“That verse of Scripture jumped out, grabbed me by the throat, wrapped itself around my heart, and I’m telling you, I’ve never gotten over it. Here was this young, green as grass, African American kid, in a kind of genteel segregated town. And there was the God of eternity marking this kid off for himself, putting a call on him: ‘You’re mine.’ You don’t get over that!”

—WILLIAM E. PANNELL, ON VOCATION
A BETTER COUNTRY

we left a world two thousand miles behind and crossed wide Arizona on the 10 to reach some undisclosed horizon line

the forests and the rivers I called mine have faded into scrub and barbed wire fence we left a world two thousand miles behind

and who can say if this was by design? we heard a voice say go and so we went to reach some undisclosed horizon line

still, in our hearts there sits a little shrine— above the door, it reads, what might have been we left a world two thousand miles behind

what greater sorrow, though, if we resign ourselves to saying no and not amen— amen to undisclosed horizon lines

how often do our hopes and fears entwine! two roads of one same journey in the end we left a world two thousand miles behind

to reach some undisclosed horizon line

BY KYLE OESCH (MA student)
When the flesh—the lived human experience—becomes word, community can develop. When we say, “Let me tell you what we saw. Come and listen to what we did. Sit down and let me explain to you what happened to us. Wait until you hear where we are.” we call people together and make our lives interlaced for others. The word brings us together and calls us into community. When the flesh becomes word, our bodies become part of a body of people. —Henri Nouwen

There is a deep tradition of the Word becoming flesh in the Christian faith, so it should not be a mystery beyond our imagination that the words we speak—whether in the form of story, comment, challenge, sermon, or coincidence—have embodiment power. We tell stories about things that happen in the flesh, but the words we speak also have the power to affect the concrete world. Sometimes these shifts are grand, sometimes granular. A sample of the latter: a colleague told me recently the story of a bad week—disillusioned, bitter, unhappy. She sat in my office and wept as she spoke. Her words produced tears, her tears were not only her own. A professor makes the case for doing deep on immersion trips

This brings me to one more story, of the grand shift kind. Four times too many in the last year the Pasadena community has gathered in the prayer garden to mourn the loved ones who are going, but the words still have power. They reside in us, a body of people. —Henri Nouwen

Fuller storytellers will tell stories, in word and image, of students and alumni enacting their calling, and our advisors will highlight other subjects that become important to our community as a result of listening and thinking and caring deeply together.

Focus

This inaugural issue of FULLER magazine, a new fusion of story, theology, and voice, is meant to reflect the life of Fuller in all her permutations: this is who we are, what we are talking about, and who we are becoming together.

From the Editor

YOU HOLD OUR WORDS IN YOUR HANDS

Lauralee Farrer, Storyteller, artist in residence, and editor-in-chief of FULLER magazine.

Thelma Palanco-Perez, photographer, labeled this image of the prayer garden at Fuller Pasadena “one of my favorite places.”

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From Mark Labberton, President

OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The words continuity and change mark the beginning of my second school year as president of Fuller. A brief glimpse of the world around us shows dramatic change in the cultural landscape near and far; the perplexity of structures and habits of the institutional church; the new experiments and models of church life; the growing interest in church planting and in bivocational ministry; the inspurring rise of immigrant congregations; the large number of our students who intend to put their education to work in some form of service in the public square or in non-profits, in the arts, or in business; morphing delivery systems for all graduate-level education, seminaries included; an urgent need for training women and men to be leaders who can form leaders for the mission of the church in the world.

Such change outside of Fuller requires change within it. Our curriculum, reimagined from the ground up last year, will move our students forward with a greater intentionality and integration over the course of their education. Alongside them, we want to discern within the community what God is calling us to do in the world—inside the...
우리는 예수님의 제자로서, 예수님을 사랑하고 우리의 이웃을 우리 자신과 같이 삶 을 지으신 세상과 사랑으로 연합을 이루는 것입니다. 성경 전체는, 특별히 예수님은, 이와 같은 사랑해야 한다는 이중사랑의 계명의 의미입니다. 예수님을 따르는 이들은 세상에서 하나님의 목적들을 온전하게 수행하고자 하였으며, 이것이 바로 지하철로 살아간다는 것입니다. 이것은 성경이 말하는 두 계명, 사랑의 계명을 일깨워 줍니다. 우리는 왜 여기에 있습니까? 우리가 살아있는데 어떻게 해 왔습니까? 이것이 우리가 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 데 있습니다. 이것은 생명의 이중사랑의 계명, 사랑의 주제 계명을 일깨우는 데 있습니다.

우리는 세상에 대한 사랑을 실천하며 살도록 부르신 예수님의 말씀을 수반하여 살아야 합니다. 이는 하나님의 부르심의 핵심입니다. 부르심은 세상에서 하나님의 사랑을 실천하며 살아가야 한다는 의미입니다. 이 부르심은 우리의 책임, 삶의 과업, 기독교의 기반, 사랑의 루프, 우리 믿음의 핵심을 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 것입니다.

부르심은 아름다운 이중사랑의 의미를 가진다. 이는 예수님의 제자로서, 예수님을 사랑하고 우리의 이웃을 우리 자신과 같이 삶 을 지으신 세상과 사랑으로 연합을 이루는 것입니다. 성경 전체는, 특별히 예수님은, 이와 같은 사랑해야 한다는 이중사랑의 계명의 의미입니다. 예수님을 따르는 이들은 세상에서 하나님의 목적들을 온전하게 수행하고자 하였으며, 이것이 바로 지하철로 살아간다는 것입니다. 이것은 성경이 말하는 두 계명, 사랑의 계명을 일깨워 줍니다. 우리는 왜 여기에 있습니까? 우리가 살아있는데 어떻게 해 왔습니까? 이것이 우리가 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 데 있습니다. 이것은 생명의 이중사랑의 계명, 사랑의 주제 계명을 일깨우는 데 있습니다.

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이 전에는 특별히 예수님의 말씀을 이해하는 것이 중요합니다. 예수님의 말씀은 우리 삶의 방향을 가르쳐 주는 말씀입니다. 우리는 예수님의 말씀을 이해하는 것이 중요하며, 이는 우리가 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 것입니다. 우리는 예수님의 말씀을 이해하는 것이 필요하며, 이는 우리가 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 것입니다.

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제니 논리의 신인 예수님이 말씀하시는 하나님의 부르심의 핵심에 대해서는, 예수님의 제자로서, 예수님을 사랑하고 우리의 이웃을 우리 자신과 같이 삶 을 지으신 세상과 사랑으로 연합을 이루는 것입니 다. 이와 같은 부르심은 모든 것을 포괄합니다. 이 부르심은 세상에서 하나님의 목적들을 온전하게 수행하고자 하였으며, 이것이 바로 지하철로 살아간다는 것입니다. 이것은 성경이 말하는 두 계명, 사랑의 계명을 일깨워 줍니다. 우리는 왜 여기에 있습니까? 우리가 살아있는데 어떻게 해 왔습니까? 이것이 우리가 살아가는 방향을 지시하는 데 있습니다. 이것은 생명의 이중사랑의 계명, 사랑의 주제 계명을 일깨우는 데 있습니다.

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My husband and I host dinner parties often enough that a group of regulars has started to convene. Our friends are young professionals with varying careers and goals. At a recent dinner I looked around the table and saw a humanitarian who campaigns for clean water in Africa, a filmmaker, a high school Bible teacher, a city of Burbank marketing professional, a youth pastor, a web-developer at Jet Propulsion Laboratories (NASA), a comedian, a children’s counselor, the owner of an allergy-sensitive catering company, a church planter, and an entrepreneur and doctoral student (myself). Noting that each of us graduated from Fuller, I realized that either by force or by choice, many seminary alums work outside traditional ministry contexts. On some level, that table represented the changing landscape of religious vocation. I looked around and saw friends who were able to respond creatively and with agility to their callings no matter what their careers.

In my past experience as a student at Fuller, I often felt that the mission statement “preparing men and women for the manifold ministries of Christ and his church” was limited to church ministry, faith-based nonprofit work, and counseling. And while these three spheres will likely always remain central, they are no longer the sole locations to which God is calling people to serve. Our dinner gatherings have convinced me this is the case: our conversations often turn to updates on our work. Angela (PhD student), the youth pastor, asks for input on the sermon she’s preparing for her youth group. Elizabeth (MAT ’12), the caterer, describes a cooking class she took last week. My husband Dan (MDiv ’10), a filmmaker, convinces us to help imagine his latest story protagonist. Lyndsey (MAICS ’13), the humanitarian, invites us to strategize how to provide clean water to children around the globe. Brenton (MAT ’11), a web-developer, explains NASA’s latest scientific exploration. As the night grows shorter, our conversations often explore such questions as how our theological training impacts what we’re currently doing. And for those of us working outside the church, how do our professions speak to the church and to Fuller? My friends intuitively know that our work is theological. Still, we long for training that brings those intuitive connections to the surface in explicit ways.
The work of Martin Luther helps make explicit connections between theological work and the various professions we represent. As a Reformer, Luther ministered and wrote largely in reaction to medieval models of faith and religious practice—including perceptions of vocation and work. Medieval models thought of work as a part of everyday life, but they did not perceive work outside of the church as a vocation—a call—from God. Yes, society needed bakers and teachers and farmers, but that work was not spiritual. If a person wanted his or her work to be spiritual, it meant withdrawing from the world and entering into monastic life. But Luther rejected the idea that work was only spiritual if done within monastic parameters. He argued that humans live in the reality of two kingdoms: the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of earth. In the kingdom of heaven, we are called to respond vertically to God with our faith. In the kingdom of earth, we are called to respond horizontally toward our neighbor with love. Vocations, then, are specific callings to practice faithfulness toward God and love toward neighbor from within a particular social location.

When Elizabeth graduated from Fuller, she strung together various part-time jobs to make ends meet. Yet a deeper urge was growing in her to start a catering business that had a double mission: serve people with food allergies and teach about the connections between faith and food. Elizabeth founded that business on the belief that all people, regardless of difficult dietary restrictions, should have access to healthy, delicious food. She infuses work in the “hospitality industry” with Christian meaning, and her theology frames her task as the creation of space for people to break bread and form community. While her technical training as a chef equips her to serve food, it is her training as a theologian that equips her to serve people.

Our friend Brenton works for Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) field center. He earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and English. After college he picked up technical skills that landed him a job as a web developer, but after a few years, he could not shake the feeling that God was calling him to something deeper. A series of investigative conversations led him to study at Fuller. At first, after he graduated, he looked for the jobs that seminary explicitly prepared him for: church ministry and faith-based nonprofit work. He was unable to find a job that utilized both his technical and theological skills. Brenton had always naturally understood God through the lens of science and mathematics, and at Fuller he took classes and attended conferences that explored the intersection between God and science. Brenton realized that he is called to live at that intersection—using his technical skills and theology together to contribute to scientific exploration. When the job at JPL opened up, the planets aligned in Brenton’s life.

Vocational agility, the subject of a great many of our conversations these days, is the ability to move quickly and fluidly between theological frameworks and one’s social location. Elizabeth practices agility when she responds to God’s call of hospitality by opening a catering business. She does the tough work of contextualizing theological frameworks into her business model. And she does this because she sees God’s narrative and teachings as the basis for her own place in this world.

I must admit that when I first started hosting dinner parties I was tempted to cook the entire meal myself—not out of service, but out of a desire for control. Since we have grown closer with our friends, however, I saw that in a desire to keep a tight rein on the meal I cheated others of the chance to contribute, and myself of the opportunity to experience my friends in a more intimate way. The dishes—and the stories—my friends bring flow from their own lives in the form of a favorite recipe from someone’s mother or a dish using lettuce someone grew. The way we’ve grown close through these dinners is a witness to the power of being intentional about our love for neighbor, about integrating our faith fully within our careers, and about sharing life together around the dinner table.

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When Joe Stroup (MDiv ’13) was first invited to a late-night Dungeons and Dragons game in college, he was wary. He decided to go, and found an entire underground culture of men and women who didn’t connect easily in other social settings, but did connect strongly with each other through “the game”—a role-playing experience in which players become the characters in an imagined, interactive story.

The discovery had a lasting impact on Joe, who went on to become a youth pastor as well as a gaming enthusiast. Noticing that some of the guys in his youth group were uncomfortable at the typical lock-ins and pizza parties, Joe started a gaming ministry—and a small group that ended up meeting at his home weekly for a year and a half. “We’d take part in a game that would last for a couple of hours,” Joe says, “and it gave us a common context to have conversations about real life.”

“I see a lot of potential to reach an unreached people group who are right in our midst,” says Joe, “through the portal of game-playing.” Joe will never know the full impact of that group on the lives of those young men, but he does know about the life-and-death impact of another gaming experience on a young woman he has never yet met face to face.

Joe and Nora (not her real name) met each other virtually, in an online version of Dungeons and Dragons. “We were on a team together at one point,” Joe says. “As we got to know each other better, we communicated by email and integrated into each other’s Twitter feeds.”

Joe began to see Nora display clear signs of depression and learned she had Asperger Syndrome, a form of autism that causes difficulty in navigating social situations. The world of role-playing games can be a very hospitable place for those like Nora who struggle to interact with others in the real world. These imagined worlds feature clearly defined rules, controlled identities, and mediated social interactions, so they are easier to navigate. When things go wrong in the imagined world, however, people who feel most at home there can have nowhere left to turn.

One night Joe logged on to Twitter to find Nora tweeting in a moment of crisis. “Nora’s depression got really, really dark,” Joe recalls. In recent weeks Nora had been very vocal online about problems in her life—in both worlds. “A lot of the relationships that mattered to her within the world of the game were falling apart, along with real-life struggles in her relationship with her mom,” Joe says. Because he had come to know Nora well, Joe knew to take these things seriously.

Joe watched in horror on Twitter as Nora attempted to take her own life. “She took a whole bunch of pills, started drinking heavily, and was tweeting about it the whole time,” Joe recalls. It was her second suicide attempt; her first had yielded tweets from the hospital featuring the suturing skills of the nurses who had stitched up her arms. Joe wasn’t the only one following along. Others in her online community were also watching, and many were frantically sending messages trying to get her to stop what she was doing. She wasn’t listening. Joe knew it was too late to reach out to Nora via phone. “I had to do something,” he realized. Something in the real world.

Joe scrambled through her past tweets. “I remembered that she had sent an image from the last time she was in the hospital. She was wearing a hospital bracelet, and I hoped it would show her real name,” Joe recalls. It did.

He remembered a passing comment she made about living in Tennessee. With that, Joe was able to call her local police department. Because this was Nora’s second suicide attempt, the dispatch officer quickly found her in their records and located her address. When the police officers arrived at her apartment, Joe saw Nora tweet angrily as she was taken to the hospital, where her stomach was pumped. Though she was angry, Joe was relieved for his friend.

Joe and Nora maintain their online friendship. But to this day, Nora doesn’t know who was responsible for the police officers’ intervention—and for saving her life.
This Is Then, That Was Now
By Lauralee Farrer

In 1968 a young William E. Pannell wrote a book about race relations in the church that was so candid even the publisher who commissioned the book was skittish about it. My Friend, the Enemy was an uncompromising statement on black-white relations that shook up the evangelical world—Bill's included. It came from some place so deep in Bill that longtime white friends said they did not believe he wrote it. One insisted it was written by an outside agitator, because "that's just not the Bill Pannell that I know." Both had grown up in the same small Michigan town, so Bill's reply was harsh but true: "That's because you didn't know Bill Pannell," he said, "or the world I lived in." It was possible for a white person to call Bill a "close friend" and still know little of a black man's life in a white world. Often white colleagues would say, "We never thought of you as a negro." That, he says, was supposed to have been a compliment.

"THERE IS AMONG US A GROSS IGNORANCE OF EACH OTHER, A PERNICIOUS SUSPICION AND SCORN FEEDING THE FLAMES OF RAW EMOTION, AND ALL BECAUSE, IN AN AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT, WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT RACE MEANS." (PP. 117–18)

Shortly after, in 1971, Bill became Fuller's first African American trustee. Ever since, his core life's work has been to rectify the state of invisibility for himself and other American blacks who suffer inequity as daily bread. Two decades later, in 1993, he wrote a book on the heels of the Los Angeles uprising triggered by trials of police brutality toward Rodney King. In The Coming Race Wars: A Cry for Reconciliation, he bemoaned a state of racial affairs that had seen little change. That book made a shallower splash because denial was no longer the only issue—the will to make change was. Among evangelicals, black males were still in short supply even at conventions on race relations; they were inadequately represented in faculty meetings or classroom settings; they were too-much-missing even on a campus located in a city with a large mixed-race population—such as Fuller Theological Seminary.

In 2007 Fuller published a profile of Bill for then Focus magazine under the theme "a legacy of tireless belief." At the time he spoke passionately about his lifelong advocacy of reconciliation between American blacks and whites and his frustration that, it seemed to him, so little ground had been won. His years of unique experience give Bill Pannell a rare voice in the evangelical world. Joy J. Moore, associate dean for the African American Church Studies Program (soon to be named after Pannell), calls him the father of black evangelicalism—a title he claims, sincerely, to find surprising. Nevertheless, "without him," Moore says, "many would have no idea that black evangelicals exist."

It's a mistake for a legacy like Bill's to be judged by the winning or losing of "ground." Bill's goal is not dominance. His goal, his calling, is reconciliation. That is achieved primarily in his person. Without him, a unique call for change would remain unspoken. With him, present and future generations witness an advocate undaunted by insurmountable odds. In the foreword to The Coming Race Wars, then-president of Taylor University Jay Kesler confessed: "I thank Bill for his insistence on bringing up unsolved agendas, even when I am weary of hearing them again. They must be our agendas together in the name of biblical justice."

Back in 1992, the uprisings in Los Angeles gave Bill occasion to "ponder the relevance of modern-day evangelicalism." He saw that hopes for response from his white evangelical colleagues were not being realized. "I hoped they would come up with a marriage of their theology and their political ideology to lay alongside the heartbreak of the city and then carve some outposts of the kingdom there." Instead, he found little change in the years between the Watts of 1965 and Los Angeles of 1992, and an evangelical establishment largely indistinguishable from most of white America.

In 2014, over four decades since that first explosive book blew the minds of white American evangelicals, Bill is thinking about his life at a time when "there is more behind me than ahead of me." In the season when the African American Church Studies program is to be renamed after him, we asked him to reflect on nearly a half century at Fuller. In the midst of talk about "legacy" with accolades being lined up like bowling pins, Bill is tying on bowling shoes and picking out the heaviest ball he can throw. He means to make the point that the work of reconciliation is far from done. Bill models tireless courage, love for the unloving other, and a dogged, Christlike presence in our lucky lives. Still stung by the racism he sees imbedded in people and institutions—our own included—he is still pointing out a better way. Even at "five years shy of 90," he does not tire of speaking truth to power.
Did I ever tell you this story? Did I ever tell you how I got started in all this? I was trying to figure out what to do after getting out of high school, and there was a woman I knew named Mildred Bedford—a domestic worker in one of the wealthiest homes in town. She was convinced I had to go to bible school. “Why would I want to go to bible school?” I argued stupidly. “I don’t know anything about the Bible!” Mildred comes to me one day and says cryptically, “We’ve got to strike while the iron is hot,” and she hands me $500. That’s 1947 dollars. I’m still trying to figure out how she did that; I still get all shook up when I think of it. So, that’s how I got to Bible college—Mildred Bedford’s savings. That $500 paid for my whole first year with a little left over for the summer. And of course it became much more to me. I didn’t always understand what was going on in the culture around me. I was a lost ball in high weeds.

Along the way, I realized I have to figure out how to negotiate the unspoken racism of white mid-America—where the Christians know about it and don’t tell you, where they know about it and don’t do anything. Folks who invited me to preach would shield me for instance, they would keep me in their homes because they knew no motel or hotel would let me inside. Those were “sundowner towns”—meaning places where black folks better not be in town when the sun goes down. Anybody knew that black folks could travel Route 66 all they wanted, but they better not plan on staying overnight anywhere along that highway.

Every year at Fuller when students graduate, I’m taken back to the day I graduated from Fort Wayne Bible College in June of 1951. I’m standing there with this piece of paper that says, I graduated, some luggage and stuff, and I’m $300 in debt. I have no idea what I’m going to do. A classmate of mine says, “Hey! You doing anything? I’m going out to Dodge City. How about I’ll preach and you lead the singing?” And I said, “Have mercy! Okay.” That’s how 25 years of uninterrupted evangelism started, one serendipitous invitation after another—just like that. It was quite remarkable. On the way, God would get me where he wanted me to be. Wow, crazy stuff, really. “Have mercy!”

And that was it. I was 21 or 22 at the most, running around the country, doing revival meetings, learning how to preach as I did it, and finding out that most congregations were full of pain and conflict that they just learned to live with. Evangelical, Brethren, Methodist, they were country folk, farmers, who tended to be much more conservatively evangelical than the fancy city evangelicals—country folks were the ones who had the annual revival meetings where I preached, in small town rural America. I was comfortable there personally, but I didn’t always understand what was going on in the culture around me. I was a lost ball in high weeds.

“DON’T PREACH TO ME, ESPECIALLY IF YOU INTEND TO DO ALL THE LOVING.” (P. 54)

I was always in the company of white Christians who were well known in these communities, so their endorsement protected me from seeing racism when we were at restaurants and so on. In addition, the churches where I preached or sang were almost exclusively white. It gave me an unusual perspective. I met some wonderful people in those early days, and we stayed in touch for many years (most of them have all died off by now). But as recently as the last 10 years, I went back to one of those Methodist churches and did a “week of meetings,” and we met around and reminisced about those early days. I heard with different ears as they complained that one of the downsides to Civil Rights activism was that black folks and Latinos were getting the lion’s share of everything and poor white folks were being left behind. It just kind of leaks out in conversation, when people are upset over the fact that there’s too many of “them.”

Most black folks were either Baptist or Methodist, so while evangelicals needed someone who was African American who could validate them. That’s one of the functions I gave myself to in those early days while I was still naïve about the racism of the South. It was a man named Vern Miller who perceived in me a need to be more aware of what was going on in the Civil Rights movement. I was probably 30, preaching up a storm, doing this, that, and the other thing, and an interesting debate took place over Frances Gary Powers being shot down over Russia. Eisenhower categorically denied that we sent a flyer over Frances Gary Powers being shot down over Russia.

Eisenhower categorically denied that we sent a flyer over Russia, saying, “We just don’t do those things here in America.” I voted for Eisenhower! I believed him. So Vern and I were standing on the sidewalk talking about it.

“BIRMINGHAM DID MORE TO SNATCH ME AWAKE THAN ANY PREVIOUS EVENT IN MY LIFETIME. THEOPHILUS EUGENE CONNOR’S CANINES SNARING VIOLENTLY AT NEGRO FLESH, THE OBVIOUS COURAGE AND STRENGTH OF WHITE COPS PINNING A NEGRO WOMAN TO THE PAVEMENT, SNARLING VICIOUSLY AT NEGRO FLESH, THE OBVIOUS COURAGE AND STRENGTH OF A NEGRO WOMAN IN STRUGGLE.” (P. 9)
I said, "Well you can't trust the Russians. They're liars, they're cheats. . . you know, Russians!" And Vern was quiet, a soft-spoken man. He said basically something like, "Bill, surely you are not naïve enough to think we just don't do that sort of thing because we're Americans!" And shortly thereafter, not only did the Russians produce their own pilot, but they produced parts of the plane that got shot down. Oops.

So not only do we do things like that, but we are involved in it. Oh boy—that was an eye opener for me. The next thing Vern did was give me a copy of Martin King's Why We Can't Wait. Here I was a Yankee, basically. I didn't know what was going on in the South. I wasn't involved. I wasn't even on the sidelines because I was so busy doing other stuff. That's why, when the Watts riots exploded, and I'm even on the sidelines because I was so busy doing other things. That's why, when the Watts riots exploded, even on the sidelines because I was so busy doing other things.

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I may not live long enough to check this out, but my fear is that now that we are in touch with the social dimensions of our responsibilities, we are tempted to think we can solve things without Jesus. Are you kidding me? That’s why evangelism is in our DNA at Fuller, for crying out loud! We’re now in what is being called “the new normal.” Oh boy. We might end up thinking we don’t need the same Jesus that we talked about in 1968, that we need a new Jesus for 2014. A new Jesus that comes alongside us in a wonderfully nonjudgmental sort of way, pats us on the butt, and tells us to keep on keeping on.

The real Jesus is really not nice. Packed full of love, and all of that, but whoever said love is neat, and nice? Whew, give me a break! I think Mark [Labberton] uses the phrase about Fuller that we are “rooted in orthodoxy.” That is right on the screws. We are not prepared to jettison the word “evangelical,” because that’s who we are. What we have to do is to pack it full of more radical meaning.

God’s fundamental interest in us is relationship. It’s for intimacy, a love affair. That’s the good news. God says, “I love you, and let’s get that settled.” But then God says: “Now I’m going to mess with you because there are things that need to get straightened out.” Oh boy, are there ever! Have mercy!

An excerpt from “A Legacy of Tireless Belief,” Focus magazine, Fall 2007, in which Bill Pannell reflects on what drew him to Fuller three decades before (available in its entirety online):

It chafed Pannell that so many institutions with a verbal commitment to diversity were not acting it out. “They had to address what was happening,” he says, and though he received many requests for help, “[Fuller President David Allan] Hubbard was the first and only representative of a major seminary who put the pitch to me in theological terms.” Pannell explains: “He said, ‘we don’t believe we can flesh out the meaning of the Kingdom of God moniculturally.’ For Hubbard it was a theological issue. That impressed me. On that basis, I came to Fuller.”

Students were asking questions about Vietnam, about the Civil Rights movement, about issues of justice, and Pannell was one of few who had frontline, personal experience. Back in those days, the seminary, he says with characteristic frankness, needed him more than he needed it. “It was uncomfortable in the early days. Being a minority was a two-edged sword. Institutions don’t quite know what to do with us. I had more experience in evangelism than anyone on the faculty, but I was often typecast. It took me years to crawl out from under that,” he says. But he was determined that his tenure was not going to depend on whether or not he was African American. He wanted to be treated like any other faculty. “I came to be the professor of evangelism—I did not want to be an ‘exotic intrusion.’”
A trip to the Holy Land should take you deep. You are not in shallow waters when you contemplate the ancient and modern issues raised by such a trip. That’s why you go with teachers and guides who are comfortable with the depths—just as you would on a scuba dive.

It might not seem like such a big deal. After all, it seems like everyone is going to Israel and Palestine lately. When I tell someone that we’re taking a trip from Fuller, I usually hear that they would like to go, and that they know people who’ve been. Most often it’s with a church. I worry about these trips, because I listen in on other groups, and wow: Their guides tell them some wild things. [Professor of New Testament] Marianne Meye Thompson and I lead Fuller groups, and students get used to watching us to see if we raise our eyebrows at each other. Marianne says, “A large part of what we do on our trips is teach students which things to take with a grain of salt, which things are plausible, and how they might know the difference. We teach them to ask good questions.”

It’s not just about information, but about the whole shape of a trip. A scholarly approach allows us to widen our scope, to appreciate deeply the sites that are not starred in every guidebook. Some of the most interesting sights in the Middle East are completely off the radar of tour companies. You might stand by the ruined fortress city of Lachish at midday—alone during tourist season—and still be able...
in support of their viewpoint. We have recognized that the modern situation requires attention on any trip to the Middle East, and have worked hard to address it in ways that do justice to its complexity. We let the students hear perspectives from both Israelis and Palestinians, we have Christian, Jewish, and Muslim guides, and our primary lodging is literally on the border between Israel and the West Bank.

A trip to the Holy Land, if done well, is less about sightseeing and more about story-forging. It is relatively easy to purchase a trip and consume a story—the same story that nearly everyone else gets. It is more difficult to read, listen, and prepare for such a trip, but it allows you to be a participant instead of a consumer. Like any good Fuller course, ours gives you the tools to think critically. And going deep allows the Bible and the land to inhabit your thoughts and words in fresh ways.

to see the massive Assyrian siege ramp, to understand why Judas lived in fear in the eighth century, and why Assyrian king Sennacherib memorialized his defeat of this city with reliefs carved all over his palace walls. Marianne teaches on the southern steps of the Temple Mount. I watch as students light up when they realize where they are. This is one of the few places where you can stand on stones where Jesus walked, and yet it’s lightly touristed in our experience. The place is remarkable, yet there is no signage to identify its significance, no markers to inform your tracks. (The state of Israel likes having Christians visit, but does not invest much in telling the story of Jesus.) It is these places without explanatory videos or historical markers, without pilgrim paths or souvenir shops, that we can encounter as students.

I remember a visit to Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls, the oldest biblical manuscripts known to exist, were found. In the visitors’ center, there was a large gift shop and a cafeteria, which were packed. There were probably 500 people in the complex. Tour buses were stacked like cordwood in the parking lot. But outside, on the archaeological site, only a few small groups circulated. Most didn’t even pause to examine the “scriptorium,” where the scrolls were likely copied. This site changed the way we think about the formation of the biblical writings, and the canon as a whole, but even the air-conditioned museum dedicated to the scrolls is often deserted, apparently offering no competition for spa products and cold sodas. By contrast, our Fuller group had toured Jerusalem’s Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are now held, guided by a member of the scrolls’ original editorial team, so they knew exactly what they were looking at.

A scholarly approach means that you know the right people. We often know the directors of the archaeological digs that we visit, and we have benefited from some wonderful tours that brought alive the stones and soil of ancient sites. (Of course, it’s not all scholarly . . . we also found time on our last trip to watch World Cup soccer in the Old City of Jerusalem, go to a water park in the Galilee, and soak up some rays on the beach in Tel Aviv. Knowing how to have fun matters, too.) A scholarly approach also allows us to think for ourselves. A theological school is in a uniquely propitious position to do Holy Land tourism better—primarily because we have motivated students who are willing to put in the study time to make a trip transcend the average and become more meaningful. It’s especially hard to think for yourself when it comes to the modern political situation, when you have interests on both sides shouting at you in support of their viewpoint. We have recognized that the modern situation requires attention on any trip to the Middle East, and have worked hard to address it in ways that do justice to its complexity. We let the students hear perspectives from both Israelis and Palestinians, we have Christian, Jewish, and Muslim guides, and our primary lodging is literally on the border between Israel and the West Bank.

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Christopher B. Hays, storyteller.
Christopher B. Hays is the D. Wilson Moore Associate Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies and directs that master’s program emphasis.

Nate Harrison, photographer.
Nate Harrison is a Fuller videographer who graduated from USC’s School of Cinematic Arts. More: NateHHarrison.com.
6 a.m. Every Day

By Michael Wright

“I’m afraid of being sober. I used to see my dealer at 6 a.m. every morning, and now when I wake up, I don’t know what to do.” Alyssa is talking with others dealing with addiction in a recovery circle at the Recovery Café. Drug use has become so embedded in the daily rhythm of her life that she’s not sure what to put in its place. Susan, another circle member, puts her coffee down, pauses, and says from across the table, “I’ll meet you, then.” And so the next morning—and the next, and the next, and the next, for months—Susan meets Alyssa at dawn as they struggle toward sobriety together.

On a similar morning ten years earlier, Killian Noe and Ruby Takushi [PhD ’90] are praying together after a service at the New Creation Community in Seattle. They’re praying for people struggling with homelessness and addiction throughout the city, and they’re asking God how they might help. With multiple treatment centers and shelters already working in the area, they don’t want their efforts to be redundant, so they spend time talking to other advocates and looking for unseen patterns they might address. They learn that while Seattle healthcare providers offer many services to those on the margin, limited resources exist for ongoing support.

So Ruby and Killian decide to fill the gap. They wonder together what a center committed to long-term support might look like: they imagine people sitting around a table committed to sharing both their wounds and their hopes, baristas making good coffee so that people who are marginalized feel seen and valued—a place so committed to sobriety that everything from art classes to open mic nights are used for holistic transformation. In 2004, their plans are realized as they open the doors of the Recovery Café.

Ten years later, those early visions for the café are a daily reality. The staff and volunteers serve so many people at this point that everyone starts each morning with a time of contemplative silence to remember one another’s humanity. After the silence, a raucous day begins. Volunteers play checkers with people struggling with mental illness while teenagers share their poems in a writing group. A woman struggling with a heroin addiction helps a blind friend practice yoga. A man who was living on the street just a week before is serving potatoes and gravy to others for lunch. As people begin to feel safe in the hospitality of the café, they’re invited to join a recovery circle: a group of seven to eight members committed to staying sober—and vulnerable—with one another. These circles create a safe space to struggle through shame and addiction with others. It’s the heart of the café, and Ruby says, it’s the purpose of everything they do: “to create space and relationship that can invite healing.” Being known and loved in this way, she says, sustains the journey toward recovery.

Supporting the recovery circle is careful planning, and as program director, Ruby uses her training to share the science behind psychotherapy with the volunteer leaders. It’s work that is shaped by studying with Warren Brown, a professor “committed to the enterprise of honest scientific inquiry while still being deeply faithful”—at Fuller’s School of Psychology, where she learned “to embed the science behind psychotherapy within our faith perspective and our community.”

Behind the front doors of the Recovery Café is both a conviction and a hope: a conviction to create a safe space for people to meet one another, and a hope that when they do, they’ll discover a community of people standing beside them—no matter how many mornings it takes—until they come to know themselves as valuable and loved. As one café regular put it, “I just needed to find someone to help me turn my story around.”

The Recovery Café is based on a therapeutic community model that insures people have “ongoing support out of the therapy office.” Ruby empowers the leaders of the weekly meetings to help cultivate intentional communities of people who are committed to vulnerability and to transforming their lives. Displayed on a wall in the café are their core convictions as a community.

- Live Prayerfully
- Show Respect
- Practice Compassion
- Encourage Growth
- Give and Forgive

Michael Wright [MAT ’12], storyteller, is Fuller’s editorial and social media specialist. He writes about spirituality and the arts at thisiscommonplace.org.

Martín Jiménez [MDiv ’12], photographer, is program manager at Fuller Northwest and is pursuing ordination in the PCUSA.
There is a story in the family: when Nate was five he strummed madly on his mother’s guitar one day and pronounced to the room, “I think God is calling me to be a pastor.”

At the end of 2013, Nate Myrick walked away from Fuller Theological Seminary with a guitar in one hand and a Master of Arts in Theology in the other. He still strums madly on his Fender Thinline Telecaster, and he is still passionate about the Bible, authenticity, orthodoxy, and teaching—even if he does not fit the traditional description of a “pastor.” The academic-blogger-songwriter-theologian is all right with that. He is where he needs to be.

The path to this spot finds its genesis in the scene of the little blonde boy with guitar and prophecy, but it winds through Central America, burnout, hundreds of performances, marriage, and the US Department of Immigration.

Nate was part of a touring music ministry for a year, and in that year he travelled through the US, Canada, the Philippines, Honduras, and, unexpectedly, El Salvador. The month-long trip to Honduras was more than Nate and the rest of his team bargained for; a coup d’etat to oust the current president saw a suspension of basic human rights—including free speech and the right to assemble—and Nate discovered a new definition of stress while helping to keep the team out of live fire or jail. It was thanks to the coup that the musicians found themselves hiding out in El Salvador. But the political turmoil, for all its stresses and strains, was not the piece of the tour that changed Nate. Instead, it was a Christianity that ministered to him among the people he thought he was going to evangelize. Here was something, Nate says, vastly different from the nationalist, Enlightenment Christianity he had grown up with; what he saw was not following Jesus with a million little caveats and compromises, nor simply words and intellectual assent. It was a Christianity of action and word, of truth and deed. He would never be the same.
He returned to the States with a jumble of emotions and experiences crammed into his overworked and overstimulated brain. After a solid year on the road, touring nonstop through foreign countries and foreign cultures and foreign theologies, Nate crashed hard. With too much to process and reconstruct to sleep, insomnia in the States struck him as much as the Christianity in Honduras did. As he tried to gather the shards of the window through which he used to view the world, Nate met Lesley. Within a year, they were engaged. A new life with his bride stirred something in Nate to be somewhere, to do something—returned. Things began to come back together in a new way. Looking to use the music and experiences crammed into his overworked and overstimulated brain. To help reassemble his faith: they never quite left his mind, but rattled around in him. His questions led to more questions. What was truth? What was sincerity? What was right and wrong? What was orthodox, and what was masquerading as orthodox? And what could a guitar player do about any of it?

The answer to the last question, at least, was to write music. Nate cut an album. Months of research and practice and contemplation were poured into what would become a master’s thesis for Nate to complete his theology and the arts emphasis through the Brehm Center. A sonic exploration of truth, lies, doubt, idols, blindness, and authenticity. Nate’s album Believe Me brings Led Zeppelin-style vocals and more than a bit of Dick Dale-esque surf guitar to the service of theology. He is following the musical project up with a book that delves even deeper into the same subject, that uses his encounter with the cult as a starting point to exposing and tearing down temples to false gods. Because the album itself isn’t enough: pleased as he is with the album, Nate doesn’t hope it makes his listeners think he is right. He hopes it makes his listeners think for themselves.

For Nate, that is what is at stake. It isn’t about being right and wrong? What was orthodoxy, and what was not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do. He knows that this is the somewhere he is supposed to be and the something he is supposed to be doing.

And why he keeps making music.

Yes, he is writing both the book and a weekly blog. Yes, he is pursuing a PhD. But he is also still rockin’ the Telecaster. Because that is who he is, how he is engaging the question. He is authentically pursuing transformation, not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do. That is who he is, how he is engaging the question. He is authentically pursuing transformation, not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do. That is who he is, how he is engaging the question. He is authentically pursuing transformation, not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do. That is who he is, how he is engaging the question. He is authentically pursuing transformation, not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do. That is who he is, how he is engaging the question. He is authentically pursuing transformation, not leaving behind a core piece of himself as he tries to do.
“The idea that I would be called to something that’s not somehow embedded within my church community, that doesn’t arise out of my church—and out of ministry experience in my church—is really quite foreign to me. We tend to think of call and vocation as part of the experience of what you might call ‘us-ness’ or ‘with-ness.’ Wesleyan ways of thinking about church structure are deeply embedded in accountability; in meeting together; in conferencing, as we sometimes call it; in struggling together over issues. Vocation arises out of that.”

—Joel B. Green
ISSUE #1 VOCATION

Daniel Kirk compartió esta idea de Sam Wells: están hablando acerca del llamado. Mi colega la vocación. ¡Un cambio al no estar sujeto al corazón! Décadas después, otras personas: “No hay lugar o tarea en esta sabiduría que muchas veces he transmitido a la realización de la mía. Ray fue el que me enseñó la wisdom que I have often transmitted to the realization of my own. Ray was the one that introduced me to that life-changing mentor. Ciertamente, desde mis días del presidente y formación en la comunidad de Fuller, y he known well that freedom and joy are key markers in your pursuit. (“Yes” was to something even deeper than just our own fulfillment. Because God loves the world, calling is always about the world too, and I have come to say, ‘vocation is identified as a key marker in the call to God’s mission in the world.”)

In the last year as I’ve been turning my attention to this challenge, a question has evolved: “At this point in your journey, how do you envision your call to God’s mission in the world?” The key word is vision. Calling is more about a vision than a title, more about a picture of oneself in the world than a title on the office door or a label on a business card. It’s more art than science. Readers will discover a sampling of answers in the following pages, along with several perspectives on the subject of vocation in a changing world. These will contribute to our ongoing conversation with God about the call to serve in various contexts and times. This will contribute to our ongoing conversation about the meaning and significance of the call in our lives.

Los archivos de mi vida están llenos de materiales acerca de la vocación a lo largo de varias décadas, en la misma institución en que me estoy formando. Así como el nuevo Vice-Presidente de Vocación y Formación en la comunidad de Fuller, y he known well that freedom and joy are key markers in your pursuit. (“Yes” was to something even deeper than just our own fulfillment. Because God loves the world, calling is always about the world too, and I have come to say, ‘vocation is identified as a key marker in the call to God’s mission in the world.”)

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FROM THE PALACE TO THE STREETS

Steven Toshio Yamaguchi

LIFE IN THE PALACE
A palace is a grand residence for royalty and officials. It takes its name from the Palati- um, the hill in ancient Rome that housed the imperial residence. Across Europe the term came to be used for the residence of aristocrats as well. Eventually, palace also became the official residence for the church’s bishops and archbishops. A bish- op’s palace was a clear expression of the Christendom church’s favor and status in society. But the place of the palace in our society has changed. Now many palaces have been repurposed as public spaces for museums, government, and amusement. Nevertheless, in many parts of the church, the palatial vision persists.

Some old-time churchgoers wistfully remember past times when the laws of the land and social pressure encouraged church attendance, when Christians and churches received preferential treatment in government and business, when those who expressed disbelief or other beliefs were treated as second-class—when, frankly, the church resided in the palace. While some look back on that relationship between Church and Caesar as the heyday of the church with the world’s power, it is a persistent training, nonetheless—one that shapes the soul. This question haunts me: Can such training be un- learned? Can a church born and bred in the palace be retrained to live among the people, to thrive on the streets outside the palace?

Stories of trading places between palace and state, such as Mark Twain’s The Prince and the Pauper, illustrate the truth that people must be trained for their place in society. Simply transplantaing a person from one world to the other, even if the dress and costume are perfect, does not immediately change one’s language and practice, let alone the mind and heart. Not only the behaviors but also the worldview must be transformed through training. Moreover, the replacement of the deeply embedded mental models can come with deep pain and at a great trans- formational cost.

Our leader to be diligent in godly training.

Nineteen years ago my spiritual director, Father Pat, a Vincentian priest, was trying to help me understand that I needed retraining in my spiritual life. I understood the idea. I affirmed the spiritual truths and insights. Father Pat, however, knew I needed more than knowledge and even understanding. I needed training. He told me about his expe- rience in a jet fighter flight simulator at the military base, which his brother arranged for him as a birthday present. Father Pat paid close attention to the instruction he received—with its warning that he would crash if he was not absolutely devoted to his training. “In the moment of crisis you will not rise to the occasion,” said the top-gun instructor. “You will default to your training.” Through years of Father Pat’s spiritual training with me, I came to experience the truth of his wisdom again and again. In our moment of crisis we do not rise to the occasion. We default to our training.7

A church that has lived in the palace not just for generations but for many centuries has been trained in the ways of privilege. A church bred under the protection of the state is not trained to fend for itself on the streets. So when state and society withdraw their special favor toward the palace-trained church, it gets a very rude awakening. Dis- orienting and painful, it can lead to despair, anger, and denial.

How can a palace-trained church learn to live among the people, with the people, out on the streets? For a privileged palace-trained church to learn street smarts it must undertake the training.

In Exodus we watch Israel freed from slavery under Pharaoh. Had they been immedi- ately transplanted into the Promised Land, they would still have acted and thought like slaves. That would have been their default, the way they were trained to think and act. So God retrained them through a generation of wandering. During that time they became a people. They began learning to trust God rather than Pharaoh or themselves for their daily bread. They received a name. They re- ceived a law. Their identity was forged. They learned of God’s unbreakable name. They wandered for so long not because they were lost. God was leading them. By God’s grace they were being trained.

The New Testament talks about our need for training. Titus is told that God does the training: “For the grace of God has appeared . . . training us to renounce impurity . . . to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly” (Titus 2:11 nsrv). Similarly, Timothy is warned against being occupied by myths and speculations rather than “the divine train- ing” (1 Timothy 1:4). In 1 Timothy 4:6 he is told, “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for . . . training in righteousness.” Likewise, he is told, “Train yourself in god- linedness,” which is of value in “both the present life and the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7-8). In these references, training is most often identified as “discipline, instruction, training,” or “discipline, train, discipline, correct.” Yet other Greek expressions nuance this same idea of training: oikonomia, “management, responsibility, stewardship” (1 Timothy 1:4), and eukrautemon, “training, discipline,” and its cognate verb, gumnos (1 Timothy 4:7-8). In some cases the command is to be trained by God; in others to keep on training oneself. Paul insists that training matters: that it must be deep and persistent, that it is of eternal consequence. Also significant for us at Fuller, these passages all instruct a church leader to be diligent in godly training.

Centuries before Christendom raised its

head, followers of Christ required training in godliness, in renouncing impurity, in righ- teousness and justice. All the more today, followers of Christ trained in the palace and now spurred by Caesar need new training for life after the palace lest they default to their training in the ways of privilege and power. Who can train a palatial church in the ways of God and the ways of the people on the streets? We can find many of the trainers we need in the often-overlooked immigrants and aliens already among us.

TRAINERS FOR THE PALACE CHURCH: THE CENTER NEEDS THE EDGES

Today the palace church suffers because of its palatial instincts. It needs to be trained by people without these palace instincts, most likely people who have never lived in the palace. Where better to find such people than among the immigrants in our midst or those who have long been systematically ex- cluded from the palace? Those people may be awkward inside the palace and lack palace manners, but they have street savvy. At Fuller Seminary we have numerous brothers and sisters who come from other lands and have no part of American palace life (unless, perhaps, as servants). They have learned to thrive in business, in living communities, and in churches, but they do not show up on the radar of the palace church.

It has been hard for the “majority” church in most denominations to appreciate and receive the gifts that immigrant churches have to offer. Traditionalists easily criticize newcomers with stereotypical criticisms: they don’t respect time; I can’t understand their English; their records are a mess; they don’t follow Robert’s Rules of Order. The criti-
The palace church tends to engage its extras—neighbors as objects of displacement, projects or as people who can cook erotic foods and dance and sing for their church programs. But rarely has the palace church linked to their immigrant brothers and sisters as trainers for the church’s future strength. Our immigrant churches have generations of experience living on the edge, displaced from the center, as more than survivors. Are we as the palace church open to receive training from them?—St. Ignatius Loyola

The expression of the divine will is this, of seeking contemplation, of conscience, of examination of life, thus disposing the soul. St. Ignatius Loyola

For a life of grace and generosity. I hope it is satisfying of helping Pi-do-ro’s family start a new life. That experience shaped my mother for a life of grace and generosity. I hope it has in some small way also shaped mine. Ojichan’s instincts and insights were so completely foreign to the values of the palace. My point is that we need the Ojichan to train the church. We need trainers unspoiled by the palace, fit to live on the edges of a new world without the transportation and arrogance of the palace. We need trainers who are young and hungry app developers, urban farmers, holistic healers, environmental activists, entrepreneurs, labor organizers, and artists. They come in all colors; they live in intentional communities and they have never been at home in the palace.

When I look to Victor Hugo’s Bishop Bienvenu in the novel Les Misérables, I see the splendid bishop’s palace next to the poverty of England, “the thing that’s most cheered on this planet.” Hugo’s Bishop Bienvenu is a jet fighter pilot, available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLz5SgnU0U8.


3. For the beginnings of the Fresh Expressions movement that flowed ecumenically out of the Church of England, see the seminal work in the report from the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Council on Mission and Public Affairs, Mission: A Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Dynamic Growth, Change, and Learning, see Michael Porchery, A Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Practice (London: SPCK, 2012).

4. “St. Ignatius Loyola”


7. This article, used with permission, is rewritten from a talk given at the “Moderator’s Colloquium” at Fuller, and is part of a forthcoming book edited by Neil Press, published by Wipf & Stock.


ENDNOTES


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THE SEARCH FOR VOCATION

Todd Johnson

MANHATTAN MEMORIES

It had been a sweltering week of re- cord-setting heat in New York City, that third week in July 2013. On Friday we were needed to de-brief our time together and discuss a way ahead. This week was an impressive experience, the fourth week of a ten-week course on the history and theology of vocation focusing on the stories of Christian artists in Gotham.1 Many of the students were from Fuller Theological Seminary’s Worship, Theology, and the Arts programs and were wrestling with how to negotiate their talents and/or passion for art with their commitment to Christ. In the first three weeks we had read and reflected online about basic biblical and theological paradigms of vocation, and after we met in New York we continued to read more and discuss more online. This week was an experiential week introducing many different perspectives on calling, encountering many and varied stories, all raising a variety of questions about vocation. We had discussed the writings of Quakers and Catholics and considered whether Ruth had a call like Mary or Moses. We heard from an Episco- palian who started the “Broadway Blessing” as an outreach to the theatre community during the initial AIDS outbreak, heard from a Catholic priest who started a theatre company, and discussed with an Adventist the challenges of being a waging woman in theatre in the “City.” The students experienced three kinds of texts in our class: they read common kinds of texts in our class: they read common

DISCERNING LIFE’S VOCATION

Though Fuller is about to undertake the tremendous new venture of intentionally forming every student in both her spiritual life and her understanding of her Christian vocation, this is not the first time I have been involved with such a project. When teach- ing at Loyola University Chicago, I was appointed to the board of a new program called EVOKE: Encouraging Vocation through Knowledge and Experience. Its goal was to raise the question for every student: “What is your calling?” This process was to begin with each student and continue through the entire undergraduate career of a student—later expanding to alumni and graduate students. It used Frederick Buechner’s definition of calling as a guiding principle:

“...the place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

Our goal was to engage each student with a conversation about their gifts and passions in life, and allow the energy of those gifts and passions to motivate their education. This, we hoped, would lead to an embrace of one’s vocation, and later their hoped that vocations could be linked to lives of service, specifically the service of God.

One of the challenges of discerning one’s life vocation is determining which voice or voices should dominate the conversation. For some a calling is a response to an inner voice, a gut-level feeling that “just feels right.” For others a calling is discerned by the “counsel of many” in their lives who know them best, who assess their gifts, abilities, and passions and work with them to focus on the direc- tion of their lives. These two paradigms are never more clearly demarcated than in the areas of religion and art, where a personal passion can be stonewalled by lack of exter- nal support or encouragement, putting the internal and external voices in opposition. Of course the inverse is also true: a person with obvious gifts in art or ministry (or both) is hesitant to pursue this calling, in spite of their affirmation, because of the risks. This is more than just a philosophica difference about life decisions; this is an existential crisis facing young people—and sometimes not-so-young people—every day.

DEVELOPING THEOLOGY AND A THEOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT

We on the EVOKE board were a cross-sec- tion of Loyola. We represented a variety of faiths, ethnicities, theological disciplines, and stations within the university. We wrestled long and hard about what we meant by vocation and how that definition would define our approach to our ministry. After much discussion—even debate—we came to a consensus that was articulated by Jesuit ethicist John Haughey. This was a develop- mental model of vocation that took seriously the process of becoming who we are over a lifetime of decisions. This should not come entirely as a surprise, as part of Loyola’s Jesuit heritage are the Ignatian exercise, a deep and extended process of discernment. Further, with both educational and psy- chological voices at the table, the focus on process and human development was seen as a key to caring for our students. Even in the case of a converting faith of insight, the process of discernment was just beginning, not ending.

This particular model of understanding vocational discernment holds the inner and outer, objective and subjective, in a healthy and helpful tension. Haughey used the works of theologian Bernard Lonergan to frame the values we had articulated as a group. Haughey’s use of Lonergan proposed that discerning one’s vocation requires three conversions. The first is an intellectual con- version. This conversion requires individu- als to discern the truths of the world around them and then adjust their perspective on the world accordingly. It is literally a reality check. The second is a moral conversion. Here the meaning of one’s understanding of reality is discerned with the assistance of one’s community. And by community Haughey means that clayer of people who speak most directly and helpfully into one’s life, such as a faith community. The last conversion is an affective conversion, where one responds to the moral issues discerned in conversation with one’s community with an attitude of love. An example of this sort of conversion triad could be a father who hears a commencement address at a child’s graduation about the decline in education funding in public schools and the need for volunteers in schools. This person, now with a revised understanding of a reality in his world, raises the possibility of getting more involved in the public schools as a volunteer with both family and his church commu- nity. After receiving affirmation from his community, this person begins a lifelong commitment to read his local schools, his teacher’s students. Discerning one’s calling, according to Haughey, is a multi- staged process.2

What is so helpful in this approach is that Haughey assumes both an inner coercion, arising from a revision of one’s opinion of the world and one’s role in it, along with an exter- nal, objective conversation with others who see both the individual and the world from a different perspective and can reinforce and challenge them as necessary. Yet in the end, Haughey, from an ethical perspective, looks at the process of discernment as one in which the individual finds fulfillment in his or her role in society and its contribution to society’s betterment. This is ultimately not an exercise in self-sacrifice and altruism. Instead it assumes that God has created us for community and we are most joyfully our- selves when we exercise our gifts and talents in, through, and for community, contributing to the greater good.

This model was echoed by another EVOKE board member in his work on vocation—psy- chologist, theologian, and counselor John Neufeld. Neufeld appealed to vocational dis- cernment as a sense of self-awareness and self-discovery of one’s “true-self.” The core of one’s true self is encapsulated by the words of psychologist, philosopher, and religious scholar William James, who wrote, “At such moments there is voice inside which speaks and says: ‘This is the real me!’” This sense of self-discovery may seem to be overly if not completely subjective. Yet Neufeld follows Haughey in that such validation of one’s call is found not in one’s sense of self fulfillment alone, but in a process of discernment with another, using the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola as one example. The final test of discernment is the moral impact one has on the surrounding world. A just God calls people to lives of justice.3

ARE, STORY, LEARNING, AND VOCATION

All of this may seem fairly abstract and philosophical to those when it comes to imple- mentation, we learned that the most effec- tive way of provoking these three conver- sations, of inviting students to hear the voices of their inner self and their just, God, was
through the stories of others. A good deal of the programming we ran in the EVOKE project, therefore, appeared quite simple: people shared their stories of finding their vocation. It began with lunches with faculty, where they outlined their journeys into their field of study and research. As well as their passions beyond their professional life. We then began asking guest speakers who were coming to campus for other purposes to have them speak about how they found their callings. Almost no one refused. These were so successful that we began bringing people on campus simply to speak about their callings. In the end we concluded that all were equally effective. The point is it didn’t matter how famous or how unfamiliar a person was; the stories of coming to know and own one’s calling was one of the most helpful resources in helping others find their own vocation. Stories—whether a person knew from her earliest memory what she would one day come to a hingement in her life where a flash of insight created a pivot point in her life’s journey—were powerful tools in helping others negotiate their own life’s journey.

It appeared rather simple: have people tell their stories so that students might find resonance with some or many of them to gain insight into discerning their talents and passions. However, this required a rather rigorous pedagogical foundation to contextualize the stories and give them a hermeneutic through which to hear them. Our programs were framed with particular questions that helped the audience see the particular as - especially fork-in-the-road decisions that can lead a person in two very different directions—is a contribution to the world at large, and all those with the least adequate means would be a benefit to the larger world. It simply identified that art—which it potential for inviting us to see the world and ourselves in new ways—is a contribution to the world at large, not simply an exercise in self-expression. In fact, artists are major contributing voices in intellectual conversation—which may frequently begin as an affective response to a work or works of art. For example, in our vocation class, the play My Name Is Asher Lev by Jewish novelist Chaim Potok and the films Romero and Mr. Holland’s Opus were some of the most profoundly provoking “texts” we discussed. They are not only fine pieces of art; they all have strong moral themes. Even those who are passionate about service to those with the least adequate means would acknowledge that those on the margins of one’s community and its economy benefit from art and beauty. Studies have consistently shown that beautifying an impoverished neighborhood has a significant impact on the self-image of the residents and their level of confidence. Similarly, teaching children the arts gives them a vehicle for self-expression and sense of control over their lives. The late Maya Angelou is but one example of a person for whom the arts became both a form of self-definition and empowerment and a vehicle for justice.

What we learned through Haughey’s work is the challenge of making decisions well, especially fork-in-the-road decisions that can lead one in two very different directions with very different outcomes. It requires an ability to take a personal inventory of one’s passions, abilities, and skills as it responds to one’s evolving view of the world. At the same time, it assumes that one lives not in isolation but in community—a community who values not only the individual’s passions but also the needs of the community—and helps the individual can find personal fulfillment and make a positive contribution to the world. Those types of questions are asked repeatedly throughout one’s life, honing one’s direction and evaluating life’s opportunities and choices.

BACK TO NEW YORK

Our conversation that hot July Friday brought together the teachings of the Scriptures, the variety of theories we had been exposed to, and the stories we had heard. We framed the question of calling using the concepts of ongoing conversations over a lifetime, drawing together the objective, the subjective, the internal and the external. We invited the students over the coming weeks into a personal inventory of their gifts and passions and asked how that might speak to the needs and betterment of the world. We had personal and heartfelt conversations that were rooted in the Bible, theology, and questions of morality and justice.

This sort of experience will no longer be contained only in isolated courses or extra-curricular events. At Fuller Theological Seminary, in the newly updated curriculum, this focused and informed reflection will now be an essential for all students, a required part of an education at Fuller. In the end, this is a process in which a vision of mutual confirmation is identified, where the external and internal speak in harmony. As James Joyce described it, “His heart trembled in an ecstasy of fear and his soul was in flight…” This was the call of life to his soul, not the dull gross voice of the world of duties and despair.5 Discovering this voice is not always easy, but it is always worth the effort. Otherwise we have silenced the contribution we can joyfully offer to our world, our God, and even ourselves.
FORMED, NOT FOUND

Ted Bolsinger

A farmer looks over his field, the South Dakota soil freshly turned in the after- noon sun, the work of the day behind him, his son next to him. “Put your hand in the soil, son,” he says. The boy, confused, complies. He looks in the eye: “Son, this soil is part of your life—you take care of it and it will take care of you.”

At that moment, a theologian was born.

It’s hard to fathom how a professor of theology could spring from such ground. Indeed, the mystery of how a South Dakota farm boy would eventually end up in the halls of Edinburgh, Scotland, studying theology with Thomas Torrance and then teaching at a seminary in Greater Los Angeles is both the story of Roy Anderson’s life and the co-narrative of vocation.

Christian vocation, or “calling,” is woven through the great biblical narrative. From the moment that God kissed the figures formed of the dust and charged them to “cultivate and keep” creation, to the final call that some one—was calling them—was calling them.

Discerning calling is the long, complicated combination of convictions and context, of passion and prayer, of knowledge and need that seems to tap us on the shoulder and say it even more clearly: your vocation is not truly found until you are fulfilling it.

In the Scriptures and throughout the Christian tradition, this transformation does not happen in some individualistic or disembodied way. The formation of vocation is from start to finish a communal event that is both contextual and incarnational. The call of Abram was to produce a people, whose very purpose was to fulfill the call of God to bring tangible blessing to the whole world (Genesis 12:1–4). The boy Samuel, who was already living in the temple, heard the Voice in the night, but needed Eli to believe his ears and embrace his future (1 Samuel 3). Simon, Andrew, James, and John left their fishing nets and followed Jesus (Matthew 4) as part of a community that would live, eat, and minister together, not only preaching, but healing. When the Holy Spirit was poured out on them at Pentecost (Acts 2), the early church established churches—witnessing communities—whose very purpose was to form people for their apostolic vocation.

When Saul, the Christian-persecuting Pharisee, became the apostle to the Gentiles, it was not just the blinding light and the voice of Jesus, but the words of Ananias and later the friendship of Barnabas that formed him for his call (Acts 9).

This biblical pattern continues through the centuries. The vocation of God is a gift of grace mediated through the relationship and formation of the people of God. The call comes within and through the community and if we, as a theological seminary, are going to continue that pattern into the next century, what kind of formation should this community offer? What characteristics should shape our seminary as we participate in the formation of kingdom vocations?

Our response is to draw on the rich tradition of our theological forebears who wrote vast treatises on Christian vocation that teach us that Christian calling is formed through communities of love and wisdom.

For Luther, Christian vocation is expressed primarily through one command: To love your neighbor (Mark 12:31). For him, God’s calling of Christians to love the neighbor is indeed the way God loves the neighbor. Our vocation then is to participate in God’s own ministry to the world that he loved so much that he sent his Son. Our responding to the call of Jesus to embody that love in the world is the way God himself works in the world—secretly.

“All our work in the field, in the garden, in the city, in the home, in struggle, in government—to what does it all amount before God except child’s play, by means of which God is pleased to give his gifts in the field, at home; and everywhere? These are the masks of our Lord God, behind which he wants to be hidden and to do all things.”

For those of us seeking to discern our callings, the Reformers insist that living out the call of God is indeed a source of great joy and gratification. At the same time, those significant satisfactions are the blessed by-products of God’s faithful call that is formed through a commitment to fulfill the command to love the neighbor, not in the search for personal fulfillment.

To be sure, following the Reformers, we affirm that Christian vocation is an ad- ministration to the entire people of God to respond to God and participate in God’s own min- istry on earth. They affirm that God’s call was to the whole church in every part of life. Vocations are not just the domain of monasteries and priesthoods, but of marketplace, homes, and professions. Since

For centuries this has been the question of the young entering adulthood. In a rapidly changing world, it is the question now being asked repeatedly throughout life. It can be as ordinary as a morning spent searching help-wanted ads or as arch as a prayer: “Lord, what am I to do?” The wish that seems promised in the biblical stories is that it will be a one-time, hopefully once-for-all announcement like a proposal for marriage. But more like marriage itself, one’s calling in life is not so much found as formed. To say it even more clearly, your vocation is not truly found until you are fulfilling it. God calls us, but

"All our work in the field, in the garden, in the city, in the home, in struggle, in government—to what does it all amount before God except child’s play, by means of which God is pleased to give his gifts in the field, at home; and everywhere? These are the masks of our Lord God, behind which he wants to be hidden and to do all things."

—Martin Luther
For Calvin, knowledge—self and knowledge of God—gives us space for both ourselves and the world through the lens of God’s saving intention and to attune to the voice of God neighbor. We need the many voices of the world that beckon for our attention. For Wesley, this same self-reflection causes us to constantly consider our motives and even the possibility that our underlying desires can sabotage our best intentions.17

While Calvin’s contemporary, Ignatius of Loyola, would develop an entire system for discerning the wisdom of God in everyday life,18 the awareness that God is the one who shapes and works through our desires (Philippians 4:17) and an awareness of how the world gives us eyes to see both ourselves and the understanding of science, psychology, and the various contexts and conditions in which people live.

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“Stick your hand down into the soil, son,” he said softly, “Son, this soil is part of your life–you take care of it and it will take care of you.”

What my father had long discovered, but left for me to discover, was that there was neither mystery nor magic in the soil. The mystery and the magic, if we were to use such words, lie in the connection of the heart to the hand. There is no place on Earth on which the soil is not attached to the heart.

My father had not attached my hand to the soil on that day long ago, although that was how I came to know the soil. My father had not attached my hand to the soil by giving me a plow, facing the freshly turned soil over to me. He had attached my hand to the soil when, as I did, he said softly, “Son, this soil is part of your life–you take care of it and it will take care of you.”

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“At this point in your journey, how do you envision your call to God’s mission in the world?”

CALLED TO FLOURISH by Mark Labberton

While on a long flight, I opened some music I had recently downloaded but not yet heard. It was a recording of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons, played by Joshua Bell. I was struck by the intensity and passion with which he played the violin. The intensity and passion had been very important to me over the years. I hadn’t noticed that this recording included a short video excerpt of Bell and the orchestra during a recording session, playing an especially dramatic passage. When I opened the file, the video suddenly began to play.

Surprised, I was at once so fully captured and moved by what I saw and heard that it was like I fell into a trance. When it finished, I was breathless. I immediately wanted to ask the flight attendant if I could use the microphone to tell everyone that my life had just been changed. In those three short minutes, I watched and heard what human flourishing means.

On the video, all the musicians, dressed in street clothes reflecting individual backgrounds and personalities, added their particular instrument to the symphonic whole. Each was essential. Each was doing in that moment something very few others could do but that he or she did exceptionally well. Bell, one of the finest violinists in the world, conducted the whole, while also brilliantly playing his exquisite part of Vivaldi’s piece. The flourishing was in both the parts and the whole, the individuals and the community . . .

The God made known in Scriptures and incarnate in Jesus Christ desires flourishing people in a flourishing world. This is God’s intent and commitment, and God created humans to flourish by co-laboring with him in that endeavor. Sadly, the narrative of the Bible includes how God’s divine desire is subverted by the very humans beings God created as partners to reflect God’s image and steward creation. Even more, however, it tells the long story of how God relentlessly pursues us in faithfulness and love. God shares with us, out of the flourishing whole, the individuals and the community . . .

When I came to Fuller I was excited about my calling as an African American Christian female clinical psychologist with the freedom to work in spirituality and health from a theologically informed and cultural perspective. Recently, God is using diverse interests to broaden my understanding of Christian formation. My church choir has taught me to be a vessel for God’s use in a treasured fellowship; beach volleyball has taught me independence and reliance on others’ strengths; being a group therapist has deepened my understanding of group dynamics; and studies in spirituality and health have broadened my perspective of spiritual struggle. My calling is to equip others in a holistic process of Christian formation that includes our creativity, bodies, relationships, and cultural heritage.

How do we deal with a call to minister to people when full-time employment is rare? At this point in my Christian journey I feel called to help ministerials deal with this tension and to try to figure out, learn, and educate about the future of vocational ministry in the United States. How do we give tools to lead in the church and also in the work place? To honor the calling and the commandment of evangelism Christ has placed on our lives; for me, a vision of vocational ministry is to use the gifts and talents that God has given to reclaim the kingdom of God in both my local church and in the ministries that God has placed before me, and to be obedient to the talents God has given (and to multiply them) while not being constrained by traditional ideas about ministry.

How much I was conforming to the expectations of the institution that ordained me: and the congregations that employed me. My ordination vows said: “. . . serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love.” I provided the best church experience I could. But we wondered, a lot, why not church people didn’t come. Then I get a call to plant a church for the not-church people. My whole sense of vocation was transformed from just caring for the people of God to preparing them for the work of embodying Jesus to the world. I love and am invested in my community more than ever, but I serve the Lord by preparing them for the larger project of reóżaining all creation.

In essence, at this point in my journey, I envision calling to God’s mission in the world to be apersons simple one: To preach the gospel, teach the gospel, and to live out the gospel—every way, everywhere—while I encourage others to do the same.

To honor the calling that I provided the best church experience I could. But we wondered, a lot, why not church people didn’t come. Then I get a call to plant a church for the not-church people. My whole sense of vocation was transformed from just caring for the people of God to preparing them for the work of embodying Jesus to the world. I love and am invested in my community more than ever, but I serve the Lord by preparing them for the larger project of reóżaining all creation.

As a daughter of immigrants, my journey to understand vocation was a difficult one. I lacked a mentor who could help me understand how my gifts and my career choice informed each other. It was difficult for me to gain access to resources that would help me succeed. Now, I want to give guidance to young women like me by connecting girls on vocation and partnering with them to mentor others in understanding their personal, spiritual, and professional growth. There is a great need in immigrant communities for such mentors but not many are equipped to do it. My calling is also to assist women in my generation to understand their own vocations, thereby helping both girls and women to find their foundation for lifelong work of good work.

In aspire to a calling to God’s mission in the world to be apersons simple one: To preach the gospel, teach the gospel, and to live out the gospel—every way, everywhere—while I encourage others to do the same.

ALEXIS DEBRENTY
PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

GERREY PICKET
MBRSY | THEODOSIOV SUPPORT

KIRK WINTSON
ADVISOR PROFESSOR AND PASTOR

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CAROLYN GORDON
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION

JONJIN PARK
VICE PROVOST

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In aspire to a calling to God’s mission in the world to be apersons simple one: To preach the gospel, teach the gospel, and to live out the gospel—every way, everywhere—while I encourage others to do the same.
The medieval notion of “vocation” is once again in vogue. “Vocational” is no longer a track in the educational world for those who want job training in contrast to university education. The hanger for a sense of “calling” is showing up all over the place—sometimes even without a clear sense of who is doing the calling. Within the Christian community, where the notion of “calling” has never been far from the minds of serious young believers, there seems to be an intensified preoccupation with how to think about one’s place and purpose in the world. De Guinnesse’s The Call (Thomas Nelson, 2003), Steve Garber’s Visions of Vocation (InterVarsity Press, 2013), and Tim Keller’s Every Good Endeavor (Dutton, 2012) are three examples of recent works on the topic. For those who want a longer and more multivariated perspective on calling, they can refer to two collections: Calling: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation (Berdman, 2003) and Leading Lives That Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be (Berdman, 2006).

Perhaps more surprising in this moment is the expansion of language of “calling” and “vocation” to the larger world of higher education. We have the Lilly Endowment, in large part, to thank for this. Their initial interest in renewing interest in “vocation” and “calling.” Apart from the perennial human desire to hear our name amidst the swirl of competing distractions that make up our days, there is the economy—especially since 2008. Everyone knows someone with a college education who has returned home after graduation to work a minimum wage job and to wander for months or even years without a clear sense of purpose. Most of us know people who lost their jobs during the recession, and with their job, their sense of personal identity and self-worth. The high cost of a college or seminary education in an economy with uncertain job prospects creates pressure on colleges and universities to give more attention to helping their graduates get jobs. It is just plain market savvy, in an increasingly competitive educational marketplace, for institutions to strengthen their programs in career and life planning. Prospective students, and the parents of prospective students, want to know that there will be a salary after graduation commensurate with the student loan payments.

I regret that it has taken the economy and the competition for market niche to encourage churches, colleges, universities, and seminaries to strengthen vocational reflection in their educational programs. We should have been doing this years ago. Shirley Mullen, PhD, has served as president of Houghton College since 2006. Prior to arriving at Houghton, Dr. Mullen served at Westmont College for 23 years, first as a professor of European history and then four years as provost. During her time at Westmont, Dr. Mullen was the recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award on three occasions. Dr. Mullen has earned two doctorates, one in history from the University of Minnesota and one in philosophy from the University of Wales. She is currently serving on the boards of Fuller Seminary, National Association of Evangelicals, Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (New York State), CCCU (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities), and Allegheny County United Way. Dr. Mullen’s extensive portfolio of historical, religious, and philosophical publications includes articles and papers on the works of David Hume, William Wilberforce, and Hannah More. Her current passion is communicating the significance and relevance of Christian liberal arts education to the needs of our world in the 21st century.

It is not hard to find reasons for the emergence of renewed interest in “vocation” and “calling.” Shirley Mullen, PhD, has served as president of Houghton College since 2006. Prior to arriving at Houghton, Dr. Mullen served at Westmont College for 23 years, first as a professor of European history and then four years as provost. During her time at Westmont, Dr. Mullen was the recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award on three occasions. Dr. Mullen has earned two doctorates, one in history from the University of Minnesota and one in philosophy from the University of Wales. She is currently serving on the boards of Fuller Seminary, National Association of Evangelicals, Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (New York State), CCCU (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities), and Allegheny County United Way. Dr. Mullen’s extensive portfolio of historical, religious, and philosophical publications includes articles and papers on the works of David Hume, William Wilberforce, and Hannah More. Her current passion is communicating the significance and relevance of Christian liberal arts education to the needs of our world in the 21st century.

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It is not hard to find reasons for the emergence of renewed interest in “vocation” and “calling.” Apart from the perennial human desire to hear our name amidst the swirl of competing distractions that make up our days, there is the economy—especially since 2008. Everyone knows someone with a college education who has returned home after graduation to work a minimum wage job and to wander for months or even years without a clear sense of purpose. Most of us know people who lost their jobs during the recession, and with their job, their sense of personal identity and self-worth. The high cost of a college or seminary education in an economy with uncertain job prospects creates pressure on colleges and universities to give more attention to helping their graduates get jobs. It is just plain market savvy, in an increasingly competitive educational marketplace, for institutions to strengthen their programs in career and life planning. Prospective students, and the parents of prospective students, want to know that there will be a salary after graduation commensurate with the student loan payments.

I regret that it has taken the economy and the competition for market niche to encourage churches, colleges, universities, and seminaries to strengthen vocational reflection in their educational programs. We should have been doing this years ago.
gian include participation in a plot to kill Adolf Hitler! And if Buchholz did indeed hear the call correctly, why would he end up in prison? The last lines of his haunting poem “Who Am I?” say it all: “Who am I? I mock them, those lonely questions of mine. Whoever I am, thou knowest, O God, I am thine.” How could Carolyn Paine Miller’s call to be a Wycliffe Bible translator in Vietnam include eight months in Viet Cong captivity? And why would God allow the captors to cherish the precious manuscripts that contained years of obedient work?

Real-life callings are complex. We are rarely called simply to one thing at a time. We are called to do good work, to be effective parents, to be loving spouses, supportive children, wise mentors, and nurturing friends in the context of one’s called life. Callings do not have to be loving spouses, supportive children, wise mentors, and nurturing friends in the context of one’s called life. Callings do not have to be an easy

ENDNOTES
3. Craig, Dennehy, in Austin Foree, The Essential Ser
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good work, to be effective parents, to be loving spouses, supportive children, wise mentors, and nurturing friends in the context of one’s called life. Callings do not have to be an easy

The world is changing rapidly and is anything but stable. Companies and institutions that existed for decades and thought “too big to fail” no longer exist. Guarantees of retirement pensions, healthcare and other benefits, and lifelong employment have long been forgotten. The world of work has fundamentally changed, and it’s not going back to the way it used to be. With such uncertainty about the future, everyone wants an anchor to secure his or her life. As Christians, we know—and are so grateful— that the anchor is Jesus. But even with our commitment, our education, and our faith, we still doubt. We ask so many questions. Isn’t there more that I need to know? Or more that I need to do? What skills, experiences, education, and connections do I need to find that perfect job? You know—that perfect job where I’ll be well-paid, have an amazing boss, a cohesive leadership team, friendly culture, kind colleagues, lots of resources, a short commute, reasonable hours and travel, work-life balance, free food and gourmet coffee, and be performing my one-and-only “calling”? CAREER DEVELOPMENT TODAY Researchers predict that today’s college students—often called Millennials—will have on average 23 jobs over the course of their working lives. Oxford researchers predict that over the next two decades, 47 percent of jobs that exist today will be replaced by technology. To clarify and confirm their unique wiring. Benefit from working with sage, balanced, meaningful to you. A few people have an intuitive way of knowing themselves on all these dimensions. However, most people would benefit from working with sage, balanced, and unbiased career coaches and mentors to clarify and confirm their unique wiring. By knowing yourself, you will develop a new set of valuable lenses to evaluate potential opportunities and prioritize work that you could pursue and work that you probably shouldn’t.

A crucial aspect of knowing yourself is being able to define where your self-identity resides. The answer to this question
When I meet with job seekers and ask about their career interests, most of them know very little about the careers that they claim are of interest to them. In the past decade, I have spoken with numerous college students who have expressed an interest in becoming thoracic surgeons, forensic investigators, and lawyers. It’s not coincidence that during this time, popular television shows among college students have included Grey’s Anatomy, CSI, and The Good Wife. Obviously, we are heavily influenced by what we watch and read, and most of us don’t have any idea about what those careers truly entail, what’s required to succeed, and if the work aligns with our interests, values, strengths, personal “wiring,” and aspirations.

Optimal ways to learn about jobs and careers include doing research via reading job descriptions online, networking with college graduates and career professionals, and speaking with people who have expressed an interest in becoming thoracic surgeons, forensic investigators, and lawyers.

Knowing the World of Work

The best way to learn about your future career is to connect and build relationships with others. This will help you understand what the careers truly entail, what’s required to succeed, and if the work aligns with your interests, values, strengths, personal “wiring,” and aspirations.

Developing a Positive, Productive Mindset

Perhaps the biggest difference today is what is most required to thrive in the dynamic and ever-changing world. Today, the ultimate aim of career development is for each person to develop career self-reliance and career agility. Those, along with a positive, productive mindset, transform career development from a transactional “just get a job” process to a “build a career” lifelong learning process.

It reminds me daily that my trials are part of God’s plan to shape me to become more like Jesus and to fully “lean in” to him. By frequently connecting with my life purpose and relationship with God, I can develop appropriate expectations as well as a positive, productive mindset regarding my career—which is just one part of my life.

Ministry Career Development

Given the foundation required to thrive and flourish in the 21st century and the expectations of our students, all higher education institutions must devote serious thought to how to teach students to be prepared for the world of work. For seminaries, several key concepts elevate the importance and impact of ministry career development for every single student.

1. Dream Big. Inspires students to dream big in alignment with their purpose and values. The world—and our fears—tells us what’s not possible and to play it safe. With God, anything is possible, so encourage students to believe in the possibilities and explore the many ways in which people are realizing those possibilities.

2. Teach Personal Development. Learning how to make great decisions early in life will have a positive compounding effect over a lifetime. My friend, Benoît Paire, President of Fuller Theological Seminary, states, “Life is a day-to-day experience of making small and big decisions, each of which conveyed how we can consistently make God-honoring, life-giving, with-God decisions. Learning how to develop ‘with-God’ wisdom is essential.

3. Equip Them to Thrive. Students need practical tools and valuable competencies to navigate the career process—one with skill and confidence. They need to be prepared for the job market, which is changing rapidly. Equipping students with the necessary tools will help them succeed in their career pursuits.

4. Cultivate Entrepreneurial Mindset. In every organization, industry, and business area, the most successful are those who create value, creatively solve problems, and can persist, overcome, and bounce back from obstacles and failures. In essence, the entrepreneurial mindset is life-saving and thrive. Teaching and driving this into students will result in lasting dividends.

Implications for Seminaries

At Wake Forest University, we have completely transformed the college-to-career experience by personalizing career and career development mission critical. We have made significant investments in people, processes, and facilities to deliver on this strategy and now demonstrate our serious intent to all of our constituents. It has had positive impact on the university’s culture, reputation, and value proposition—with 98 percent of students in jobs or graduate school within six months of graduation in 2013.

For seminaries like Fuller and other Christian schools, there are several steps that would enable them to progress on delivering the experiences and outcomes that their students, alumni, and friends expect from the institution given today’s challenging employer and economic environment.

1. Make Mission Critical. Personal and career/vocational development must become a core aspect of the academic experience right from the start. Creating courses for academic credit and/or building it into existing courses will ensure that students truly learn and do what’s required to build their personal and career development foundation that will have lifetime impact. To reach all students, solely offering extracurricular learning and experiences is not sufficient.

2. Stable Connections. The university is a network of people—internal and external—with shared interests, values, and experiences. Rarely is this network fully activated. Connect students and faculty with alumni and friends of the institution for learning, for support, advice, and mentoring, and for further connections that lead to new open doors, opportunities, and walks with God. Career troops, job shadowing, internships, information sessions, speakers in classes, networking events, and an accessible alumni directory and alumni alumni should be part of every institution’s approach to building a network. This will pay dividends for the student and the institution long into the future.

3. Unify the Culture. Activate the internal network so that all are open to mentoring and helping students in their career process, especially through faculty support, partnerships, and career and professional development curriculum and programs. Leaders and faculty should speak publicly about individual success stories as well as programs and results that demonstrate the institution’s commitment and success in transforming the personal and career development experience for the network of constituents, both internal and external.

As the world continues to change at an accelerated pace, people are under increasing pressure and stress to successfully navigate through their lives and careers. Our educational institutions have the opportunity and responsibility to educate and equip our students to lead lives of purpose and meaning through intentional focus and investment in personal and career development. With this education secured to the anchor, our Lord Jesus, seminary students have a bright future ahead.
“It is only when we are knit together that we ‘have nourishment from Him, and
increase with the increase of God.’ Neither is there any time, when the
weakest member can say to the strongest, or the strongest to the weakest, ‘I have no need
of thee.’ Accordingly our blessed Lord, when his disciples were in the weakest
state, sent them forth, not alone, but two by two. When they were strengthened a little,
not by solitude, but by abiding with him and one another, he commanded them
to ‘wait,’ not separate, ‘but being assembled together’ for ‘the promise of the Father.’”

—John Wesley
Preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems

As a young seminarian, it was his artistic response to a theology class that inspired Roger Feldman to leave Fuller and pursue ministry as an artist. Over 40 years later, it is an artistic response to a conference on Paul featuring N. T. Wright that brought him back. A site-specific sculpture without right angles or straight lines, Tenacious Convergence is Feldman’s way of exploring in architectural form the unstable context of the first-century church to whom Paul wrote.
The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

Psalm 19:1-4

**SCIENCE + EVOLUTION:**
Richard Carlson (MAT ’94), TTS*
A case can now be made that evolution is a process that leads to a defined result, that evolution is convergent, and that the development of sentient creative life was inevitable. Christian evolutionary biologists refer to this as evolutionary creation. Hence, contrary to certain widely held positions, other biologists maintain that evolution is not to be associated with blind random chance.

**SCIENCE + CREATION:**
Richard J. Mouw, TGTS*
It's so important for us to love what God loves, to take delight in what God takes delight in. In awesome wisdom, when we consider all the worlds that God has made, we see that we take delight in those things—the immmanent aspects of the creation that we see around us. And this means that we seek to develop a creation theology that relates to all of the things God has made.

**SCIENCE + SCRIPTURE:**
Deborah Haarsma, TTS*
As a biblical historian and scriptural theologian, Dr. Haarsma explores the role of science and Scripture in relation to one another. She discusses how Scripture informs our understanding of creation and how our understanding of science is shaped by our interpretation of Scripture.

**SCIENCE + CONGREGATIONS:**
Justin Barrett, TTS*
In Genesis chapter 1 we read that God created humans in his image and commands them to “rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing” (Psalm 8). In awesome wisdom, when we consider the Creation narrative, we see what God created and who he made it for. We then consider how we as God’s stewards can act as stewards in exercising care for and authority over the natural world.

**SCIENCE + THE HISTORICAL ADOBE:**
Daniel Kish, TTS*
When, why, and how do we share our faith? What is the best way to talk about Christ and the gospel? In this inspiring talk, Daniel Kish shares his personal story of transformation and how he is living out the mission of the church.

**EDITORIAL NOTE:**
These quotes are taken from a 2013 conference at Fuller Seminary titled “Talk of God, Talk of Science” (TGTS) and edited for Fuller Seminary’s 2013 issue of Theology, News & Notes (T4NN) on science and faith integrated by Joel Green.

*This content is created from resources and ongoing conversations taking place throughout the Fuller community. Check online for full videos, articles, and more resources.

**CIEB SHEPHERD, from The SEMI, Spring 14.4**

“We don’t have to choose between science and theology: they are not mutually exclusive. We don’t have to keep them separate as if one cannot and should not inform the other, because keeping science and theology separate limits our understanding of God, nature, and our own place within God’s creation. Instead, let us work together to build a bridge between science and theology, allowing science to contribute to the fabric of our theology, and theology to provide meaning and depth to our study.”

**RICHARD J. MOUW, TGTS**

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Astronomer DEB SHERPHERD studies an infinite God

"I know God existed. I felt him inside of me. I knew Jesus as my savior; no one else could have brought me out of such deep despair. But I was also an astronomer, and I knew intimately just how big the universe was. I knew stars are born and they die each day. I know there are billions (10²³ or 1,000,000,000,000) of galaxies, each with billions of stars. I know the galaxies are expanding from an enormous explosion 13.7 billion years ago, the Big Bang. I know that galaxies themselves evolve and even collide in events that last more than a billion years. I understand, at least partly, the beauty and complexity of the physics and mathematics that describe the fabric of space-time and the incredible balance between matter and energy that exists at the quantum level.

So how could a God who created this amazing and wonderful universe possibly love something so insignificant as a human being? We are nothing but tiny organisms on a small rocky planet orbiting a dwarf star (that we call the Sun) located in the outer reaches of a rather standard galaxy in our universe. I just couldn’t figure it out. I had a very difficult time believing in my heart and soul that God actually loved me when he had so much else to hold together. . . . I still don’t know how it is possible. I probably never will. But I finally understand that it is possible: God both loves humans and creates and sustains the universe."—from The SEMI, Spring 14.4, pp. 17–18

DEB SHERPHERD (MDiv student)

From a family of artists and musicians, Dr. Shepherd became an astrophysicist, working as a research engineer and then training astronauts for the NASA shuttle program at Marshall Space Flight Center. She also studied astronomy, after which she became a post-doctoral scholar at Caltech and then a visiting astronomer at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO). Her research focus is in the field of star and planet formation with a specialty in large radio telescopes (such as the Very Large Array, see right) in New Mexico, Chile, and South Africa. Shepherd holds degrees in physics from the University of Cincinnati (BS) and University of Tennessee (MS) and in astronomy from the University of Wisconsin (PhD).

JENNIFER WISEMAN, senior astrophysicist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, with a new view on the love of God

After reading Psalm 19:1–4, Wiseman said, “The heavens are speaking, in a sense, to us, and it’s our job both through science to find out the scientific facts that we’re learning by looking at the universe and through our faith and philosophy to find out the other things that we can give by looking at the universe. We need to put our minds to this task. . . . We recognize the beauty of nature, and we are drawn to explore it, perhaps that implies, as we’re looking for ways that the heavens declare the glory of God, that God enables us to desire, to explore, and to grow in understanding of the natural world—this could be a facet of God’s love.”

Durham University physicist TOM McLEISH lectures

Suggesting that much of the time the “science/faith debate” is much more fecund when investigated in exploration and wonder rather than “through shouting matches,” Tom McLeish of Durham University spoke as a guest of the Fuller student science group (Pasadena). Drawing from thoughts in his new work Faith and Wisdom in Science (Oxford University Press, 2014) to an intimate but engaged crowd that included President Mark Labberton and School of Theology Dean Joel Green, McLeish shared some of his books’ exploration. He observed enthusiastically that “the corpus to start in is the wisdom literature: Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs. . . . [and] the snowy mountain peak of the book of Job.” As Professor McLeish was aware that many students in the room were currently part of a summer course studying Job, he was quick to incorporate his observations on that text into his lecture.
NANCEY MURPHY on the discipline of theology

“The nonreductive physicalist account of religious experience is valuable in that it allows believers to accept and make use of research on the biological, psychological, and social realization of religious experience. However, without an account of divine action, religious experience will be reducible to these lower levels of the hierarchy. The nonreductive physicalist account of nature needs to be completed by a theological account in which descriptions of divine action supervene on descriptions of natural and historical events, but without being reducible to them. We need to conceive of the hierarchy of the sciences as incomplete without theology, and especially to maintain the nonreducibility of theology to other disciplines.”—from Whatever Happened to the Soul? pp. 147–8

WARREN BROWN reflects on the mystery of the soul

“The soulful aspects of human experience are engendered by the experiences of personal relatedness. This relatedness is, in turn, an emergent property of certain critical human cognitive capacities. Just as the properties of soul presumed by Jewish and Christian Scripture emerge from personal relatedness, so also personal relatedness emerges from the operation of the incredibly enhanced mental powers of humans. In the plan and design of God, the richness and depth of human interpersonal relatedness was made possible by an evolutionary explosion of our mental capacities. Nevertheless, personal relatedness and the soulful capacities of humans are not the same as these cognitive systems or reducible to nothing but cognition. Rather, the human experiences of soul are conditioned by but cannot be reduced to the underlying mental processes from which they emerge.”—from Whatever Happened to the Soul? p. 103

Further reading from our faculty

Whatever Happened to the Soul? Warren S. Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony, eds. (Fortress Press, 1998)

Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies? Nancey Murphy (Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Did My Neurons Make Me Do It? Nancey Murphy and Warren S. Brown (Oxford University Press, 2009)


Body, Soul, and Human Life Joel B. Green (Baker Academic, 2008)


With thoughts on body and soul relatedness, JOEL GREEN writes about partnering with God

“Work in biblical and theological studies, together with insight from the neurosciences, encourages a way forward marked by an account of the human person that rejects the necessity of a separate, metaphysical entity such as a soul to account for human capacities and distinctives; that underscores the material location of the human person in relation to the created order; that refuses to reduce personal identity to our neural equipment, emphasizing instead the personal contribution and relatedness of human beings to the human family and the cosmos; and thus that has as its primary point of beginning and orientation the human in a partnering relationship with God.”—from Body, Soul, and Human Life, pp. 37–38

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“What I find most inspiring is to read the Bible through the eyes of immigration. Abraham and Sarah, our patriarch and matriarch of faith, are people who had faith in God in the process of moving though they did not know their destination. Throughout the Scripture we see that God is at work when people are on the move. The people of Israel actually learned more about God when they were in exile than when they were in the land of Israel. I challenge my students to read the Bible through the lens of migration. As we read through the Bible we see that God often works through those who are immigrants. All of those things point to the fact that we should be concerned about this issue.”—from “Churches Help Push for Immigration Reform,” Take Two (KPCC Radio), November 18, 2013

Rally to advocate for IMMIGRATION REFORM

In the winter of 2013, President Mark Labberton looked out over a crowd gathered at Pasadena City Hall and told them, “We often think of ourselves as a nation of immigrants, but when it comes to immigration reform our hearts just shut down. We need to make our hearts bigger than they are.” He was speaking to over 300 advocates—all Fuller students, faculty, and community supporters committed to comprehensive immigration reform.

He was speaking to over 300 advocates—all Fuller students, faculty, and community supporters committed to comprehensive immigration reform.

It was the final stop on a march that started in prayer on Fuller’s Pasadena campus and ended with testimonies and songs on the steps of City Hall.

The Peace and Justice Advocates student group worked with LA Voice and G92 to organize the rally, and they sent a clear message to the local government to not only push immigration reform on a national level but also to remember their commitments to undocumented people living nearby.

Director of Fuller Arizona TOM PARKER urges public prayer and “light-bearing”

“The Bible is filled with immigrants—all people created equal in the image of God. We see immigration reform as an important issue, as a matter of gospel. We can continue to be a light-bearing country, a country that stands out for how we treat others.”

— from a Phoenix, Arizona, gathering of church and education leaders to pray publicly for immigration issues

Director of clinical training LISSETH ROJAS-FLORES on offering support

“We tend to think that the psychological is separate from the physical and separate from the spiritual, but I believe that they’re all intertwined. When we think of trauma, we see precisely this connection. When an unexpected traumatic event [like the deportation of a parent] occurs, it shatters your concept of the world. It shatters your faith in God, your relationship with others, and your sense of purpose and meaning in life. Particularly, citizen children who are here legally feel that they are not protected by the society or their parents or even God, and their sense of security and hope is challenged. . . . In the work that I do, I see resilience in children, in the Latino community, in agencies who are trying to come alongside immigrants and families that are in need of support; I see communities who are providing support in very creative ways for these families. I think the important thing is to be educated, to be willing to be open, even at times to be bold.”

—from a presentation, with doctoral student Marisol de Jesus-Perez, at a conference of the Latino Behavioral Health Institute

This content is curated from resources and ongoing conversations taking place throughout the Fuller community. Check online for full videos, articles, and more resources.
GLEN STASSEN, the late Smedes Professor of Christian Ethics, from his groundbreaking book on ethics

“The perception of all human beings as equal, and equally valuable, as persons worthy of respect and equal treatment before the law, is a relatively rare and recent achievement in human history. The concept that women, children, racial minorities, immigrants, refugees and the poor are to be treated not only equally but with special concern because of their frequent marginalization and vulnerability is a central biblical teaching rarely actualized in public life.”
— from Kingdom Ethics, p. 222

An invitation to the WHITE HOUSE

It was past 10:00 on Sunday night when Solano Beach Presbyterian Church pastor Mike McClenahan (DMin ’00) was surprised to see an email from the White House. It invited him to meet with President Barack Obama and his senior staff to discuss the moral urgency of passing immigration reform. He thought it was a joke. A quick email to friends at the Evangelical Immigration Table confirmed it was real, and the next morning he was speaking to the President of the United States. McClenahan was joined at the meeting by Fuller alumna Hyepin Im (pictured in red). The White House thanked attendees “on behalf of all of us, for your interest and leadership on this issue.”

A prayer from TOMMY GIVENS, given at a Pasadena immigration rally in 2013

Nuestro padre Abraham fue un arameo errante. Como él somos un pueblo inmigrante en busca de una tierra de justicia y paz. O Dios, en nuestra peregrinaje, confesamos que nos hemos desviado del camino de vida que tú has colocado delante de nosotros y nos hemos ido por nuestro propio camino; nos hemos distanciado de ti y de nuestros propios. Nos hemos instalado y acostumbrado a tal manera que no hemos escuchado a nuestros inmigrantes a nuestras comunidades. Ayúdame, en nombre de tu primogénito, de leyes y documentos que los oprimen. Los hemos llevado a correr riesgos extraordinarios para sobrevivir y buscar una vida sana, a cruzar desiertos, a trabajar por una miseria, a vivir en temor. Dirígenos ahora hacia los que sufren y hacia ti, para que seamos hospitalarios a tal punto que la ley establecida es inhospi table, para que las leyes sean reformadas para proporcionar una bienvenida justa. Que la congregación de nuestros cuerpos y palabras en esta noche cambie nuestros corazones. Que nuestro cuerpo y voz lleguen hasta las iglesias por toda esta tierra y hasta los que están en el pozo. Creadenos, perdón, te pedimos. Concede justicia a nuestros polémicos inmigrantes, te pedimos. Amen.

Our father Abraham was a wandering Aramean. Like him we are an immigrant people in search of an earth of justice and peace. God, in our wandering we confess that we have trespassed from the path of life, that you have put before us, and gone our own way, we have turned from you and from our neighbors. We have settled in ways that keep us from welcoming new immigrants to our communities. We have made a system of laws and documents that oppresses them. We have driven them to take extraordinary risks to survive and seek a healthy life crossing deserts, working for pitiful wages, living in fear. Turn us now toward those who suffer and toward you, so that we will be hospitable even when the law of the land is inhospitable, and so that laws may be reformed to provide a just welcome. May the gathering of our bodies and words tonight change our hearts. May our bodies and voices reach to churches throughout this land and to those in positions of power. Grant ur sorrowfulness, we pray. Grant our immigrant neighbors justice, we pray. Amen.

“You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child.”
— Exodus 22:21–22

“When I was an undocumented immigrant, I struggled to reconcile guilt and gratitude. Guilt because I understand that by crossing the Mexico-US border without inspection, I broke the law. Gratitude because I validate my mother’s decision to provide a better life for her family. When my grandfather died in 1997, my mother saved money and paid a smuggler (we call them coyotes) to help. And we embarked on a one-month journey across Mexico to Los Angeles, California. Years later, I’m getting a master’s degree in theology, and I’m passionate about humanizing the issue of immigration. People everywhere are moving away from their native countries to seek out better futures, jobs, a safer environment, sacrificing their family ties, abandoning their children, communities. Most of the time they move by force, and others move by choice. Christians should pay close attention to this movement of people. Christians should test the times and the seasons to see and hear what it is the Lord is trying to tell us through his undocumented children everywhere. My challenge, therefore, to you tonight is to have eyes to see, and ears to hear the cries of the undocumented immigrants here in North America but also in the rest of the world.” — Jennifer Hernández (MAT student), at the Pasadena rally for immigration reform.
When Mark Labberton was named the fifth president of Fuller, he asked one of the artists in residence at Fuller’s Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts to screen a film on the eve of his inauguration ceremony. On this momentous occasion for Fuller, an evening of film and prayer and music and spoken liturgy gave a fresh view on the ancient discipline of the hours of prayer, ushering the audience into thoughtful worship together. The nearly 1,000 attendees heard many voices—most of whom were part of the Fuller community of students, alumni, staff, faculty, and administrators who read from Scripture, recited contemporary poems, and spoke prayers both ancient and new. The unconventional liturgy that was intermingled throughout the service led to the focal point of the film screening. It was evidence of the new administration’s commitment to an abundant reception to the arts.

“I asked filmmaker Lauralee Farrer to screen a portion of Praying the Hours on the eve before my inauguration because I wanted to reinforce that the arts are an integral part of Fuller, and that a discipline like filmmaking deserves equal respect as a form of ministry.”

MARK LABBERTON, President

“Why do stories matter to human beings?”

I think people are captivated by story because that’s the way we speak to one another. How many times have you sat bored in class or a church while the speaker shares factual information but as soon as they start saying, “You know, my sister-in-law got in an accident at the grocery store . . .” we immediately sit forward and feel connected. With stories, we become in tune with the experience they’re relating, and that is just hardwired into our brains.

What is the relationship between faith and stories?

Stories get to that connection that we all share between each other, between ourselves and our family, and between us and the Creator. I think Christianity as a religion recognizes the importance of that connection between people. At the heart of it, there’s still some mystery that only God knows. That is what stories can touch; when you have a really good story, it’s reaching for that unknown. This is what art does; it takes something beyond words—something that you can talk around but can’t quite grab onto with words—and speaks about that elusive nature of what it is to be human.

Why do we connect to characters in film?

There are numerous studies out today about mirror neurons and how they help us empathize with others. When we watch someone’s experience, those neurons fire. So when we watch someone play tennis, we experience in some small way what that is like. It’s thanks to those neurons that I have a job. At Pixar, we’re looking for ways to trigger those so that the audience feels the same thing the character on the screen feels. When we’re writing these films, you’re looking for that meaning—that connection between what’s going on in you and what other people share as well.

How should films tell the truth?

As we’re creating our films, we’re always looking for some sort of theme. It’s easy to think we’re looking for a moralistic message, but we don’t intend for it to be a lecture. Films are supposed to be a reflection on the world we see as people. Whether the characters are cars or monsters or insects, I’m always trying to find what it is about my life that if I saw it on the screen I’d recognize it like looking in a mirror. I see it and say, “That is truth. That is what life is about,” and I think that’s why people go to the movies. Obviously you go to be entertained, but the films that really stick with you are the ones that speak about what it is to be alive. That is what I’m looking for in the work I do.

“Pete was a keynote speaker at our conference on ‘Preaching in a Visual Age,’ and I am very pleased to call him a friend and ongoing conversation partner at Fuller. The thoughtful video interviews he did with us on story are rich reminders to us of the power of film. They bear watching over and over again.” —Mark Labberton

A conversation on the power of story with Pixar’s PETE DOCTER, director of UP
For nearly 15 years Fuller’s Reel Spirituality group has been curating the conversation between film, faith, and culture. Screenings, panels, books, study guides, discussions, and filmmaking are part of ongoing life together.

**Further Reading**

- **Religion and Film: New Focus for an Emerging Discipline** by Robert Johnston, ed. (Baker Academic, 2007)
- **Finding God in the Movies: 33 Films of Reel Faith** by Robert Johnston & Catherine M. Barsotti (Baker Books, 2005)
- **Music as Religious Experience: Further Reading** by Robert Johnston, ed. (Wipf & Stock, 2011)
- **Unleash Beauty: Ecclesiastes Through the Lens of Contemporary Faith** by Robert Johnston (Baker Academic, 2012)
- **Reframing Theology and Film: Further Reading** by Robert Johnston, ed. (Wipf & Stock, 2013)
- **Theology and Film in Dialogue** by Robert Johnston (Baker Academic, 2013)

**Further Reading**

- **KUTTER CALLAWAY [PhD '90]**
  - educator and author

Very much like preaching, audiovisual retellings of biblical stories (like Noah) offer us an opportunity to imaginatively explore the ways in which this ancient text might inform or shape our basic understanding of the world. These narratives are meaningful not because of their strict fidelity to some abstract notion of biblical “accuracy,” but instead as they draw us into a story that shapes our lives. In no way am I suggesting that biblical content is irrelevant. Rather I am simply recognizing that, as it concerns both the Bible and biblical films, the core measure of a story’s power and meaning does not reside in its rigid adherence to historical or linguistic data. In other words, whether we are watching a film like Noah or reading a text like Genesis 6:15–10, our primary focus should be on clarity rather than fidelity, that is, on the interpretive insight these stories offer—the unique vision of the world that the story lays bare.

**NEVILLE KISER [MAT ’09]**

Although it’s never explicitly called a “communal calling,” everything about (Lars and the Real Girl) looks and feels as though it is. The mystics have told us, “communal calling,” everything about the film shows how a community’s adherence to its calling can often be the difference between saving and losing the human family.

**ROBETTE BUNTER**, Brown Lecturer 2013

Tuning in to the truth of our own story can be daunting for any of us. Our first impulse is to deflect our stories, by saying they’re all too common, that no one would be interested. Why should anyone care? But, in fact, tuning in to your own story is your power. We are all unique. We have all faced difficult circumstances, experienced triumphs, setbacks, and disappointments. But it is how we have made our choices in the face of adversity—how we harnessed courage at our own thresholds—that makes each of us unique and exceptional. This is the story others want to hear. This is why you need to tell your story. And tell it well.

**EUGENE SUEN [MAT student]**

The notion that a film should be condemned for merely showing immoral behavior is, I hope, self-evidently problematic. Depiction does not mean endorsement. Great works of art engage the human condition with honesty and seriousness. This sometimes means taking an unflinching look at the darkest, ugliest parts of our existence. The fact that a work of art is about immorality does not make it an instance of immorality.

**LAURALEE FARRER [artist in residence], film director**

Years ago I started as a filmmaker when the resurgence of independent film was in its infancy, accessible technology was just emerging as a viable alternative to celluloid, and the church still considered the cinema’s playground. It’s so rewarding to me that we have a legitimate filmmaking community here at Fuller that is as sophisticated as those found at actual film schools. We’re not just talking about movies over espresso drinks, we’re watching live readings! Tarkovsky, discussing Sokurov, watching Malick, and making our own films as we find our voices. I remember Bob Bethke, Justin Bell, Matt Webb, Camille Tucker, Drea Gacs, Dan Long, Eugene Suen, and many many others, as they started at Fuller, wondering if they had permission to merge twin callings to ministry and cinema. Now we have award-winning work coming from our community that is giving us exposure on filmmaker panels, journals, and festivals around the world. That means that the conversation that’s happening in our ad hoc independent film community here is cycling out into the wider world where we can inform and be informed. A dream come true.

**ROBERT K. JOHNSTON**, founder of Reel Spirituality, on relationship to culture

“If I am simply critical of the culture, the culture is going to be dismissive of me. If we’re going to be effective in our outreach and evangelism, and if we’re going to really know ourselves—because we’re a part of that same culture—we need to be able to engage the stories that are forming the metanarrative and way we understand life around us, and we need to then be able to put that in conversation with God’s story that can complete it.”

Further Reading

- **Religious Theology and Film: New Focus for an Emerging Discipline** by Robert Johnston, ed. (Baker Academic, 2007)
- **Finding God in the Movies: 33 Films of Reel Faith** by Robert Johnston & Catherine M. Barsotti (Baker Books, 2005)
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Reflections on living room film festivals from Reel Spirituality podcast and codirector host ELIJAH DAVIDSON (MAICS '13)

“We all have cinematic blind spots, films we haven’t seen that are famous and that have influenced so much of the cinema we love. Reel Spirituality podcast regulars Matt Aughtry, A. C. Noel, Jonathan Stoner, and I decided to correct at least one of those blind spots together by focusing on the films of Andrei Tarkovsky. For several nights we watched his greatest films together. Discussing them afterwards was among the most enriching group movie-watching experiences of our lives.

“I hope our podcasts inspire people to incorporate the communal into their movie watching and to take a chance on films that are outside their comfort zone. Art has the power to transform us when we interact with it communally and not just consumptively, when we commune with the artwork and with others in the process. We’re not made to be just consumers. We’re made to be communers with God, with others, and with the world.”

(at right: scene from Andrei Tarkovsky’s film Stalker)

Film director AVRIL SPEAKS (MAT '14), on the power of film to bring awareness and change

“The art and beauty of film is that it has the power to entertain, but it also has the power to be a weapon that brings awareness, as it did in Do the Right Thing and its predecessors. A ‘classic’ is defined as ‘a work of art of recognized and established value.’ These types of films encouraged me the most to become a filmmaker, making them ‘classics’ in my book. My own ethic as a filmmaker of faith has been largely shaped by these films, giving me a desire to tell my truth, to add my voice as an African American woman, to ‘shake things up,’ and hopefully cause people to take another look at life and see the truths that God is speaking through it.”

JOHN PRIDDY [MAIL '05], founder of the Windrider Forum, and RALPH WINTER [filmmaker and adjunct professor] at the Sundance Film Festival

“Stories are truly the ‘storehouses’ of culture, and film—our culture’s principal form of storytelling—is the most critical, value-defining medium of our age. The name ‘windrider’ means ‘to ride the Ruach,’ the Hebrew term for the creative Spirit that hovered over the earth at creation and, we believe, continues to move in the hearts and minds of artists and their audiences today.”

WILL STOLLER LEE [director, Fuller Colorado] leads screenings and panel discussions

“There are always films with broad issues of spirituality, justice, and forgiveness for us to see and talk about as a community. The value of watching films together is that it creates an opportunity for hospitality to the filmmakers and the chance for us to find common ground through stories.”

Stoller Lee (far right) hosts a question and answer panel with filmmakers James Duff and Jaka Morrison of Hank and Arlo, screened as part of the Windrider Bay Area film festival.
Library in Pasadena invites suggestions for improvement:

Using staff member Zach Smith’s idea, the David Allan Hubbard collection will be added.

TOP ANSWERS:
1. Library in Pasadena invites suggestions for improvement:
   - Coffee/refreshments
   - More study rooms

LAS RESPUESTAS MÁS COMUNES:
1. Café/ refrigerador
2. Más aulas de estudio
3. Computadoras de red con más potencia
4. Más horas de operación
5. Mejores servicios de entrega
6. Más cómodas sillas
7. Más máquinas para escanear
8. Más tomas de corriente
9. Más estaciones de trabajo de pie
10. Más escáneres
11. Más sillas
12. Más escáneres
13. Más seguridad
14. Más seguridad
15. Más seguridad

New Faculty Books and Journal Articles


JUSTIN L. BARRETT, with S. A. SCHNITKER, T. J. Felke, J. L. Barrett, and R. A. Emmons, “Longitudinal Study of Religious and Spiritual Transformation in Adolescents Attending Young Life Summer Camp: Assessing the Epistemic, Intrapsychic, and Moral Sociability Functions of...
TOD BOLSINGER
Vice President for Vocation and Formation and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology

Tod Bolsinger has been a pastor, teacher, author, speaker, blogger, and consultant to churches, nonprofits, and business leaders. His faculty role at Fuller includes team-teaching the new Touchstone class that all master’s degree students will take to begin their course of study, teaching leadership classes, and developing a leadership cohort for DMin students.

KEN FONG
Executive Director of the Asian American Initiative and Assistant Professor of Asian American Church Studies

Third-generation Chinese American Ken Fong is the pastor of Evergreen Baptist Church and a popular speaker, author, and trailblazer in Asian American post-immigrant ministry. He has led EvergreenLA to become the first English-only multi-Asian American, multiracial, multigenerational church in North America.

W. DAVID O. TAYLOR
Director of Brehm Texas and Assistant Professor of Theology and Culture

Artist, pastor, and theologian David Taylor was shaped by the intertwining of music and theology in his childhood home in Guatemala City. Married to a visual artist, Taylor’s special interest lies in the theological significance of sight and seeing in the biblical narrative.

DIANE OBENCHAIN
Director of the China Program and Professor of Religion

Obenchain’s expertise is in Asian religious traditions, particularly the Ru (Confucian) tradition, as well as world Christianity and mission. She has lectured worldwide on Chinese cultural traditions, the place of religion in Chinese society and the world today, and Christian engagement with people of other faiths. Obenchain has lived many years outside the US, about 15 of them in China.

AMOS YONG
Director of the Center for Missiological Research (CMR) and Professor of Theology and Mission

Amos Yong’s scholarship has been foundational in Pentecostal theology, interacting with both traditional and contemporary contextual theologies on themes such as the theologies of Christian-Buddhist dialogue, of disability, of hospitality, and of the mission of God. He comes to Fuller from Regent University School of Divinity.

New Fuller Faculty as of July 2014
The Story of Arab Dola

By Hanna Massad (PhD ’00), founder of the Christian Mission to Gaza

I want to share with you the story of Arab Dola, a man I visited recently in Gaza with Pastor Richard, my friend from Scotsburn Parish Church, in Glasgow, Scotland.

Three weeks before Pastor Richard and I were due to visit Gaza together he saw a feature on the Channel 4 News in the UK about a man called Arab Dola in Gaza—a young martial arts champion who had been paralysed from the neck down in a construction accident. That reported that Dola could no longer support his wife and young baby on the way.

We agreed we should try to help this young man, only in his twenties, so Pastor Richard tweeted the journalist who first discovered the story, asking for an address. He received a reply at the last minute before he left Scotland, with the phone number of a local Muslim contact named Khaled.

Pastor Richard tested Khaled several times without success, and just as we were about to give up, Khaled called and agreed to take us to see Arab Dola on the morning we were to leave Gaza.

We met Arab and his mother, wife, and baby daughter. We were taken aback by their circumstances. All of life was centered around two poor rooms, one where the women cooked on a gas ring (and dealt with rats that came in through the drains) and the room where Arab lay continually on his bed.

By Hanna Massad [PhD ’00], founder of the Christian Mission to Gaza

After a nice time talking with Arab, we asked what we might do to help. He longed to have an electric wheelchair, so that he might return to some semblance of a life, but the cost was impossible for them. Khaled, who also was a nurse, informed us that a medical supplies company was just a few streets away.

We prayed in the name of Jesus for this Muslim man and his family, asking God’s blessing to be dealt with rats that came in through the drains) and the room where Arab lay continually on his bed.

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THE COST OF THEIR LEADERSHIP BELONGS TO US ALL

“I’m always inspired by stories of our students making an impact around the world. Yet I know many others feel called to Fuller but can’t attend because of financial burdens. We must respond to this need.” —Mark Labberton

Royalties from President Labberton’s new book CALLED will be used to support student scholarships. Will you join him with your own commitment to share the burden of leadership for the next generation? fuller.edu/CALLEDtoGive or call 626-584-5495