminary, pursuing an M.A. in Theological Studies with an emphasis in philosophy and apologetics online degree and expects to graduate in 2023. In addition to pastoring Mosaic Church, Rev. Dr. Carolyn Moore was recently elected as chairwoman of the Wesleyan Covenant Association’s Global Council.*

**ATTEMPT  
SOMETHING  
BIG**

ASBURY  
theological  
SEMINARY

Visit [asbury.to/voices](https://asbury.to/voices) to read more of Heather’s story.

## Because of You!

Thanks to you and your generosity, Asbury Seminary's global reach and influence continues to grow. Here are some examples:

- This academic year, the Seminary accomplished what President Timothy Tennent promptly dubbed the “Triple Crown” of enrollment management. This means that the Seminary achieved three goals simultaneously: highest incoming class in history; **highest new Fall enrollment in history**; and highest number of classes taken in history. This happened even in the midst of a pandemic!
- We currently have **1,806 students** from **44 U.S. States** and **50 countries**! That is global influence! If you are interested in supporting our student scholarships, visit: [asbury.to/give](https://asbury.to/give).
- Asbury Seminary continues to hold true to its commitment to develop a “diverse, missionally oriented student body.” As the Fall 2020 term began, 45% of students reported themselves as being in an ethnic category other than white.
- We have graduated **12,611 students** across our 98 years of service to the Kingdom. Our alumni currently serve on **6 continents**, in **76 countries**, and in all **50 states** in the U.S.
- To celebrate our 100-year global impact through our alumni, we are in the midst of creating our Global Alumni Center on the first floor of the Crary-McPheeters building. To support this initiative, visit: [asbury.to/GAC](https://asbury.to/GAC).

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP, WHEREVER YOU ARE IN THE WORLD.

Watch Asbury Seminary Chapel LIVE online every week during the semester at [asbury.to/live](https://asbury.to/live)

Visit [asbury.to/chapel](https://asbury.to/chapel) for our chapel message archive.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES:

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*Taken from The Herald, Winter 1985*

# Seasons of Spiritual Pilgrimage

By Dr. Frank Bateman Stanger

*President, Asbury Theological Seminary 1962-82*



My favorite definition of spiritual formation describes it as the journey of the soul towards wholeness. It is the pilgrimage of concerned persons toward maturity, in every aspect of one's being. It involves an effective plan of personal devotion and discipline, in dependence upon the Grace of God.

There have been three stages in my lifelong participation in spiritual formation. I became a Christian at the early age of 5½ years and received the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Spirit when I was a sophomore in high school. At the very outset of my Christian life, I was taught the need for spiritual growth, both in my home and in my church. From the beginning I sensed my personal responsibility for spiritual growth, else my spiritual experience would become ineffective.

I call this first stage in spiritual formation that of spiritual conformity. I did what every Christian is supposed to do. This remained my primary motivation for spiritual formation through high school, college, and seminary days.

But upon graduation from seminary, I experienced a second distinct stage in my participation in spiritual formation, characterized by a sense of vocational responsibility. When I was assigned the full-time pastoral oversight of local churches, I quickly became aware that a rich and growing spiritual experience and the enjoyment of spiritual health were imperative if I was to realize the adequacy of Divine power in my pastoral ministries. I served local churches from 1935 until 1959.

The imperative of spiritual growth was doubly impressed upon my consciousness during my long tenure as chief administrator at the seminary. The task was humanly impossible, but with God all things are possible. Increasingly, during my 23 years of leadership at the seminary, I recognized

my total dependence upon God and sought to make Divine power realizable in personal experience through participation in spiritual formation.

But I must mention a third season in fact, the present stage in relation to my personal spiritual formation. I identify this as the season of personal crisis.

The first crisis was the occasion of my retirement in 1982. In spite of what psychologists and sociologists say about retirement and the advice given by authors and personal counselors, retirement was a traumatic experience for me. The abrupt transition from "belonging" (I had been an active member of a church body and an administrator of an educational institution for 47 years), to the realization of not "belonging" was shattering to me. But let me get quickly to the bottom line; active participation in spiritual formation, both personally and with my devoted wife, Mardelle, has been the basic secret of a survival which has been both redemptive and functionally useful.

Within the retirement crisis has been another soul-shaking crisis: unexpected illness which has involved two hospitalizations and continuing treatment. Here again, intensive participation in the process of spiritual growth has been both salvatory and therapeutic.

These, then, in general outline, have been the seasons of my personal spiritual pilgrimage: initial spiritual conformity, prolonged vocational responsibilities, radical crises.

Every opportunity must be seized for taking an honest look at one's own spiritual state, for daring to put one's needs over against the promises of Christ to meet such needs, and for appropriating God's grace to undergird one's own responsibility for devotion and discipline in the process of spiritual growth.

# News & Events

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## Endowed Chair of Theology Named in Honor of Tim and Julie Tennent

Asbury Seminary names the recently funded Chair of Theology the Timothy C. and Julie M. Tennent Chair of Theology in honor of President and Mrs. Tennent's continued commitment to the mission of the Seminary and the global church. The endowed chair is a \$2.5 million Hundredfold Campaign initiative and was funded by generous friends of the Seminary. In response to the donor's request, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to name the chair in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Tennent in recognition of their service to the global church.

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## Thomas H. McCall Appointed to Chair of Theology of Asbury Theological Seminary



Asbury Theological Seminary is pleased to announce the appointment of Thomas H. McCall to the role of the Timothy C. and Julie M. Tennent Chair of Theology. Dr. McCall served for 16 years as a Professor of Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and more recently, as Professor of Theology at Asbury University.

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## Asbury Seminary Mourns the Passing of Dr. Leslie Andrews



Asbury Seminary mourns the passing of Dr. Leslie Andrews, who passed away due to COVID-19 complications on January 13, 2021. Dr. Andrews contributed significantly to the mission of Asbury Theological Seminary over the course of three decades, and the Seminary extends its gratitude for her service and condolences to her family and friends.

## Asbury Theological Seminary Welcomes New Trustee



Asbury Theological Seminary welcomes Dr. Jim Dunn as a new member to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees ensures that all Seminary policies and procedures align with the Seminary's mission to "prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world."

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## Asbury Seminary Alumna Carolyn Moore Elected WCA Chairwoman



Asbury Theological Seminary congratulates Rev. Dr. Carolyn Moore on her election as chairwoman of the Wesleyan Covenant Association's Global Council. Moore graduated from Asbury Seminary with her M.Div. in 1998 and her Doctor of Ministry in 2018. She is an author, speaker, church planter, and lead pastor at Mosaic Church in Evans, Ga. Moore is a founding council member of the WCA and has served as vice chairwoman since 2016.

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## Dr. Gregg Okesson wins Christianity Today Book Award



Dr. Gregg Okesson, Dean of the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, received Christianity Today's 2021 book award in the Missions/Global Church category for his book *A Public Missiology: How Local Churches Witness to a Complex World*.

Follow us on social media for the latest news, events, and content from Asbury Seminary.



## Asbury Theological Seminary Hires Dr. Michael A. Salmeier, Registrar and Director of Enrolled Student Services

After a 10-month search, Asbury Seminary welcomed Dr. Michael A. Salmeier as the new Registrar and Director of Enrolled Student Services. Since 2009, Salmeier has worked at Life Pacific University in San Dimas, Calif., first as academic dean and most recently as Vice President of Academic Affairs. He has experience advancing academic programs and student development planning, programs and personnel. Salmeier assumed his responsibilities on January 4, 2021.

## Asbury Latino Center Receives Capacity Building Grant

The Asbury Latino Center receives a Capacity Building Grant from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity in partnership with Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH). This yearlong project allows Christian organizations to strengthen and expand their current organizational capacities.

## Asbury Theological Seminary Alum Dr. James Karanja Receives German Federal Cross of Merit



Asbury Theological Seminary congratulates alum Dr. James Karanja on the commendation of “Bundesverdienstkreuz” or Federal Cross of Merit from the President of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Karanja received this commendation for his work with Home Care International, a Kenyan-

German organization that provides accommodations, education, and health care to orphans in Africa. He also works with refugees, serves in Christian youth ministry and works for the eradication of poverty in East Africa.

Please join President Timothy C. Tennent as he shares the Asbury Seminary vision in your area. At each of his stops, Dr. Tennent is honored to be speaking at Sunday morning services.

**November 19 - 21, 2021 Asbury UMC  
Tulsa, OK**

For event schedule, reservations, and information, contact Major Events: 877.PRAY.ATS (772.9287) or email, [major.events@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:major.events@asburyseminary.edu).





# Thrive

WITH ASBURY SEMINARY

Our Spring episodes featured some great guests, including singer-songwriter and hymn writer, Sandra McCracken (ep. 43). We talk about her new album "Patient Kingdom," how we keep worshipping in difficult times, her spiritual journey and her new book.

*Listen and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts or visit [asbury.to/thrive](https://asbury.to/thrive)*

**"My hope is that each song would be a conduit for God's comfort to our hearts. That we would believe it and be brought back to truth."**  
Sandra McCracken

## New Podcast Episodes Release Every Other Tuesday

Thrive with Asbury Seminary brings you interview-style conversations to help you thrive where your passions meet the world's needs. Join us every other week to hear stories from people just like you and be inspired by world-renowned scholars, thought-leaders, and authors. Thrive seeks to help you learn about the variety of ways you can serve God, actively grow your relationship with God, take the next step in your faith and calling, and learn some practical next steps for growth.

**What is one thing you're doing that is helping you thrive in your life right now?**



*Meeting new people and discovering what God is doing in their life and how God brought them where they are, and really hearing their story has been transformational.*  
Rev. Dr. Girma Bishaw Ep. 38



*For me, when I go to the gym or jog outside, I'm also listening to faith-filled messages or inspirational music or talking to God, so it's meditation and exercise at the same time, which releases endorphins into the brain.*  
Dr. Laklieshia Izzard, Ep. 45



ASBURY SEMINARY



# The Shepherd's Fund

Q&A WITH ALUMNUS DR. ROBERT BICKERT (1968)

**How has the Shepherd's Fund helped you personally?  
Can you tell me a little about your experience?**

It has been a wonderful experience. Last year they gave us about \$20,000, and I don't know how we would have survived without it. Between surgeries and supplements and getting the house to be accessible, we weren't sure how we could pay for it all.

I was absolutely amazed when they said they would cover over-the-counter medicine and supplements. The cost of nutritional supplements almost equals our monthly food bill, so that was huge. They also paid for my \$1,200 dental work.

I was recently unexpectedly in the hospital, and I had lots of medical bills coming in. You have to pay for them immediately. We were worried about how we were going to get those bills covered right away, and my daughter was going to start a GoFundMe account, but our assistant with the Shepherd's Fund told me that as soon as I got a bill beyond insurance coverage, then I could fax it to her and they would put it in the system right away for immediate payment!

We also had to tear up old carpet and put down laminate flooring after my wife's knee surgery. They even covered that. It was about \$3,600. We had additional bills coming our way between knee surgeries and chiropractor visits, x rays, and doctor visits, and they helped us with it all.

**That's amazing! What was the application process like?**

I thought it was very straight-forward. The application took me about 10 minutes. I just filled that out and that was it. We had to write in our budget. I was done completely in less than an hour.

**How much of your expense was covered?**

Everything. There wasn't any expense I submitted that wasn't covered.

**This fund seems almost too good to be true. What would you say to those who might need similar help?**

There is no reason not to apply. If you're a retired graduate, you probably qualify. I have told multiple people about this fund, and some of them didn't think it would apply to them, but they looked into it, and they were approved.

Once you fill out your application, the approval process is fast. The Shepherd's Fund has helped us tremendously. We are so grateful. If it could help you, reach out and apply.

A friend had to build a ramp for the bathtub because of a recent injury, and he was wary of filling out the application because he was worried they wouldn't cover it, but I still encouraged him to apply. Some friends have said that it seems too good to be true, that it wouldn't apply for them, but it is worth a try!

**What do you wish people knew about the Shepherd's Fund?**

Just send an application in. It's very easy to do. It seems too good to be true, but it has truly helped us. The Shepherd's Fund has paid out over \$1 million to our alumni since it started.

I don't know anyone who has applied who hasn't been approved. If you are retired and a graduate, you should try.

I also wish people knew that the scope of what is covered, including over-the-counter medicine, supplements, medical equipment, and adjustments to your home for medical reasons.



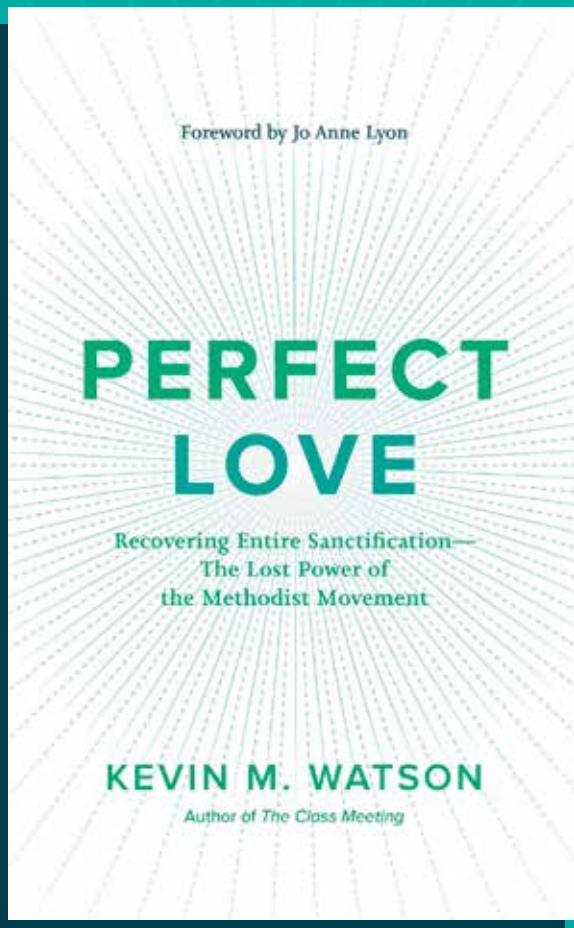
204 North Lexington Avenue  
 Wilmore, Kentucky 40390  
 asburyseminary.edu 800.2ASBURY

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



asbury.to/inquire

# The new book from Kevin M. Watson!



The church has offered an unbalanced understanding of the gospel for too long. The promise of forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ is good news indeed, but Jesus came not only so that we could be forgiven, he came so that we could have life abundantly. This book calls all spiritual descendants of the Wesleyan revival back to who we've been at our best, when we were a growing, vibrant, and Spirit-filled movement. *Perfect Love* provides an in-depth explanation of entire sanctification and helps readers pursue all that God has for us.

As I read *Perfect Love* my heart leapt within me. My imagination cannot grasp the enormous outpouring God would do in this generation and those to come if we recover entire sanctification. May it be so, Lord!

Jo Anne Lyon, PhD · General Superintendent Emerita, Wesleyan Church

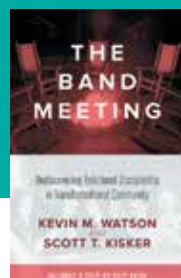
The message of this book needs to be heard in fresh ways across the church and I applaud Watson for yet another landmark book in rebuilding our movement.

Timothy Tennent · President, Asbury Theological Seminary

Reading these pages were like comfort food for my soul.

General Brian Peddle · International Leader of the Salvation Army

Available now at  
[seedbed.com/perfectlove](http://seedbed.com/perfectlove)



Find Kevin's other books *The Class Meeting* and *The Band Meeting* at [my.seedbed.com](http://my.seedbed.com)

