

THE ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# HERALD

Vol. 142 no. 2 Fall/Winter 2023



Current student,  
Abraham Livingston, on a  
mission trip in Africa.  
Read his story on pg. 12

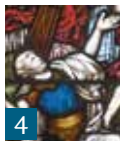
**The Whole Bible for the Whole World**



THE ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# HERALD

- 3. **Letter from the Provost**  
The Whole Bible for the Whole World
- 4. **Who Can Be Called, and What Are We Called to Do?**  
Dr. Steven Ybarrola, Professor of Cultural Anthropology in the E. Stanley Jones School of Mission and Ministry
- 6. **To Testify...**  
Dr. James R. Thobaben, Dean of the School of Theology and Formation and Professor of Bioethics and Social Ethics
- 8. **Kingdom Conference 2023**
- 10. **Asbury Seminary Serves Around The World**  
Highlighting some of our alumni who are carrying the whole Bible to the whole world
- 12. **Faculty Highlight: Dr. Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo**  
Associate Professor of Missions and Evangelism
- 13. **Alumni Highlight: Manik Corea**  
National Director for the Singapore Centre for Global Missions.  
M.A. in Intercultural Studies, 2021
- 14. **Alumni Highlight: Sarah Parham**  
Vice President for Mobilization with TMS Global.  
M.Div., 2016
- 18. **Current Student Highlight: Abraham Livingston**  
Advocate for the Underprivileged  
M.A. in Christian Ministries, Graduating 2025
- 20. **From the Archives: A Door Which No One Can Shut**  
by Dr. Frank Bateman Stanger,  
President of Asbury Seminary 1962-1982
- 22. **News and Events**



4



6



8



10



12



13



14



18

ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
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## THE WHOLE BIBLE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

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Asbury Seminary's motto, "The Whole Bible for the Whole World," proclaims an audacious vision. It represents an audacious vision in 2023, let alone a hundred years ago when the school was founded with three students in rural Kentucky.

God delights in the audacious.

We spent the past year celebrating Asbury's 100-year anniversary. As we look ahead to the next 100 years, or until Christ returns, Asbury's global vision remains as audacious as ever. The same God who inspired Henry Clay Morrison to begin a theological seminary in rural Kentucky with a motto, "The Whole Bible for the Whole World," is the same God we proclaim today. This is not triumphalism, but obedience to King Jesus.

Asbury Seminary has grown from three students to more than 1,700, making it one of the largest seminaries in the country. The global vision remains as strong as ever:

- We recently admitted 114 Latino/a students from throughout the U.S and Central America, with one of the residencies taking place in Medellin, Colombia.
- Asbury has formal partnerships with 18 institutions/organizations on all continents.
- Four faculty recently traveled to Lviv, Ukraine, to do trauma counseling training in partnership with Ukraine Evangelical Theological Seminary.
- We currently have 292 international students.
- Almost half of our student body (47%) is comprised of students from ethnic minorities.
- We teach cohorts of students in Colombia, England, and India.

One of my favorite drawings comes from the artist Robert Doares. He devoted thirty years to researching the archaeology, history, and geography of first century Pales-

tine in order to sketch fifty scenes from the Gospels. With nothing but thin pencil strokes, Doares takes us back two thousand years to walk and sit with Jesus.

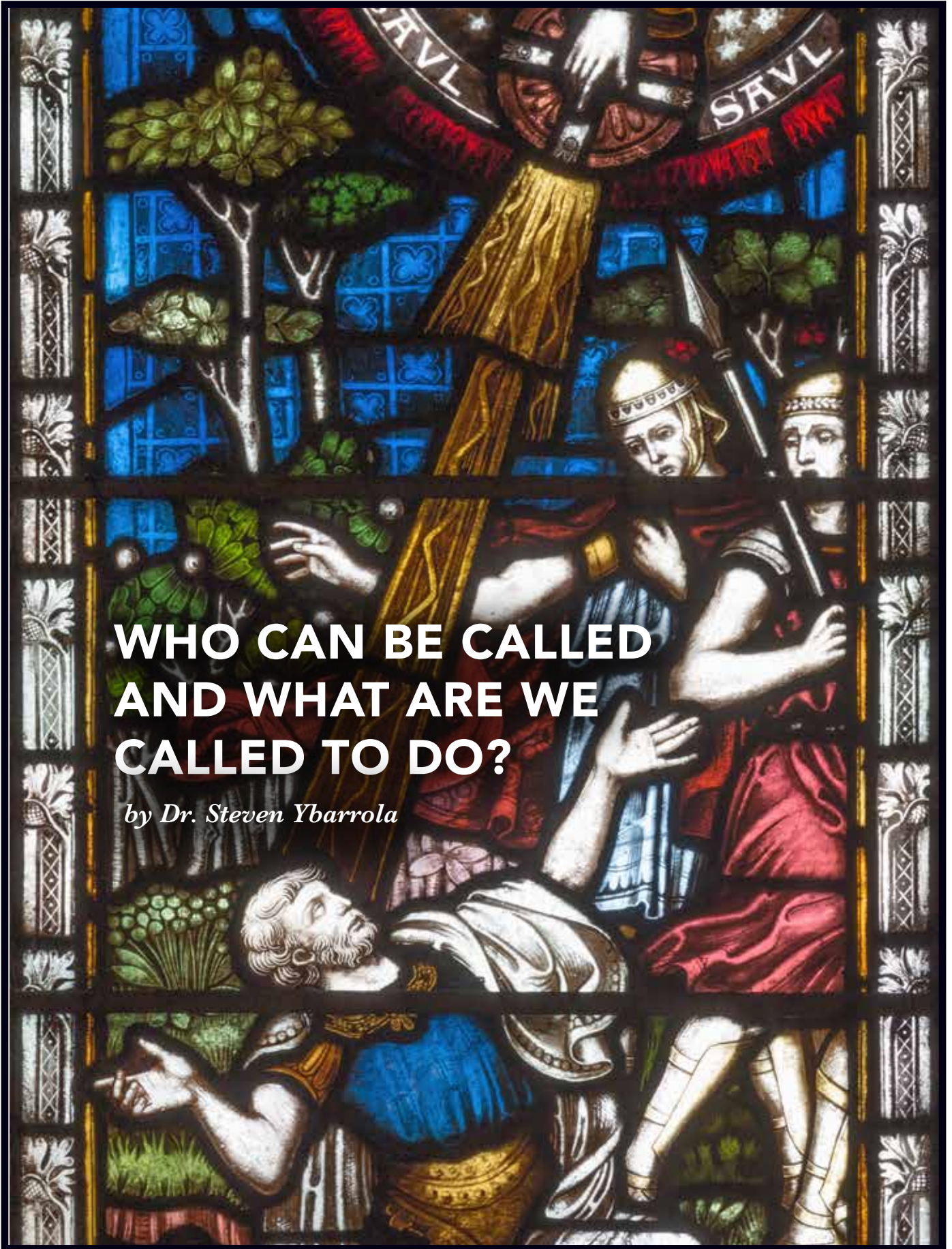
In one of these pictures, a double-page spread reveals a hillside in Galilee. We see crisscrossing dirt pathways across a rocky, barren landscape. A few trees appear on the horizon, with the Sea of Galilee visible in the far distance. Unlike many of his other drawings in this collection, this print looks quite ordinary – one might even say bland and uninteresting. I remember first viewing it in the Billy Graham Center of Wheaton College. My first impulse was to pass by the picture without a second glance. How can it compare with Jesus raising Lazarus or with the Last Supper? It looks like a nature scene. Nothing more. But then one stops. The nearer our eyes come to the print, we discern eleven men sitting at the feet of a robed figure on the hillside. They are scarcely visible, almost insignificant. The Scripture underneath is the Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20.

How could anything so ordinary as eleven men sitting on a hillside in rural Galilee result in what we currently experience with 2.2 billion Christians around the world today? The Great Commission begins with Jesus saying, "I have been given all authority in heaven and earth," and then concludes with His reminder: "And be sure of this, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

We at Asbury Seminary continue to exist between these two statements. God delights in the audacious.

Dr. Gregg A. Okesson  
Provost and Senior Vice President  
of Academic Affairs





**WHO CAN BE CALLED  
AND WHAT ARE WE  
CALLED TO DO?**

*by Dr. Steven Ybarrola*

**I**N 2017, I joined a group of Christian anthropologists, missiologists and theologians to produce the book, “On Knowing Humanity: Insights from Theology for Anthropology.” My contributing chapter was titled, “Calling: Implications of the Transcendent for Love and Purpose in Migration.” My argument in that chapter had to do with the sense of calling that Christian immigrants often experience in their new contexts and how this can give them a sense of purpose in the midst of an often immigrant-hostile environment. As one of my interviewees from Colombia who had migrated to the Basque Country of Spain put it, he and his wife had felt God calling them to migrate for the furtherance of the Kingdom — that is, to be missional. He stated, “We didn’t come here to earn money, but rather to win souls.” (“No vinimos aquí a ganar dinero, sino a ganar almas”). In Spanish the same verb – ganar – is used for both “earn” and “win.”

I use migration as an example of calling for a couple of reasons. First, in recent years we have seen more and more groups of Christians from the Majority World migrating to the West, as well as other parts of the Global South, to be missional in their new contexts. Second, I believe the call in the Great Commission requires migration in order for it to be fulfilled. Jesus told us to GO and make disciples of all nations (i.e., peoples). Historically, the West has understood this to mean that we must migrate to other parts of the world to take the gospel. Yet, as we in the West are now viewed as an important mission field, there is often a negative reaction when those from the Majority World sense that same calling to come into our “neighborhood” in order to evangelize us.

I would argue that being “called” to participate in the *Missio Dei*, the Mission of God, often, perhaps most of the time, involves movement, i.e., migration. Sometimes this can be a direct sense of calling, as Abram experienced in his interaction with God. That he was being called to create a new nation in a new place meant that he had to leave kin and safety for a place that, at the time, he didn’t know. God was “calling” him to act on the fact that He was faithful in what He was calling him to do. This faith in the calling was further tested when God told him to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Abraham remained faithful to the call that he had received.

But sometimes the sense of calling only becomes apparent “after the fact” of migration. Here we can look at the experience of Joseph in Egypt, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and, after a number of years of exaltation and imprisonment, was able to say when confronting his traitorous brothers, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is

now being done, the saving of many lives” (Gen. 50:20, NIV).

We see the importance of movement in God’s purposes throughout the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. One of the key elements that assisted the spread of the gospel in the first century was the Diaspora (i.e., immigrant) Jewish communities that had spread throughout the Middle East. Paul grew up in one of these communities, Tarsus, which, because of the mix of cultures he experienced, made him a perfect “third culture” person who was able to cross cultures in his world and contextualize the story of the gospel for each group (see Acts 17 as an example).

Andrew Walls, Scottish theologian and historian of missions, identified two main principles throughout the history of the church – the Indigenizing Principle and the Pilgrim Principle. The former deals with the fact that, when individuals become Christians, they do so within particular sociocultural contexts. As a result, they want to experience church as a “place to feel at home.” The latter, the Pilgrim Principle, recognizes the fact that, throughout church history, God has called His people to be pilgrims, where, as Walls puts it, the Spirit “whispers to him that he has no abiding city, and warns him that to be faithful to Christ will put him out of step with his society” (*The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 1996, 8. Gender exclusive language in the original). Pilgrims wander; they move.

Calling is nothing to take lightly, but, as Christopher Wright has reminded us in “The Mission of God’s People,” we are all as believers called to participate in God’s mission. It’s not “if” but “how” God is calling us. This often means that God is calling us to move from where we feel comfortable, whether that be physical or cultural, and to recognize the transcendent relationship we have with God, which should always lead us to love and purpose.



*Dr. Steven Ybarrola is professor of Cultural Anthropology in the E. Stanley Jones School of Mission and Ministry at Asbury Theological Seminary. He received an M.A. and a Ph.D. from Brown University. Prior to coming to Asbury Seminary, Dr. Ybarrola served in the Frank and Grace Moore Chair in Anthropology at Central College. His areas of expertise, which include inter-ethnic relations, oral history, ethnography, culture theory, diaspora missiology, and Europe, have led to invitations and teaching awards. He speaks and leads seminars on cross-cultural ministry in diverse venues. He and his wife, Lorie, have two adult children.*



# To Testify...

by Dr. James Thobaben

*Because of the decline in Christendom in the modern world, some people outside the faith deem overt expressions of Christianity inappropriate or unacceptable. This makes sharing our faith in a secular workplace or other secular settings challenging. Dr. James Thobaben gives us ancient guidance for modeling and sharing the gospel.*

**S**ecularity is growing, not in the sense that fewer and fewer people seek spiritual answers for their lives, but insofar as religious institutions are being pushed to societal margins in the late modern West. Or, to put it more succinctly, globally Christianity is growing even while Christendom is shrinking.

In one sense, that is good. There is little possibility any longer that one can claim to be “bribed” into church attendance with promises of social or economic benefit. No one has to turn to the church for artistic patronage or to justify diplomatic decisions. Seemingly, if the moniker “Christian” is claimed, it is not for earthly advantage but because one truly wants to be such.

On the other hand, the decline of Christendom also means that overt expressions of Christianity will be deemed by some outside the faith as inappropriate for a given venue or even unacceptable in any public setting. This means, quite simply, that offering the gospel, even in the so-called western world, will not be as easily done as in the past.

Guidance can be found in the even more distant past, the times before Constantine and the rise of Christendom in the early 4th century. For instance, “The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus,” perhaps written as early as AD 130, provides a description of how to be Christian in a secular setting.

“For the Christians are distinguished from other [persons] neither by country, nor language, nor the

customs which they observe. ... They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. ... They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. ... they are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless...”

Realizing, as did Mathetes, the need to wisely consider circumstances, here are ten prudential rules. Other may approach testifying in different ways, but these seem effective in serving the end of “proclaiming the good news” to “ears that can hear” (Matthew 11:15):

**1. Begin each day in assurance.** The starting point of evangelism is accepting anew the good news for oneself. If one has a proper relationship with God, then proper relationships with others are far more likely. Assurance yields confidence, and confidence becomes courage (Romans 8:38-39). Courage is the willingness to act prudentially without rashness or cowardice. The one who lives according to Christ is empowered by His Spirit and need not fear a secularized world.

**2. Do good quality work.** One should distinguish when and when not to speak of spiritual things. Most often in a secular employment setting, focus on the so-called job at hand, and the Spirit will provide opportunities to witness. Further, that focus should lead to excellence at the secular task. God is not the God of mediocrity. As Paul said, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord...” (Colossians 3:23-24 NIV).

**3. Look for ways to cooperate on joint activities that are considered by others supererogatory.** This word means “morally superior actions” or “good works beyond that which is required.” Of course, in our tradition, such is not extra; we are to do any and all to which we are called (Luke 17:10). Shared efforts with non-believers based on “middle axioms,” that is, proximate value agreements, provide a means to establish mutual respect (II Corinthians 5).

**4. Intentionally help individuals in need.** Not just believers, but also those outside the church, even when not legally or contractually obliged to do so. In a work or volunteer organization, work to gain a reputation for being helpful and polite. Go beyond the required to help the forgotten, the broken, the mistreated. Works of mercy virtually guarantee an opportunity to witness that cannot be readily dismissed. As our Lord said, “Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16 NASV).

**5. Learn to give in to others,** perhaps especially non-Christians, on that which does not eternally matter. If the gospel offends, then so be it – but believers should not be offensive in how they interact. While it is true that “sweetness” is not among the fruits of the Spirit, gentleness and kindness are (Galatians 5:22-23). To use the somewhat harsh words of our Lord, “Do not cast pearls before swine” (Matthew 7:6). Even so, as Paul said of our living out the gospel, “Insofar as possible, be at peace with all” (Romans 12:18).

**6. Develop the habit of patience in adversity.** Learn to expect mockery. Christians have legal rights like anyone else and can appeal to such, just as Paul did with his Roman citizenship (Acts 25:11). Yet, short of such, they must simply persevere, knowing it leads to fulfilled hope (Romans 5:3-5).

**7. Find other Christians to encourage and hold you accountable.** As John Wesley famously said, “The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.” The author of Hebrews said, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds... encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

**8. Maintain personal purity by avoiding gossip, maintaining relational and sexual boundaries, etc.** We each need to do this simply to maintain our spiritual readiness for the gospel. Such temperance also provides protection from accusations of hypocrisy. Many in the world will look for cracks in the characters of Christians as an excuse to not take the gospel seriously. As Peter said, “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us” (I Peter 2:1, 11-12 NIV).

**9. Now, at last, testify.** Being deferential, appropriately ‘keeping one’s head down,’ working with non-Christians, and having good manners do not mean one should not speak the Truth as warranted. People will ask, so be ready to speak. Help them understand they can be part of the narrative of Christ, that they can have meaning and eternal value in Him. What Paul said to Timothy applies to us all in one sense or another: “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season...” (2 Timothy 4:5 NIV).

**10. Commit yourself to never be ashamed of the gospel.** End each day being able to look back to how you began, with assurance. Christ warned, “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be as wary as serpents, and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16 NASV) but did so to give us courage and confidence in Him (Romans 1:16-17; I Corinthians 15:3-11).

Our days are no worse than those before and better than many. The very minor problems that Christians face in the U.S. pale in comparison with those that believers around the world must confront. The end of Christendom is not the end of the faith. So, as you have an opportunity, share the story that is hope, even in an antagonistic world.



*Dr. James R. Thobaben is Dean of the School of Theology and Formation and Professor of Bioethics and Social Ethics at Asbury Theological Seminary. He received his M.Div. at Yale Divinity School and his Ph.D. at Emory University. His expertise in ethics includes bioethics, social ethics, sociology of religion, and rural life. He is an author and a co-pastor of a rural church. He and his wife, Marcelyn, have two grown children.*



**I**N 1989, two Asbury Seminary faculty members joined their passion and effort to form the annual Kingdom Conference. John F. Kilner, Professor of Social Ethics, had been facilitating a conference that brought prophetic voices to the Seminary to speak on social justice. Darrell Whiteman, Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Dean of the ESJ School of World Mission and Evangelism, was responsible for a long-running missions conference.

Whiteman realized the need for the Seminary to wed mercy and social justice with mission and evangelism. Whiteman and Kilner came together and joined their respective two-day conferences into one four-day conference – Kingdom Conference – which was named by faculty member Ron Crandall. David McKenna, then the President of Asbury Seminary, agreed with the plan and established a budget.

Since launching in the fall of 1989, the Kingdom Conference has set aside a week each year to focus on missions, mercy and justice through music, speakers, talkback sessions, shared meals, and other events. The work of Kingdom Conference quickly moved to a team effort called the Kingdom Conference Task Force, which

over the years has included key faculty such as Christine Pohl, Eunice Erwin, Chris Kiesling, and Steve Ybarrola.

Kingdom Conference captures a larger vision of God’s work in the world and displays the diversity of the Kingdom of God. The conference has become an annual highlight at Asbury Seminary. It kicks off with Tuesday chapel at Estes Chapel, decorated with flags from nations that are represented on campus. International students and their families, wearing colorful clothes from their cultural traditions, lead the congregation to lively music from around the world

During Kingdom Conference, guest speakers as well as Asbury Seminary faculty present on the chosen theme during special chapels. Speakers have included well-known names in the areas of missions or evangelism who have also had a social dimension to their work. Musical guests, often from the Christian music world, lead worship during chapel and hold a concert on Tuesday or Wednesday evening. This year the Wednesday evening event was called “Night of Worship and Prayer.”

Thursday evening is a special time for Kingdom Conference. It is the night of a shared meal that reflects the Kingdom of God as depicted in Revelation 7:9-10: “After



# Kingdom Conference captures a larger vision of God's work in the world and displays the diversity of the Kingdom of God

this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'" Located in the Dining Hall, this event brings together the Seminary community around a large meal of diverse foods. This year, the Thursday evening meal was called "Night of Table Fellowship." The mealtime often features choirs of students from countries including Africa, India and Korea performing, but this year the Asbury University Gospel Choir led the congregants in joyful worship music. This evening depicts the Kingdom of God that embraces all of humanity in its cultural diversity.



Asbury University Gospel Choir

The 2023 Kingdom Conference was the second Centennial-focused Kingdom Conference. The first one in 2022 focused on "Thanking God for the Past." This one was about "Trusting God for the Future." Together, these two phrases form the motto for Asbury Seminary's Centennial year, 2023.



Maryanne J. George leading worship in Estes Chapel

With a focus on the future, Allan Varghese Meloottu, Asbury Seminary staff member, student, and a lead coordinator for the 2022 and 2023 Kingdom Conferences, explains that this year's conference embodied the trajectory of global Christianity by discussing how Christians may think of the church's role in politically divisive and religiously diverse settings. In other words, how do we recapture the Kingdom of God for the next 50 years, taking into account contemporary issues and the current state of our world?

Although it is common to use the word "international" to describe the events hosted by Kingdom Conference, Varghese Meloottu reminds us that the Kingdom of God is both local and global. Therefore, the conference was approached by the perspective that mission is "from everywhere to everywhere," and so everyone – both domestic and international students – are part of the conference. He explains, "We are not putting one culture above another; we are putting them all on equal footing to capture the Kingdom diversity." The official theme for the October 17-19 Kingdom Conference was, "What is the Master Thought of Jesus?" The keynote speaker was Dr. Peter Kuzmic, Senior Distinguished Professor of World Missions and European Studies at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. The featured worship leader was Maryanne J. George, a Grammy Award-winning, Maverick City Music-partnered musician and songwriter of Malayalee origin. The 2023 Kingdom Conference also featured a Creation Care Night at the Kalas Village Garden of Nations.

Visit [asbury.to/archive](https://asbury.to/archive) to view the chapel messages from Kingdom Conference 2023

# ASBURY SEMINARY SERVES AROUND THE WORLD



**Bishop Mark Webb**  
M.Div., Asbury Seminary, 1989  
Bishop of the  
Global Methodist Church



**Christian Selvaratnam**  
D.Min., Asbury Seminary, 2020  
Church Planter, Leader of G2.  
Priest in the Church of England  
and Ordained Pioneer Minister



**Obed Badilla**  
Bilingual M.A. in Ministry,  
Asbury Seminary, 2024  
Spanish and Associate Pastor at  
City on a Hill, San Antonio, Texas



**Pam Harrison**  
M.A. in Theological Studies,  
Asbury Seminary, 2024  
Founder of High Seas Ministries

**100 Years** of Sharing *The Whole Bible for the Whole World*

*Asbury Seminary has taken the gospel to all corners of the world. These are just a few of our more than **13,000 alumni and current students** serving all around the world.*



**Brian and Elizabeth Ballinger**

M.Div. 2021, M.A. in Spiritual Formation 2019,  
Asbury Seminary  
Cross-cultural Ministers with TMS Global



**Rev. Dr. Daniel Ronda**

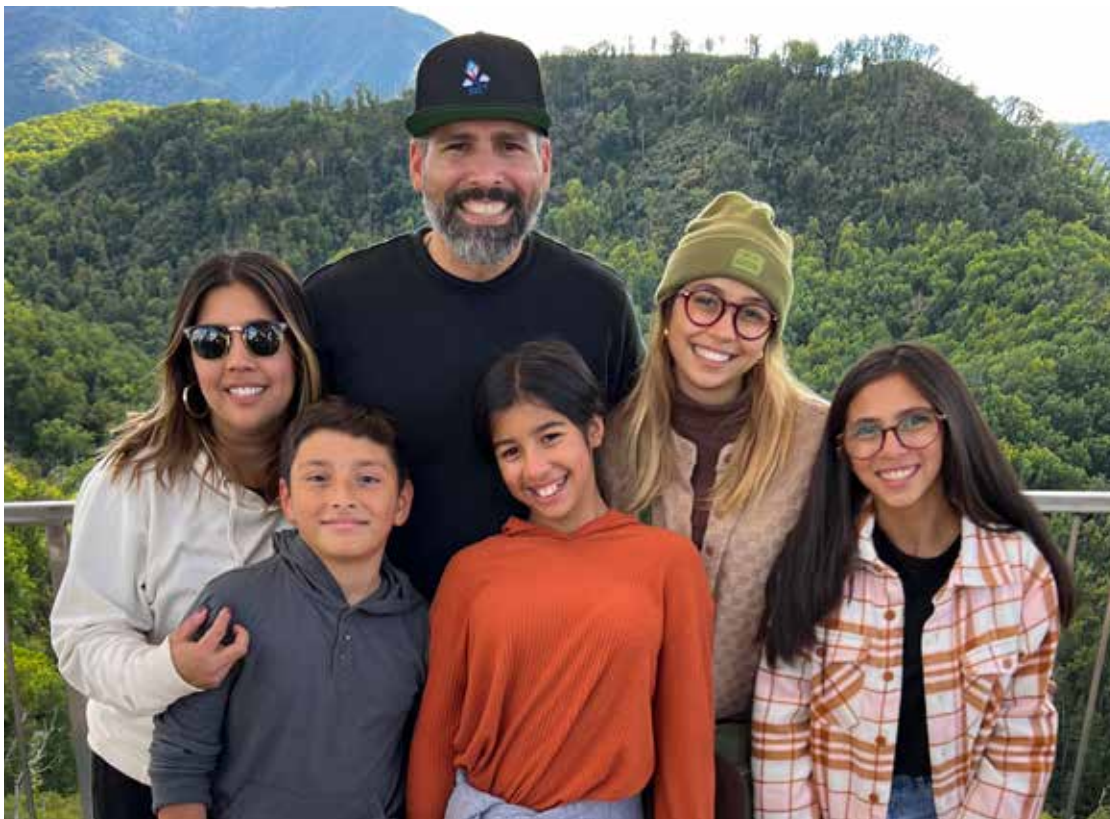
D.Min., Asbury Seminary, 2007  
Professor and President of  
The Christian and Missionary  
Alliance in Indonesia



**Clara Danquah**

D.Min., Asbury Seminary, 2020  
Associate Pastor of Wesley  
Chapel in Kumasi, Ghana

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**Dr. Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo, a child of Pentecostal pastors, was raised on the island of Puerto Rico. At youth camp at age 14, he heard the words, “God is calling you into ministry.”**

He played in the worship band for 10 years. He was a youth pastor, an associate pastor, a district pastor, and a youth and discipleship leader. “That took me into the pastorate,” says Dr. Estrada. His bishop asked him to take a three-month pastoral appointment, and three months became three years.

Estrada Carrasquillo’s parents had taught him how to preach. But what he found challenging, as a new pastor at age 27, was sitting in an office advising people older than him about their difficulties with marriage and children, “giving life lessons to people one on one.” This led Estrada Carrasquillo to want to further his studies.

Estrada Carrasquillo and his family relocated to the United States, where he earned his M.Div. at

Pentecostal Theological Seminary. During a class on missions, a professor assigned him to read Dr. Christine Pohl. “She just completely moved me,” Estrada Carrasquillo says of her work on hospitality. He found Dr. Pohl on the faculty page of Asbury Seminary and wanted to be there.

When Estrada Carrasquillo graduated with his M.Div. in 2013, the people in his life talked with him about doing a doctorate. “Do I have the possibility to do this kind of work?” he asked himself. Those around him told him he did. He applied and was accepted into Asbury Seminary. Finally at the institution where Dr. Pohl was a professor, Estrada Carrasquillo describes Asbury Seminary as “very healing” for him and his family. And his courses at the Seminary brought his pastoral ministry into a new perspective. “Now the classroom is my parish, the place where I practice my pastorate,” he says.

Estrada Carrasquillo earned his Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies from Asbury Seminary. He is now in his first semester as a professor with Asbury Global, instructing his students online and at extension sites. His burning passion, as he teaches “Missional Formation” and “Discovering the Missional Heart of God,” is the church.

“I’m in love with the church, theology of the



“  
*Now the classroom is my  
parish, the place where I  
practice my pastorate.*”

church,” he says. “There’s one theme that’s been constant throughout my writing, and that’s ecclesiology.” His master’s thesis looked into how the Latino church should embody its identity in a strange land. He argues that these churches don’t have to repeat what the Anglo or the African churches are doing. Referring to the book, “The McDonaldization of the Church,” Estrada Carrasquillo challenges the idea that we should develop churches where everything is the same. He is passionate, particularly, about the local church. “Pentecostal spirituality is lived ecclesiology,” he explains. “It’s important to read the Great Commission all the way to Acts chapter 2 where it says, ‘And the church kept herself in the teachings of the disciples.’ It connects the Great Commission to the local church ... What happens in the worship service doesn’t stay there. It goes with us. What we read, what we pray, the conversations that we have; all of that goes with us.”

Estrada Carrasquillo, who had once questioned whether he was capable of earning a doctorate, never imagined he would someday teach at Asbury Seminary. Yet Jesus giving people the encouragement to do something they think they’re not capable of doing is an important theme for him.

“As a Pentecostal, I read the Great Commission as a long story that begins with them being fearful in a room and ends with them being in the Upper Room. Between the room of fear and the Upper Room, they are empowered to go and make disciples and baptize them and teach them all they are commanded to.”

According to Estrada Carrasquillo, he would never be where he is without his family and children, who walked with him every step of the way to where he is now. Having lived in both Puerto Rico and the United States, learning a new language, and moving every two to three years for two decades, “I’ve been a person on the move, living in a home away from home,” he says. Estrada Carrasquillo learned “what it is to be the ‘other,’” circling his passion for the local church back to relationships and hospitality. “Human life is based on healthy relationships. It’s not so much about the place, but it’s about the people in that place. If we let our relationships grow with the people we’re around, that can change the way we see places. When we see people, we change the way we see so many things.”



## MANIK COREA

*National Director for the Singapore Centre for Global Missions.  
Global Consultant for the Diocese of Churches for Sake of Others.  
M.A. in Intercultural Studies with a specialization in Church Planting,  
Asbury Seminary, 2021.*

ASBURY SEMINARY

VOICES

**M**anik Corea jokes that he loved the church before he knew the Lord of the church. As a pastor's kid, Manik grew up in the church. Yet he was 13 before he became a committed follower of Jesus. As a teen and young adult, God planted seeds that later confirmed a missionary calling.

In 1998, Manik worked for a magazine in Singapore. One day he was invited by friends to a dinner with Rev. Dr. Jon Shuler, founder and leader of New Anglican Missionary Society (NAMS). Over dinner, Manik shared how he had recently completed university studies in London, England, and had enjoyed serving in international student ministry. "At the end of the meal as we were saying goodbye, Jon looked me in the eye and said, 'I think God's got a work for you and me in England reaching the nations.' I was stunned, but it was the Lord," Manik says.

Manik accepted Jon's invitation to intern with NAMS in South Carolina for a few months before he was sent to Colchester, England, to help plant a DNA Networks church with an Anglican pastor and his wife near the University of Essex. At that point, Manik felt he did not know enough to be of use in a church plant in a post-Christian context. "Jon encouraged me that the obedience of faith is proven in our stepping out," he says. "Faith is really spelled r-i-s-k. I just had to step out, not knowing the culture or what I was to do, really, but the Lord had a plan and was gracious."

Manik met Enoch, a Sri Lankan grad student. They began to pray together to reach University of Essex students

for Christ. They started Bible discussion groups, allowing students – both non-believers and Christians – to share, discuss, and ask faith-based questions without judgment. Manik and Enoch focused on 4 R's: Raising (our voices in prayer), Rice (eating together often), Relationship (building friendships of trust) and Rescue (sharing the Gospel story). As the group became friends and relationships thrived, international students started coming to faith and attending the church plant in the town.

As Manik continued to serve, God confirmed his call to global church planting in a profound way. In 2000, at a New Wine Conference in Sheffield, England, a national church leader told Manik that he believed Manik was called to apostolic ministry. At the time, Manik didn't know exactly what that meant. Two years later in Colchester at a gathering of ministers, a visiting pastor from London with an established prophetic ministry prayed over Manik and again confirmed his apostolic calling to the nations.

As God continued to open doors for Manik to share the gospel, he continued to say yes.

He went on to lead NAMS globally while pursuing a Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies with a specialization in Church Planting at Asbury Seminary. He is the Global Hub representative for Asbury Seminary's Center for Church Multiplication in all Asia. He is now National Director for the Singapore Centre for Global Missions and serves as Global Consultant for the Diocese of Churches for Sake of Others. Learn more about Manik's roles in global missions by reading his full story at [asbury.to/voices](https://asbury.to/voices).



## SARAH PARHAM

*Vice President for Mobilization with TMS Global.  
M.Div., Asbury Seminary, 2016.*

ASBURY SEMINARY  
**VOICES**

**A**fter accepting Jesus at age 15, Sarah Parham wanted to tell everyone about Jesus. As she ministered to others, she realized she was wired to equip and empower people to serve God around the world. She now works as Vice President for Mobilization with TMS Global, leading their strategic direction as they seek to mobilize churches and individuals.

As a college student, Sarah threw herself into missions with the Baptist Student Union, applying for overseas mission work every summer. However, she always got placed domestically. In hindsight, Sarah recognizes that this could have been a clue to her future. Yet as graduation approached, she felt increasingly confused about what God wanted her to do with her life.

Her campus minister, who had served as a guide and mentor, invited her to talk. He affirmed her calling to missions and suggested that she broaden her view of mission work to include campus ministry. “He asked me if I knew who wrote his paycheck. He said it came from the North American Mission Board, and that he was a missionary on her college campus,” she says.

Sarah graduated, got married, then took a break from school to think about her next step. After three years working as a chemist for a pharmaceutical company, she and her husband discerned the timing was right for her to pursue seminary.

While studying at Asbury Seminary, Sarah began working as the campus minister for the University of Kentucky Wesley Foundation. As she prepared students to be missionaries to their classmates and friends, she realized that she, too, was a missionary to the campus. “I wanted to help capture their heart for the kingdom so they could change the world when they left,” Sarah said. “I never would have put the word ‘mobilization’ with it

then, and didn’t understand my role as such, but the pieces were there.”

After graduating with a Master of Divinity degree from Asbury Seminary in 2016, Sarah and her family moved back to Georgia for her to take an administrative job with TMS Global. In this role, God confirmed her calling to global missions. “When I understood what mobilization was, I finally had a name to put to my calling, really to help others discover and live theirs out,” she says. “It’s really just true to who I am to come alongside other believers to help them hear from God and have faith to act on what they hear.”

Sarah helps others hear the voice of God by looking at their life stories. “When I help people discern their calling, I always ask them to share their story, because there are always breadcrumbs in the story. Through story, we can see what direction the arrows are pointing, name what has happened, and take a next step,” she says.

During her time at TMS Global, Sarah transitioned from Administrative Assistant to Director of Mobilization to Vice President for Mobilization. Sarah currently leads three teams: church mobilization, individual mobilization, and international mobilization. With each team, she develops systems, structures, and processes to help others share the gospel around the world. Through her work, she seeks to resource individuals to serve within the marketplace. She has created a video-based Bible study curriculum called “Who is My Neighbor?” that helps people build bridges for the gospel. “I dream of and plan for ways to do discipleship even more deeply and intentionally with the few who think they could actually take their jobs and go overseas,” she says.

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## ABRAHAM LIVINGSTON

*Advocate for the Underprivileged.  
M.A. in Christian Ministries, Graduating 2025.*

ASBURY SEMINARY

# VOICES

**A**braham grew up in Madurai in Southern India. His Hindu mother and father were from two different castes. With the threat of murder, his father's family insisted his father divorce his mother then marry within his own caste. To save his life, his father obeyed his family, leaving Abraham fatherless. When Abraham was four, his refugee home separated him from his mother and sent him to a home for abandoned orphans.

Abraham was taught Christian hymns and Bible passages at this home. Yet he first met Jesus when he was 15 and immobilized with severe jaundice. His treatment was not affordable, and he was unable to stand on his own. With no one to help him to the lavatory, he cried out to God, "I will follow You if You will heal me." Abraham was cured one week after his prayer, although doctors had estimated that healing could take a year.

At age 16, Abraham said to God while walking on a terrace, "I want to eat fish today." Someone was drying pricey fish (Macreal) nearby, and a bird dropped two pieces on the ground near Abraham. "God affirmed to me that He was hearing. I started putting more of my faith in God," he says.

Abraham dedicated his life to the Lord's service at age 17. After obtaining a political science degree in college, Abraham's pastor told him, "It's time to attend theological seminary and prepare yourself for the ministry." The pastor suggested a seminary in North India near New Delhi.

Abraham told the Lord, "I don't have any money, but you will make a way." And God provided. Abraham's four years at the Indian seminary were miraculously covered by donations.

His second year in seminary, Abraham was once again sick with jaundice and instructed by doctors to eat only bland foods. Idli is a famous rice cake delicacy only found in Southern India. Abraham asked the Lord for it, even though

it was not found in that region. He spoke to the Lord, saying, "You provided for Elijah using ravens. Fill me up." The next morning, someone brought Abraham a lunchbox with idli. Abraham wept, saying, "Lord, You are always with me."

Abraham graduated from seminary in 2019. He applied for various ministry positions but received no responses. He considered pursuing a theological degree, but all of his applications to American seminaries were rejected. Abraham had been privileged to study under Dr. Craig Keener and Dr. Timothy Tennent during their visits to the seminary in North India. Abraham felt he would never get into Asbury Seminary. However, he applied and was accepted immediately.

"How will I pay tuition?" Abraham asked himself. He sent letters to numerous acquaintances requesting money, and two families paid his first year's tuition. The miracles continued. As Abraham was waiting on a Visa, he was given the opportunity to join a medical mission trip in Kenya. After his trip, he was granted a Visa to America without any difficulty. Someone he'd met during the mission trip bought him a business class flight to America. Then, when Abraham arrived at Asbury Seminary, God met his needs for food, clothes, and a vehicle.

As he works towards a Master of Arts degree in Christian Ministries, Abraham finds much-needed support on the Kentucky campus. "Asbury Seminary is a healing community. People like me, who carry hurts and wounds, find shelter and family here," he says. "We discover an abundance of love, caring and attention... Even the professors pay special attention and concern to our academic success. Therefore, it's safe to say that this is an outstanding establishment."

Find out what Abraham plans to do after graduation by reading his full story at [asbury.to/voices](https://asbury.to/voices).

# ENDING THE YEAR WELL

*As the end of the year approaches,  
so does the opportunity to reduce your taxes.*



## Tax-Wise Charitable Planning Strategies

**There are a number of charitable planning strategies that can help you shift tax dollars to charitable dollars that can have eternal impact:**

**IRA Charitable Rollover** – If you are 70 ½ or older, you can make a gift from your required minimum distribution, up to \$100,000, to a qualified charity like Asbury Seminary. This may lower your income and taxes.

**Outright Gift of an Asset** – Make a gift of stock, real estate or another asset, avoid paying capital gains tax on the transfer and receive a tax-saving charitable deduction.

**Life Income Gifts** – Make a gift to Asbury Seminary through a Charitable Gift Annuity or Charitable Remainder Trust to secure annual income and receive tax benefits.

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

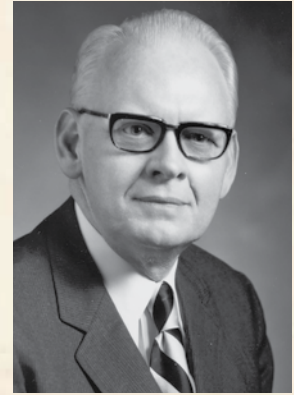
Watch Asbury Seminary Chapel LIVE online every week during the semester at [asbury.to/live](https://asbury.to/live)



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

# FROM THE ARCHIVES:

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## A DOOR WHICH NO ONE CAN SHUT

### The Christian's Responsibility for World Evangelization

by Dr. Frank Bateman Stanger, President of Asbury Seminary 1962-1982

The same Lord who said, "all authority is given to me..." (Mt. 28:18), and "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15), also said: "I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it ...." (Rev. 3:8).

I have an increasing sense of the fact that no one of us would be Christian today had not somebody, somewhere, been faithful to Christ's Great Commission and shared the Gospel with others. The Gospel has reached us through the outworking of the program of Christian missions. The Great Commission is probably the most important message that Jesus Christ ever gave to His Church. The statement of the Great Commission appears five times in the New Testament Scriptures. In each case the emphasis is different, but the task is the same.

In Matthew's account, which relates Christ's commissioning the disciples to world mission, the authority of Jesus to do so is emphasized. Jesus says, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" (Mt. 28:18-20). In Mark, the emphasis falls upon the final judgment against which the urgency of the mission is emphasized: "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15, 16). In John's account, Christ placed the Great Commission in the context of His own commissioning by the Father: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (Jn. 20:21). Finally, in Acts, Jesus' command to the disciples to go into all the world is linked to a definite program of world evangelization and to the empowering of the disciples by the Holy Spirit. "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

I do not believe that Christ's Great Commission to His Church has ever been repealed. Therefore, if professing Christians and the Church are failing to fulfill the Great Commission, they are living in disobedience to Jesus Christ. I am convinced that the primary reason

for the decline of missionary passion in the contemporary Church is the absence of a sense of "Biblical authority." When the Church loses its divinely inspired Bible, it loses its sense of the authoritative commands of Jesus Christ. When the Bible becomes merely a sacred book, rather than the uniquely inspired revelation of God, then professed followers of Christ often remake their leader and His commands in their own rationalistic image. Only in the content of Scripture which is authoritative can there be discovered authentic mission motivation.

There must be a new strategy for world evangelization if we are to take seriously Christ's command to reach every person with His Gospel. Dr. David A. Womack, foreign missions home secretary of The Assemblies of God, writes in *Christianity Today*:

"The only hope for the total evangelization of the world is to teach the Christian believers of each nation to evangelize their own people and to incite in each country the conditions in which spontaneous lay movements of church expansion may occur. In short, the Church must abandon its stained-glass sanctuaries and take the Gospel out into the streets."

No national church will prosper and grow at any realistic rate that is not founded on the indigenous-church principle. It is only as the native people of a land become active proclaimers of the Gospel that there can be any natural church growth. The only way the world can possibly be won for Christ is for every believer to be an evangelistic witness and for every church to become a center for missionary activity.

The work of evangelization includes efforts to meet the physical, emotional, social, and other temporal needs of men. We have our Lord's example. He had compassion on the poor, needy, sick and lonely. He healed their sicknesses and inspired others to provide for temporal needs and to manifest attitudes of love and concern. Liberation is included in the concept of redemption. Bondage in any form, whether physical or mental, is a terrible thing, and Christians must be concerned about freeing their fellow human beings from every form of tyranny.

May God help each of us, in fellowship and ministry with one another, to pray, plan, and work together for the evangelization of the whole world.



# Thrive

WITH ASBURY SEMINARY

One of our favorite guests from the newest season of Thrive with Asbury Seminary is Andrew Peterson. He is a recording artist, songwriter, producer, filmmaker, publisher and award-winning author of *The Wingfeather Saga*. In this episode we talk about faith and creativity and the power of art to illuminate deep spiritual truths.



“Pay attention to your story because your story is one of the ways that God is making himself known to you.”

Andrew Peterson

## New Podcast Episodes Release Every Other Thursday

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, artists and authors. Thrive with Asbury Seminary seeks to help you learn about the variety of ways you can serve God, actively grow your relationship with God and take the next step in your faith and calling.

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



“I remember leaving and thinking what a sacred privilege it was to be invited into that space - the idea that we went to serve them, and they treated us like royalty.”

**Dr. Janet Dean and Dr. Marcus Kilian**  
Teaching Trauma-Informed Counseling in Ukraine



“Pentecost is not only just about being able to be bilingual, trilingual in our language of faith, but it is also about being able to hear one another.”

**Dr. Emilio Alvarez**  
A Conversation about Pentecost

# News & Events

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## Asbury Theological Seminary Signs MOU with Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary



Asbury Theological Seminary signed an MOU with Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary on October 18, 2023, to collaborate on leadership development in the global

church through theological education. Dr. Gregg A. Okesson, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs at Asbury Seminary, signed the agreement along with Rev. Dr. Ivan Rusyn, President of Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary. Both institutions share the goal of advancing the kingdom of God through theological education and will support educational, professional and intercultural activities among students and faculty of the two institutions and their respective communities.

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## Asbury Seminary Awarded Lilly Endowment Grant

Asbury Theological Seminary has received a grant of \$1,225,460 from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help develop and implement a learning community titled, "Growing Families," using digital teaching resources, experiential learning at home, and small group accountability.

The project is being funded through Lilly Endowment's Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative. The aim of the initiative is to help parents and caregivers share their faith and values with their children. With the funds awarded under this grant, Asbury Seminary will develop a gospel-centered, Wesleyan-rich, research-based family program that includes spiritual practices as a means of grace, digital resources for parent-led discipleship, small group accountability, and family gatherings to create the right environment for parents and caregivers to pass on the Christian faith to their children.

## Asbury Seminary Welcomes New Hires

Asbury Seminary announces the hiring of Dr. Kenneth L. Waters, Sr., to serve as Professor of Homiletics; Dr. Chris Bounds to serve as Professor of Theology; Dr. Leanne Dzubinski to serve as Professor of Christian Leadership and Director of the Beeson International Center for Biblical Preaching and Church Leadership; Dr. Ken Myers, to serve as Clinical Coordinator and Assistant Professor of Counselor Education; Dr. Andrew Graham, Associate Professor of Counselor Education, to enter his teaching role long-term; and Dr. Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo to serve as Associate Professor of Missions and Evangelism; Rev. Dr. Charles O. Galbreath as Assistant Professor of Ministry; Dr. Stanley John as Associate Professor of Intercultural Studies, and Rev. Dr. Ron Walborn as Executive Director of Urban Initiatives.

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## Asbury Seminary signs MOU with the Logos Academy of Ministry and Mission



On July 17, 2023, during President Timothy C. Tennent's visit to Australia, Asbury Seminary signed a partnership agreement with Logos Academy of Ministry and Mission (LAMM) in

Malvern East, Victoria. Per the agreement, Asbury Seminary and LAMM will collaborate to provide theological training to both clergy and lay members of local churches. This training will occur through the Certificate in Theology and Spiritual Formation, a 5-module certificate offered by the Center for Formational and Missional Training at Asbury Seminary.

With this new partnership, LAMM will provide learners and coordinators for the Certificate in Theology and Spiritual Formation; invitations to the public for certificate training and education; hosting for visiting professors; and meeting spaces. LAMM and Asbury Seminary will explore future possibilities for mentored ministry and cultural immersion in Australia for Asbury Seminary students and faculty as well as for visiting international scholars from LAMM.

## Asbury Seminary Announces \$2 Million Endowed Scholarship for Mental Health Counseling



Asbury Theological Seminary announces a grant of \$2 million from the Bobbie Bailey Foundation of Tucker, Georgia, to establish an endowed scholarship for the Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling. The grant was announced by Audrey Morgan, Chairman and CEO of the Foundation and Bobbie Bailey's sister and business partner.

In announcing this gift, Tammy Hogan, Vice President for Advancement, said, "This significant gift in the early phase of developing our School of Counseling program will help us attract quality students that are called to facilitate healing for our mental health crisis. We are blessed and strengthened by this gift and the partnership of the Bobbie Bailey Foundation with Asbury Seminary."

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## Asbury Seminary Mourns the Passing of Dr. Christine Pohl



Dr. Christine Pohl passed away in hospice care the morning of June 5, 2023, after battling pancreatic cancer.

Dr. Pohl was beloved Professor Emeritus of Christian Ethics at Asbury Theological Seminary. Her special work in the areas of hospitality, community and friendship helped the church

rediscover these central practices. Her contributions included her groundbreaking books, "Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition" and "Living into Community: Cultivating Practices that Sustain Us." Dr. Pohl also co-authored several books, wrote numerous articles and spoke regularly on the practices of hospitality and community. She retired in the summer of 2018 after 29 years of teaching at Asbury Seminary. She was known personally and professionally as someone who lived her theology by embodying the virtues and hospitality practices that she taught.

## Andrew Peterson Visits Asbury Seminary for Centennial Celebration

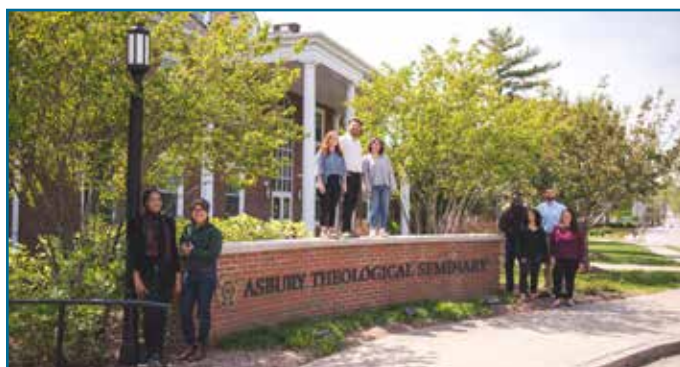


Asbury Seminary and Asbury University welcomed recording artist, songwriter, producer, filmmaker, publisher and award-winning author of "The Wingfeather Saga," Andrew Peterson, on November 9 and 10. Peterson came as part of

the Seminary's series of Centennial Celebration events that began in September 2022 and will wrap up in December 2023.

His visit included speaking in both the Seminary and University's chapel services on Thursday and Friday, performing a concert Thursday night in Hughes Auditorium, and leading a songwriting workshop on Friday in McKenna Chapel. Peterson shared his thoughts on faith and creativity and the importance of artists in the church.

Peterson was originally scheduled to come in February 2023, but, due to the Outpouring at Asbury University, he graciously rescheduled his visit for November.



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