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Fuller Theological Seminary

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“Celebration & Motivation”

Inside This Issue

“A child was selected as bishop and...sat in judgment of the adults...”

“Do we come to the manger to flaunt our wealth, or to make an offering to he who saved us?”

“Bring this coupon and receive a 16 oz. soda free with any purchase of $2 or more!”

How macho is Fuller football?

Read one man’s confession on page 3

Fall Quarter

How macho is Fuller football?

Read one man’s confession on page 3

November 27–December 1, 2000

Holidays Boghosian-Style

by Christopher J. Boghosian

I'm Armenian. Though I was born and raised in this country, Armenian culture has heavily influenced me through my family, and there's no better evidence for this than the holidays with the Boghosians...

Ever since I can remember, I've always gone to my grandmother's house for Thanksgiving. Quiet and simple with turkey and all the trimmings, right? Not really. It's actually loud and chaotic with tons of Armenian food like hummus, tabouli (that green salad you buy at Trader Joe's), rice pilaf, baklava, a 15-pound roast, and of course, to make it official, a couple of turkeys—see, it's very disgraceful in Armenian culture to leave the guests hungry. Now as far as the carving goes, well, you're sure to see my Uncle Harry with his famous electric carver proudly going at it with all the meat. And the reason for all the loudness and chaos: imagine a small living room filled with over 30 people who like to talk at the same time plus 12 or so kids running around chasing each other—oh yeah, you can't forget the Armenian rock music blasting through the sound system to create a little atmosphere. Tea is served after dinner with a plethora of desserts, which is then followed by traditional Armenian coffee (a thick, gritty brew closely resembling espresso). By the end of the night everyone is stuffed and tired and ready to go home.

Shortly thereafter, I find myself at my parents' house for Christmas Eve— it's been there as long as I can remember. Every year my Mom attempts to cook too much stuff and she ends up going crazy. She has this thing with overworking herself every Christmas. She always spends way too much time turning the living room into Santa's Village and dragging in a tree which has no chance of fitting—there's still a huge scrape in the ceiling from the time she insisted the tree would fit. I, in the meantime, am the official ice person, going back and forth to the market fetching huge bags of ice—a promotion from video person that I received after I started driving. As far as the actual festivities go, well, just do the math: Thanksgiving at my grandma's house times 100. It's louder, more chaotic, and yes, there's a lot more food, ensuring leftovers for at least a month. You got all the
The St. Nicholas of popular legend is believed to have been a historical figure who lived in Asia Minor in the 4th century. He became the Bishop of Myra (now a region in Turkey) at quite a young age and suffered under the Diocletian persecutions of Christians.

Tradition says that Nicholas anonymously provided three bags of gold as dowries for three sisters who would have been unable to marry because of their poverty. He tossed the bags into the girls’ cottage at night through an open window, and one bag fell into a stocking that was hanging by the hearth to dry. Another version of the story is that the bag fell into a shoe set out on the windowsill. St. Nicholas performed other acts of charity, particularly toward young people, and is therefore considered the patron saint of children.

Eastern Christians particularly revered St. Nicholas. The Princess of Byzantium brought his name to Europe in the 10th century, when she married Otto II of Germany. From Germany, St. Nicholas’ popularity spread to Holland where he was called “Sint Nikolaas.” Dutch immigrants to New Amsterdam (now New York) continued celebrating December 6 as the day “Sinter Klaas” gave gifts to children. English settlers in America appropriated the custom, changing the name to “Santa Claus” and associating his activities more closely with Christmas Day.

Since the Middle Ages, St. Nicholas Day has been a popular children’s festival in many parts of Europe. In general, the holiday is a chance for children to reform their behavior before the Christ child’s birth and a time to enjoy the sweetness of the season. The customs that have grown up around the Feast of St. Nicholas go back to a very old tradition: the child bishop game, originally celebrated on the Feast of Holy Innocents, December 28.

A child was selected as bishop and dressed in robes. He sat in judgment of the adults to remind the church leader that all power was given to him by God only for a limited time, and might at any time be taken away. Later the Feast of St. Nicholas was moved to December 6th, the presumed day of his death. The game was reversed: St. Nicholas came, pronounced judgment on the children, tested them on their catechism, and rewarded their performance either with a gift or with punishment from his lackey, the bad elf or devil.

In Slovakia, Svetý Mikuláš visits Slovak children on December 6, dressed in white robes, with a pastoral staff and bishop’s miter. He asks about their behavior, rewarding good children with small treats. Unfortunately for the mischievous, Svetý Mikuláš is accompanied by a mean-spirited devil, Cert. Cert strikes fear in the hearts of children, for he is aware of all their misdeeds and points them out to the good bishop, Mikuláš.

Children put their shoes on the windowsill at night, hoping to find them filled with sweets or small gifts in the morning. If they were bad, Cert might leave them some coal bricks or stones.

When we lived in Slovakia, we really enjoyed December 6 when Svetý Mikuláš came. Now, Svetý Mikuláš visits schools, hospitals and department stores to give out candy to children. Nowadays, stores are filled with chocolate Mikulášes a few weeks before the holiday.

Later, to counter growing superstition, Martin Luther forbade these Nicholas customs in the Lutheran areas of Europe. Instead, the “Christkindl” or Infant Jesus himself was to be the bringer of gifts. Today in many parts of Central Europe, including Slovakia, it is the Christ Child or “Jezisko” who puts the presents under the tree on Christmas Eve.

Helen Rudinsky, a MFT student, lived in Slovakia as a child and recalls celebrating Svetý Mikuláš Day (St. Nicholas Day) on December 6.

Expression of Thanks

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Fuller community for your prayers, tangible support, and words of encouragement during this time of loss of my mother, Yvonne Skeete.

You have indeed made this a place of grace where I could grieve and be healed. May God’s grace in turn continually abound to all of you. — Marion Skeete

Fin Aid

The following awards are now available:

1. Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans in amount of $20,000 stipend plus half of tuition for one year. Deadline for application is November 30 and applicants must meet the following criteria: a) must be a U.S. naturalized citizen or permanent resident b) have a bachelor’s degree or be in final year of under grad study c) not be past the second year of graduate study d) not older than 30 years of age as of Thursday, Nov. 30 e) be able to communicate creatively your career goals and your commitment to the values expressed in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

2. PCUSA Grant applications are due January 15. Pick up now before the holidays. Applicants must meet the following criteria: a) be a member of the Presbyterian Church USA b) be enrolled as an inquirer or be received as a candidate by a presbytery of PCUSA if you are preparing for ordained ministry c) have unmet financial need d) be enrolled full-time during this academic year e) be in good academic standing.

Check your current status through Campus Pipeline.
Here at Fuller Seminary, counselors, missionaries, and ministers in training we are—gridiron beasts we are not. But on Saturday mornings we put the books, flashcards, journals, and commentaries aside, hurl the pigskin, and chase each other around the football field like maniacs. Fuller flag football is just my style—it’s just that there’s not the manly pride in it that is usually associated with playing football.

Flag football is already spoken of in hushed tones among men because it’s not the real thing. But, at Fuller, our game is further distanced from its testosterone and blood-spilling ancestor because it’s co-ed. Don’t get me wrong. I enjoy co-ed football. It’s just that playing football with women makes me feel somewhat self-conscious about being a guy—kind of like I feel when I unknowingly walk in on a baby shower.

In addition to being co-ed, there is also absolutely no physical contact allowed in Fuller flag football. I remember one instance where my flag whiffed an opponent’s hip as I ran by him—this grazing was interpreted as hazing and I was flagged for a 15-yard personal foul! At least in regular flag football you still pass-rush, block, and can clothesline the occasional wide receiver.

By Fuller’s no contact rules, blocking becomes more of an exercise in herding. As the rusher advances, the blocker shuffles her feet to get into the rusher’s path, thereby forcing him to change direction in order to avoid contact. I recall many instances where I’m charging the quarterback when a wail of a girl deftly steps in my path. I stagger to a halt just before plowing her, and juke left. Quicker than I, the pixie matches my jukes and we engage in a clumsy dance—she mirrors my every move and follows my jerky leads precisely. While practicing the nuances of this dance, I typically don’t notice when the quarterback sprints downfield.

The best blocker in Fuller football wouldn’t be a 300-lb. lineman, but a 40-lb. sheep dog. Special cleat-wearing sheep dogs could be trained to dodge in front of charging out-of-shape seminary students. The quarterback would just relax in the pocket as his cleated canines create a virtual force field around him.

These differences are okay when our special brand of football is played within our grace- and peace-oriented community, but I’ve found that the outside world isn’t so understanding of our game. Recently, I was blindsided when I exposed our game to an innocent worldly jock, deeply offending his sense of propriety.

It all started because I suffer from a socially debilitating handicap that often afflicts men: I’m competitive. I decided to buy a pair of football cleats so that poor traction would be eliminated from my list of excuses for poor performance.

One day at the local mall, I entered Champs Sporting Goods Store where a young, buff, football-playing clerk came to help me.

“I’m here to get some football cleats,” I said, realizing that he might be sizing me up. “They’re for me...I’m just going to play some flag football. I gotta make sure I’ve got every advantage I can get out there...”

“Sure, sure...that’s cool,” the guy played along. It wasn’t just my insecurity talking—in the men’s Universal Code of Conduct and Manly Understanding, flag football is code...
Alternative Christmas:
Making Things Possible

by Matt Cromwell

It is so very interesting to me what Christmas has become in America. It’s somewhat sad that, as Christians, we now have to talk about Christmas in “alternative” ways than how it has commonly been practiced. The idea of “Alternative Christmas” is similar to that of “Alternative Halloween”: Christians being intentional about celebrating an event that gives us meaning and identity. If we celebrate Halloween by disguising ourselves as ghosts and devils, what type of identity does that give us? Similarly, if we celebrate Christmas by mad rushes to the mall to buy expensive items for friends who already have everything, then what type of identity are we celebrating but materialism and our lack of responsibility for our abundance?

If we think about the first Christmas, way back at the manger, the wise men gave gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These were given to symbolize Jesus’ kingly authority (gold), his life given as a fragrant offering to God (frankincense), and his death for us all (myrrh, used for burial). These gifts had deep, intimate meaning and purpose. They were a sacrifice made to show their loyalty to God made flesh. Some also claim that the gold was used by Mary and Joseph to provide for their escape to Egypt. Mary and Joseph were poor and needy, unable to make this journey by their own means. But God provides. In this way the gifts made things possible that formerly would not have been possible.

Today, it would make things so much easier if we could simply make our own pilgrimage to our home towns to give gifts to the baby Jesus. But Jesus doesn’t walk among us quite like he used to. Instead, Jesus comes to us, just as poor and needy as he did as a child, but now in his “distressing disguises” (as Mother Teresa says). If we are to celebrate the birth of Christ, how more literal can we be than to celebrate those for whom Jesus has a special blessing for (“Blessed are the poor”), for whom Christ equated himself with (“Unto the least of these…you have done unto me”)? Do we come to the manger to flaunt our wealth, or to make an offering to the whole man? We made presents for those who have no hope.

Suzanne B. Hollon
Development staff

As a child, one of the best Christmas presents I remember was Mindy, a tiny black puppy with a big red bow—licking your face on Christmas morning! As a child, one of the best Christmas presents I remember was Mindy, a tiny black puppy that we gave my mother. I was finally old enough to be trusted with the secret of what we were giving Mom, and I could not wait for Mom to see her. Mindy was really a present for the entire family that year. There’s nothing cuter than a puppy with a big red bow—licking your face on Christmas morning!

Jim Soots
SOT M.Div., 1st year

A plane ticket home. Last Christmas my mom bought me a plane ticket so I could come home. I was working out on Catalina Island at Campus by the Sea from January 1998 until May of this year.

Patty Engert
SOP Clin. Psych., 5th year

I got my first bike for Christmas when I was five. My dad took me outside in the snow—no ice, just snow—and taught me how to ride it. It’s a great memory.

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS IDEAS

For Friends and Family:
Because “We cherish relationships more than money!”

★ Offer your time, at a coffee shop, at home, etc. Conversations can make things possible in relationships that you didn’t even know you needed.

★ Offer a work day to your parents or overworked friends. Clean their home, their office, their car. Do the grocery shopping for them. Something to lighten their load so the rest of their work can be done with a clearer conscience.

★ Make a small book or card to say the things you think they already know but you rarely tell them. You will be surprised by what they don’t know about you.

For the Poor/Jesus:
Because Jesus comes in “Distressing Disguises.”

★ The Heifer Project. Donate animals to needy families in third world villages. Can be donated in the name of a friend or family member as a gift (cards available). Call (800) 422-0474, on the web at www.heifer.org or email <info@heifer.org>

★ Alternative Christmas Market, held at First United Methodist Church 500 E. Colorado on Dec. 3, 10, and 17. Handmade crafts that directly benefit the poor.

★ As a family or group of friends or church, go and give blankets and food to the poor in your area. Make things happen for those who have no hope.
The SEMI was told that the free car wash put on by the Barnabas Partners on November 11th was a great success. Luci Gutermuth shared that it was just an amazing time giving and receiving and that many, many people were touched by this practical act of kindness—including those washing the cars as well as those bringing the cars to be washed. Wasn’t there someone who said giving blesses the giver as well as the receiver?

In celebration of Dr. Gooden’s installation as SOP dean on November 15th, a jazz presentation was put on that night in Travis Auditorium by his close friend, Dwight Andrews, who just happens to be an extremely talented musician, composer, educator, and minister. Now many of us can say that we were “jazzed” both literally and figuratively about Dr. Gooden taking over the SOP leadership [“jazzed” is American slang for “excited and happy”].

A student going through registration naturally and automatically adopts one of the usual “poor student at the student accounts station” looks. Quite possibly you’ve felt the same way as you “ran the registration gauntlet”? As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words....

for “Football for Old Guys.” But his pity didn’t overrule his quest for commission. “Where do you play?” he asked.

Fuller Theological Seminary,” I said self-consciously, expecting him to know that Who Let the Dogs Out isn’t exactly our theme song.

“Oh yeah? Seminary, huh...that’s cool,” the guy said lamely. He looked at the counter and bit his lip. There was a long, awkward pause. Then, feeling merciful, he tried to make me feel better about my manhood. “Flag football’s cool though,” he offered. “...I mean, it can get pretty intense with all your boys on the field, gettin’ fired up, goin’ after each other and everything...”

“It’s co-ed,” I mumbled hastily, digging my toe into the carpet.

There was an awkward pause as I watched his football paradigm confront this epistemological crisis. At last he registered this new information and shrank back away from me. I randomly grabbed some cleats and headed back to the cash register. The clerk searched for words. Then, in his time of trauma—just like an elite special forces member—he reverted to his guerrilla salesman training and went in for the add-on sale.

“Hey, man, I know you’re just playing flag football,” he ventured, “but I know how it is...things can get pretty physical on the line, elbows swingin’ and all...you want to get yourself a mouth guard?”

I froze. My mind screamed, “Buy the mouth guard! Buy the mouth guard! Mayday! Mayday! Cut your losses, pick up the shards of your dignity, and evacuate the premises!” My thoughts sputtered and stalled like a pass-rusher in a no-contact football game. My breath was short. I considered my options, weighing the pros and cons of boxing his ears with a pair of high tops, or gouging him with a shoehorn. Anything to escape this neutering nightmare.

But my integrity was on the line—I had to be honest.

“I’m no-contact, co-ed, flag football,” I whispered to no one in particular, unable to look at the once buff salesman, whose shoulders were now slumped.

His eyes communicated betrayal—I was an accomplice to the tarnishing of his bastion of masculinity. He looked at me like I was unclean, like I needed to be banished to forever dwelling outside the Champs. I paid in cash so as to remain nameless, and left without getting my change. I was just thankful that he hadn’t called mall security.

Since this episode, I’ve been careful about sharing Fuller flag football with the outside world. And I don’t mean to sound soft, but my feet are killing me in these oversized cleats and my wife is tired of my complaints. Is anyone willing to make a run to Champs for me?

Marshall Allen’s mother wouldn’t let him play football when he was a boy, so now he lives out his boyhood dreams playing Fuller flag football. He is also a 2nd-year M.Div. student.
same Armenian food and Uncle Harry is at it again with his electric carver, but the 30 or so people has now become 40 and they still like to talk at the same time while the kids run around. However, the Armenian rock is changed to Armenian Christmas rock—you know, Jingle Bells and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer sung in Armenian.

Perhaps the best known and most memorable tradition is the arrival of Santa Claus. Did you know Santa can speak Armenian? It’s amazing, and the kids love it. There’s been a long line of Santas, including my Uncle Armen, who wore a plastic costume; then my Uncle Tony, who was upgraded to a real costume; and most recently, my dad—the much too serious of Santas. However, the all-time best was my cousin Albert. One year, when Uncle Tony was sick, Albert was coerced into being Santa. It was hilarious. He’s about 6 foot 2 inches and weighs about 140 pounds—the costume had to be safety-pinned in order to stay on! Nevertheless, no matter who Santa is, all the kids always end up with tons of toys that they’re bored with by the next day, and there’s always enough torn up gift wrap on the floor to cover the house. And, of course, by the end of the night everyone is stuffed and tired and ready to go home.

All this being said, I realize that I’ve left out a few minor details: generosity, commitment, and good times. This is what really makes the holidays with my family so special. and this is where the Armenian tradition truly shines. No one is cheap when it comes to bringing food and giving gifts (I still get gifts to this day!), and everyone helps in one way or another. As far as commitment goes, nobody in my family would ever think twice about not showing up to any of the holidays. Year in and year out, all my aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws show up ready to have a good time. And that’s what it is: a good time. I will always cherish the fond memories of the holidays with my family, and I pray to God that my children will have the same kind of memories.

Christopher Boghosian is a 1st-year M.Div. student and is interested in multi-media communication, photography, drama, and cooking.

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**CAMPUS EVENTS**

**TGU Time Out**

*Thurs*, November 30

Noon-1 p.m., Catalyst

Intimate worship, a timely word, small group prayer ministry. Come and be refreshed! Sponsored by the TGU.

**FE Preparatory Workshop**

Thurs, January 4

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Faculty Commons

Participation in a Preparatory Workshop is required of all first-time interns enrolled in the WINTER Quarter. For more information, contact Gary Purtee at 584-5377. Email: fielded@fuller.edu.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**English Conversation Classes**

If English is not your first language, you have an opportunity to learn in the company of other Fuller community friends. Our weekly 2-hour class plus conversation practice time with a partner will help you sharpen your conversational skills. For details and registration, call Susanne at 792-4464 or Heather at 584-5860.

**Affordable Psychotherapy**

Available to SOT and SWM students, staff, and families. Ideal for those having difficulties in relationships, adjusting to Fuller or other life changes, and those interested learning more about their thoughts and feelings. $75.00 for 15 sessions. Please call FPFS for more information at 584-5555.

**Two New FPFS Groups Starting**

An adult Anger Management Group to help people cope with anger in relationships and resultant emotional difficulties. And an Adolescent Group dealing with peer and school difficulties, substance abuse, violence, emotional and motivational problems. Call FPFS for more information at 584-5555.

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**positions available**

**Elementary Tutoring**

Tutoring 1st or 2nd grade children in the Pasadena School District for $10/hour, 10-20 hours per week. Must be eligible for Federal Work-Study (check with Fin Aid office), applications at Human Resources. For more info, contact Andy Gray at 584-5421.

**Admissions/Marketing Coordinator**

Part-time work study position available in the Office of Marketing/Recruitment and Admissions. Ideal for an individual with 2 years of experience in marketing/communications and admissions related responsibilities for the D.Min. program. Contact Joy Lewis at 584-5316.

**Clinical Pastoral Education**

An Extended Clinical Pastoral Education (CFE) is being offered Jan. 8 - May 25, 2001 at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. 22 hours/week. Rev. Karen Schnell, Fuller grad, will supervise the program. For more info, contact Rev. Schnell at (323) 669-4645; or contact Gary Purtee at 584-5377.

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**Discount Entertainment Books**

$25

Good throughout San Gabriel Valley until November 2001

Available at the SOP Front Desk

Proceeds benefit Clinical PGUs Internship Care Program. For more info, call: 584-5519.

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**All Seminary Chapel**

Nov. 29

Mark Branson

Homer L. Goddard Associate Professor of Ministry of the Laity

Nov. 30

Al Dueck

Professor of Integration of Psychology and Theology

Finals Week- No Chapel

Dec. 6 and 7
This section of the SEMI is for the announcement of events or services not directly offered by a Fuller office or organization. For information about rates, contact the SEMI at 584-5430. Note: Individuals are personally responsible for checking on the quality and type of service before contracting or using it. The SEMI and Office of Student Services do not recommend or guarantee any of the services listed.

JOBS
Director of Women’s Ministries. Seeking someone who can develop targeted Bible studies, support groups, and weekend retreats for our female members at First Presbyterian Church. For info, call Pam Yanez at (831) 455-8538 or email <pamyanez@aol.com>

Personal Assistant. The STARS Tutoring Program, an outreach for inner-city children by Lake Avenue Church (two blocks north of Fuller), needs a very capable part-time administrative and personal assistant 15 hours/week. Please call Jill Shook, 797-4072 or 675-1316.

SERVICES
Getting Engaged? Or just want a reliable jeweler? Many Fuller students have come to us and it has been a privilege to help them. We do not sell to the general public. Walter Zimmer Co., wholesale manufacturing jewelers with 82 years experience. Call (213) 622-4510 for hours, days open, and directions.

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The Computer and People People

New From Fuller Grad ('88), Kevin Bowen

"Imagine the turmoil that would break out in Christendom if an archaeologist discovered the bones of Jesus Christ. Kevin Bowen’s novel...is an entertaining page-turner."
—Christianity Today

“I found the book to be thoroughly engrossing as I got caught up in a boldly conceived plot”
—Eugene Schwartz, Consortium House

Kevin will be signing his book at Vroman’s December 18th at 7PM.

Whether you are looking for Christian entertainment or desire to reach friends or family with the Gospel, Wit’s Bones will captivate all readers.

$12.95 ISBN 1-930892-12-8
Available at Fuller Bookstore, Vroman’s, amazon.com and other outlets.

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