What Kind of Eyes Do YOU See Fuller With?

A Testimony

by Laura Simmons, Editor

Fuller is a banquet table."

The thought flashed through my head during house church last week. We were talking about how the Bible defines ‘prosperity’ when I had this revelation. It took me quite by surprise, because I don’t usually think of Fuller in the same sentence as a word like ‘prosperity’, and I certainly have not used the analogy of a banquet table to describe this place. It got me thinking, though.

I remembered how excited I was to move to Southern California and to come to Fuller, back in the summer of ‘93. I had lived for eight years in a city that was populated mostly by white, upper-middle class families and college students. It was a wonderful town, but very limited in its appreciation of differences. I was so thrilled to come here because of the sheer diversity of Southern California, and how that diversity is even exaggerated in our campus population. So many countries represented here... I bragged about how many language groups were in my classes. I joined the gospel choir. I taught songs in languages I could not even speak.

Have I forgotten what an incredible privilege it is to be here? To worship God with people from every tribe and tongue and nation is something most people will never taste before heaven. My life these days, though, is so busy that I rarely make it to chapel. I do not have the time to develop new relationships, so I rarely say more than a few words to my fellow students and staff members from around the world. In my busyness, I am far more often struck by the little annoyances of being here than by the blessings.

It’s not just about appreciating Fuller’s multicultural character. I find myself lacking time to appreciate everything that is wonderful here. I still have close friends from many denominations, but conversations about church life are few and far between. I’m in a job that allows me to connect with people from almost every department, but I could hardly tell you what it is that makes the Admissions staff so pleasant or the SWM advisors so cohesive. I need to make a choice to look at Fuller as a banquet table. It means slowing down occasionally, even stopping to notice that attractive arrangement or unusual ‘food item’ or favorite dessert.

How do we look at Fuller, and why do we choose to look at it that way? Do we look through eyes that see the difficulties of being here, but not the blessings? Do we see how much reading a professor gives, but not how he or she gets to know the students personally or makes the class exciting? Do we see the cost of health insurance but not the incredible hardship for those who do not have it and suffer unexpected health problems? Do we focus on the rats in our campus apartments and forget how nice it is to live so close by?

This brings the real challenge home to us. I was horrified to hear that a friend had to kill not one, but several, rats in his

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A CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY

BY RAEDORAH STEWART DODD
PROGRAM COORDINATOR, AFRICAN AMERICAN MINISTRIES

The African-American Ministries office took the initiative to contact the SEMI about publishing a series for Black History Month. We hope to feature articles during the Spring quarter about other cultural groups and issues and experiences related to multiculturalism. If you would like to write an article for our Spring series, please stop by the SEMI office to talk about it.

Black History Month is a season of celebrating African-American culture and history. Established in 1976, Black History Month has evolved into a greatly anticipated time of sharing and learning between Blacks and non-blacks alike. Many communities observe this month with lectures, festivals, concerts, and other special events which reflect the cultural, political, social, and religious voices of African Americans.

This year at Fuller, the African-American Ministries Program and the African-American Seminarian Association will host a series of Black History Month activities. The entire Fuller community is invited to attend, participate, and dialogue with us in this effort to further build bridges toward reconciliation and peace. You are welcome to:

ASK QUESTIONS - "WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICANS" Every question is valuable in gaining knowledge, understanding, and acceptance. You can ask your questions through the Board of Declaration or by calling our office, (818) 584-5591. Responses will be intentionally brief, as we seek to catalyze discussion rather than dictate an homogenous answer to the complexity and diversity of African-American culture and history. Responses will be composed by African-American faculty, staff and students and will appear in this column weekly throughout February. Over the next three weeks, we will answer your questions and these: "Which name is regarded most politically correct — African American (with or without an hyphen) or Black?" "What is Afrocentrism and what is the benefit of operating from that perspective?" "What is Black Theology and what makes it different from theology in more commonly-regarded terms?" "How do Blacks feel about identificational repentance; does it seem insincere or is it powerful and necessary?"

WATCH A MOVIE - "THE COLOR OF FEAR" On Monday, February 6th, at 6:30 pm in Travis Auditorium, you are invited to watch this riveting docu-drama and dialogue about racism as seen through the eyes of three racially-diverse men. Following the movie there will be facilitated dialogue with African-American administrators, faculty and pastors.

BROWN BAG DISCUSSION WITH BISHOP EDDIE LONG Tuesday, February 6th, 11 to 1 pm in the African American Resource Center and Lounge (Taylor Hall, third floor). Bishop Long is pastor of New Birth Community Church in Atlanta, GA., and Third Presiding Bishop of the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship. In 1993, his church was cited as the fastest growing congregation in North America, and he is seen nationally on the Trinity Broadcasting Network.

WORSHIP TOGETHER - "THE SEASON FOR PREACHING" The cornerstone of African American culture and history is our worship experience. Highlighted this year is our oral tradition of preaching. You are invited to worship with us weekly to experience the shout, "hoop and call and response. Fridays, 7 p.m. Preachers will be representatives of the Fuller community and local churches; watch display board for info.

WEAR ART - "EXPRESS YOURSELF" Every Monday this month, you may notice more African attire on campus as African-American students strut our stuff in wearable art. You are invited to participate in this 'art exhibit' by wearing African-influenced clothes, and by dialoguing with African American students about their attire and hairstyles.

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“Action for Reconciliation and Renewal”

by Sondra A. Hollinger, M.Div. student

Fuller Seminary takes pride in its multicultural and multiethnic student body. We are definitely diverse, but are we ‘one in Christ’? There is coexistence...but is there harmony? Our diversity demands that we have fellowship with students and faculty who are not ‘our kind of people.’ In some of my encounters with others on campus who are different from me, I have become aware of some entrenched racism, prejudice, and just plain ignorance between us. It was not until I noticed it in the hearts of one or two brothers and sisters in Christ that I realized it is a seminary-wide phenomenon.

I want to share with you a few of my own experiences here, in hopes that God will use them to reveal some underlying issues and move us further toward reconciliation. As in any dysfunctional family, the process of healing can come about only when wounds are exposed and treated. We have a long, long way to go at Fuller, both in exposing our wounds and in working toward their healing.

God has shown me the need for Christians from all backgrounds and persuasions to communicate genuinely—for each group to be quiet and to listen, really listen, that they might hear. This became painfully obvious to me when a white sister here talked to me about the problems in black America. She said it seemed that we do not value education. She said when she was younger, she had ‘really defended us.’ She talked and talked and talked, but she left my presence with no new insight about African Americans from an African American. We did not communicate.

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Then there was the O.J. trial. How could black folks and white folks be so polarized about the verdict? A lot of white Christians on campus said they felt justice had been done away with. Have they not heard the stories of millions of black Americans who have been lynched, beaten, and robbed for over 400 years in this country, victims whose attackers have almost always gone free? If my brethren had been truly listening, they would know that justice packed up and moved away a long time ago.

It has also become clear to me here that no American is immune to racism’s insidious nature; this disease does not afflict only white and black Americans. I spent some time together with two wonderful Korean Americans at Fuller; we even prayed about the tension between our communities. After we shared about reconciliation, I felt we should visit each other’s churches. I told them I had always wanted to visit a Korean church, and that I wanted to visit each of theirs. They said I would not be welcomed in their churches because I am black, that members would just not be ready for a black visitor. Before we parted, one of them said he felt convicted by the Holy Spirit, and that he’d think about it...I guess he’s still deep in thought.

My experiences at Fuller have reminded me, too, that the unrighteousness of slavery has never been sincerely dealt with by the church. Slavery has become the subject of a few of my class discussions, and some of my classmates have tried to justify slavery in America by pointing out that other countries also kept slaves. In fact, on more than one occasion a brother in Christ even came out and said, in response to my professor’s remark that slavery was inhumane, that we could not judge our ancestors from our vantage point in history. He said they merely acted according to the spirit of their time. I had to speak up, because I knew none of my white brothers and sisters would.
Set Into Intimacy

"In," says Eugene Peterson, "is the preposition of intimacy." We are set into a relationship of intimacy with God through Jesus. "I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them." (John 14:20-21)

Fellowship with God and true knowledge of God are dependent on love; and love is dependent on obedience. As we obey God's commands, we show our love for Jesus, know his love for us, and enter into intimacy with Him. What commands are we to obey? For starters—"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength...love your neighbor as yourself...love one another as I have loved you."

Love is more important than anything else in the sight of God—more important than speaking like angels, or manifesting powerful spiritual gifts, or giving all one's money to the poor. Love is active; it is to be practiced. When we see it happening around us, we notice that it is patient and kind, contains no envy, does not boast, is not proud or rude or self-seeking, is not easily angered, forgives quickly, and rejoices in the truth. In other words, it looks a lot like Jesus. We know we are in Jesus' presence when we are in the presence of such love.

The question each of us needs to keep asking here at Fuller is "Do others, when they meet with me, encounter Jesus and his love, or just 'noisy clanging-cymbals'?" Love is the greatest thing. Without love we are nothing.

Prayer: Jesus, you have commanded us to love, you have showed us how to love, you are in us and with us to love. Develop in us a passionate, radiant, devotion to you and a deep, consistent, mature love for others. Set us into intimacy with you and, as we are living seeds, plant us where we can bear much fruit. In You. Amen.

Doug Gregg
Director, Office of Christian Community

Winter Opportunities

❖ Escaping the Messiah Trap: When Helping You is Hurting Me - Whether you're in ministry now or will be soon, this is a retreat you don't want to miss! All of us in the Fuller community are preparing for caretaking roles. Join Carmen Renee Berry, who authored a book with the workshop title, for a day to explore limits of our caretaking role and how we can protect ourselves from burnout. The workshop will be Saturday, February 10 from 9:30 - 4:30 in Payton 101. Cost is $15 (scholarships available) including lunch and you can register by calling 584-5322.

❖ Bridge Toward Wholeness - Do you have a group where you can share your deepest struggles and joys? The Bridge toward Wholeness is a safe and confidential place that is open to all Fuller students and faculty. The 12 Steps will be applied to your life to move you toward spiritual and emotional wholeness. It is an open meeting so you can either come for one meeting or every week - there is no long-term commitment involved. It meets every Thursday, from 7:00pm-8:30pm in the Office of Christian Community. Come if you need support or want to learn more about the twelve steps.

❖ Retreat Center Listing - This seems to be a common time for students to take personal retreats. A listing is available of area retreat centers if you need a day or two to get away and refocus. We encourage you to practice the discipline of taking rhythms of solitude and listening to God. The listings are available outside our office, or leave your name and box number and we'll put one in your box.

Ongoing Opportunities

❖ Common Lunch Time - Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:15-1:00.
❖ Making Space for God - Tuesdays at Ten (10:00-10:40), in the Catalyst.
❖ Orthodox Morning Prayer - 7:30am-7:55am, Mon.-Fri., in chapel above Library.

The Office of Christian Community may be reached at 584-5322, or FTS Box 243, and is located on the second floor of the Catalyst building.
Jesus said the truth would make us free, but sometimes it comes to us so raw we prefer the prison of our illusions. Dead Man Walking is an intense, yet freeing film that allows no illusions. It challenges many of the easy answers our society offers for the violence we do to ourselves and to one another, whether that violence is monstrously impulsive or coldly legitimized. It points the way to recovering our humanity, without glossing over the effort of the journey.

The fictionalized story is inspired by true events in the life of Sister Helen Prejean, a nun working in the St. Thomas Housing Projects in New Orleans who agrees to correspond with a Death Row inmate. “I didn’t know anything about the person in there,” says Sister Helen, “but I knew one thing, if they were on Death Row in Louisiana, they were poor and I was there to serve the poor and I said ‘sure.’” (Reason #1 why seminarians should see this movie).

Susan Sarandon stars as Sister Helen Prejean, whom she met while on location in New Orleans shooting The Client. Impressed with the nun’s energy and commitment, Sarandon read Prejean’s book when she returned to New York, giving it to Tim Robbins who wrote the screenplay. “What’s great about her story is that she makes so many mistakes. It’s not some righteous nun coming into a situation with everything all figured out,” says Sarandon. (Reason #2 why seminarians should see this movie).

The untidiness of the story is at the heart of its truth. By now, you’ve probably seen enough trailers and talk shows to guess the outcome of the plot. The story line is not where the real suspense is. The suspense, and importance, of the film is in experiencing the profundity of the journey. Both Sister Helen and inmate Matthew are at sea, fighting for their lives and souls in different ways. Like life, their story is messy, intense, full of tenderness, anger, unexpected humor and conflicting emotions. (Reason #3 why seminarians should see this movie).

The performances are as stunning and truthful as the story. Sean Penn’s Matthew is especially powerful. It can’t be easy to carry a pivotal role in a film where your hands are tied in front of you for the entire time and there are barriers between you and all the other actors. It must be even harder to play a character no one likes in a way that is true to the person’s humanity. Penn has reached deep for this performance.

One of the most striking features of the film is how human all the characters are. There’s no glamorous make-up or snazzy scenery. Just ordinary people in mundane places. We could see every one of the characters in our supermarket checkout line or corner laundromat. Even though we see ordinary people in an extreme situation, no character is de-humanized into a symbol, whether it be of good or evil or even a stock functionary like a prison official or nurse. Each character, no matter how minor, suggests the fullness of humanity.

The one exception is the priest who lives as if life is a neat little package, and religion is the box you put it in. Anyone or anything outside the box is extraneous. It is ironic that the official representative of faith in the film is the least authentic human being. Yet he, too, is realistic—a stark reminder to those of us in religious professions how easy it is to delude ourselves into believing we are serving God by serving religious structures rather than serving people, especially people who force us to face harsh realities where our God-talk has little meaning. (Reason #4 why seminarians should see this movie).

Dead Man Walking is about as un-commercial as American filmmaking gets. In the words of Steve Earle, a musician who wrote a song for the film, “This ain’t the kind of picture that’ll show up on all the kids’ lunchboxes next year, but it’s definitely worth seeing.”
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**Spring Registration**
cried that day in class; I don’t think anyone noticed.

I need you to know that writing this was a painful process for me. I have, as an African-American woman in our racist society, quite naturally experienced racism before. I never expected to find it in the proportions in which I have found it at Fuller Seminary. Although I still feel a little empty when I reflect on my experiences, I remain hopeful. I believe God has ordained Fuller to be as culturally and ethnically diverse as it is so that through shared prayers, fellowship, and heartfelt discussion we can experience what it truly means to be as one so that the world might believe.

If my experiences have shown me anything, it’s that the process will not be easy. I still believe, though, in the power of the Holy Spirit to tear down the spiritual walls that separate us. I still believe because, ironically enough, I have experienced this with a few white brothers and sisters, whom I love deeply, here at Fuller. God has given some of us a vision for a reconciliation and renewal movement on Fuller’s campus. We envision prayer, study, and discussion about racial issues to catalyze reconciliation in all areas of campus life. We would like you to join us. If you would like to become a part of the ‘Action for Reconciliation and Renewal’ movement, please contact me at Box 770 or Mamorobele Mokgoatsane at Box 956. Even if you can’t join us physically, everyone can be an important part of this move of God because everyone can pray! Please pray for reconciliation and renewal on Fuller’s campus.

**CHURCH NEWS**

**All-Seminary Chapel**

This **Wednesday**, February 7, our speaker is **Dr. Joe Bettridge**, of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Arizona. We gather for the Wednesday Chapel at 10 am at the First Congregational Church. There will be a brief time of fellowship following chapel.

On **Thursday**, February 8, **Phyllis Mouw**, Special Assistant to the President, will be sharing a message after a time of praise and worship led by the Chapel Worship Team. The Thursday All-Seminary Chapel meets in Travis Auditorium at 10 am.
“Eyes” - cont’d from page 1

apartment. That is a terrible experience, and it would be absolutely unfair to tell him he could not be disgusted by it. We cannot live our lives according to what I call ‘ostrich theology’ – ‘if I just stick my head in the sand and pretend not to notice it, maybe it will go away.’ But how do we learn to discipline ourselves to look at the famous ‘both/and’?

I think part of it does have to do with our busy lives and stress and pressure. I went grocery shopping at 6:00 a.m. the other day. One aisle was so crowded with empty boxes from restocking, I could not navigate my cart through it and had to choose another aisle. I reflected on the fact that, had the same thing happened at 5:00 p.m. after a long day, I would have been incensed. Because it happened when I was rested, it ‘rolled off my back.’ If our entire lives at Fuller feel like a never-ending stream of stress and pressure, small annoyances feel much larger and small blessings go by the wayside.

Part of it, though, involves a choice to look for and at the good Fuller offers. I did an exercise recently where I ranked several factors along a continuum while focusing on the negative ones. Then I did the same thing with some similar factors, but focusing on the positive ones. The lowest rankings when I ‘accentuated the positive’ were higher than the highest rankings when I focused on the negative! “Kids, do try this at home.” Make a list of what you love about Fuller. Go through the list and ask yourself how important each of those factors is to you.

THEN make a separate list of what frustrates you, and do a realistic assessment of how much those things ‘weigh’ in your experience of Fuller. How did it feel to focus merely on the positive – unusual, good, indifferent?

I have spent this week looking at Fuller through different eyes. I am amazed at the change in my own attitude. The wife of a Fuller alum once told me that seminary students were the angriest people she’d ever met. I don’t want my experience of Fuller to be one of anger and bitterness and ‘good riddance’ when I leave. I want to celebrate the banquet table God has given me, here and now. But I need to choose what eyes I will see it with. Is it a table lacking in my favorite foods and filled with strange things I would never want to eat? Is it an empty table because others have taken all the goodies? God brought the image to mind for a reason, and in the context of a discussion about prosperity. I intend to see Fuller as an abundantly stocked luxurious banquet, with my favorite foods and yours, and wonderful things to be discovered if I only take the time to look. Won’t you join me?

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid Applications for 96-97 are available in the Financial Aid Office starting February 5, 1996. Pick up your copy!

Also note the following scholarship opportunities.

❖ Nikkei Ministerial Association - Annual Scholarships for Seminary Students who are serving at or be a member of a Japanese American Church. Deadline is March 31, 1996

❖ Lydia Fund For PC (USA) women. Applications are available in the Financial Aid Office. Deadline is March 10, 1996

AFRICAN AMERICAN FACT FINDER


IT’S A FACT! In 1964, when Martin Luther King, Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize at age 35, he was the youngest man ever to receive this honor.

IT’S A FACT! Phillis Wheatly, notable American poet, was purchased as a slave by Susannah Wheatly, a 52-year-old Christian woman.

IT’S A FACT! A respected author of critical essays, a professor at Princeton, and the first African American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, Toni Morrison became the first African-American woman to have an endowed chair at an Ivy League college.

IT’S A FACT! George Washington Carver used sweet potatoes to develop postage stamp glue!
Lunch with Peace
The TGU is sponsoring a brown bag lunch with Dr. Richard Peace on Wednesday, February 7, from 12 - 1 pm at the Geneva room (2nd fl. of Payton). Dr. Peace will be sharing his experiences as a missionary to South Africa reaching the South African youth culture through coffeehouse evangelism. Bring bag lunch and questions. Drinks will be provided.

Cheap Movie Tickets
The Office of Student Services is offering United Artist (UA) movie tickets for $4.25. These tickets are good for movies after two weeks of their release (usually) and do not have a 'VIP' restriction. Come by the OSS on the second floor of the Catalyst building and pick them up. We have only a limited quantity.

Ministry Enrichment Seminar
Richard and Noreen Nazarian, Directors of Southern California Presbyterian Camps, will speak on “Camps, Conferences, Retreats and Your Ministry,” Tuesday, February 6, from 1:00 - 2:30 pm in Payton 101. For more information, contact the Field Ed Office, 594-5377.

Ministry Enrichment Seminar
Rev. Jim Sillerud and Barb LeFevre, pastors at First Presbyterian Church in Northridge, will speak on “What to Look for in Your First Call as an Associate,” Thursday, February 15, from 3:00 to 4:30 pm in Payton 101. For more information, contact the Field Ed Office, 584-5377.

Pray for Muslims!
Don’t just study Islam... pray for Muslims! Join us Sundays at 7 pm at 47 N. Craig Ave, #4, Pasadena. For info call Gail Schlosser 683-8685.

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Textbooks are Finite
The Bookstore will begin pulling textbooks from Winter quarter off our shelves on February 14th to make way for Spring quarter. Many texts will be returned to publishers as soon as they leave the shelves, so make sure you’ve got what you’ll need before it’s gone.

Editing Referral Service
Do you need editing for a paper, thesis or dissertation? The Editing Referral Service has compiled a listing of editors. For information on an editor suited to your needs, see the referral book at the International Student Services, Office of Student Services, or the ASC.

Acoustic Coffeehouse
The Arts Concerns Committee of the ASC is sponsoring an Acoustic Coffeehouse on Saturday, February 3, at 7 pm in the Catalyst. If you would like to perform, please contact J.J. at 818-683-0516.

Introducing TeleFile from the IRS. If you are single and filed Form 1040EZ last year, you can file your tax return in ten minutes by phone. Anytime. Check your tax booklet for information.
Auto Repair: SMOG CHECKS, tune-ups, oil change, brakes, batteries, etc. Complete service. Hrant Auto Service, 1477 E. Washington Blvd., Pasadena. 798-4064. Call for an appointment.


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