



Student Spotlight—Michael Johnson



Several years ago, as my bride-to-be Chasity and I thought about our life together, we felt like God was leading us to be more involved in the local church. We wanted to spend the bulk of our time investing in a church family and reaching out to those who didn't know Jesus. My hope was to become a pastor and someday start a new

church. Though Chasity had worked with a college ministry for years, I had nearly no experience in my limited time of following Jesus. When our home church, Christ Community CU, offered me full time position to grow and serve, seminary seemed like a great complement to the hands-on experience I would be getting.

As it turns out, I was not disappointed. I began taking classes at Urbana Seminary in the summer of 2016. I will never forget my first class, Group Spiritual Direction with Peter Spychalla. The class was nothing like I expected but exactly what I needed. My Christian experience at the time had heavily focused on approaching God from a merely intellectual standpoint, so a

Johnson continued on page 7...

Pascal Study Center

Since Urbana Seminary has hired a new Director, Emily G. Wenneborg, our Christian Study Center has been renamed! Now named after French mathematician, scientist, and Christian apologist Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), Pascal Study Center partners with University of Illinois campus ministries and local churches to provide a place for engaging in deep questions about the Christian faith in relation to learning and vocation. Pascal Study Center seeks to engage the university community through academic hospitality and faithful presence.

Three key images will help us focus the work of Pascal Study Center:

- 1) Planting trees: sowing the seeds of faithful Christian discipleship across all areas of life and over the whole lifespan
- 2) Building bridges: creating and strengthening thoughtful partnerships with the University of Illinois, local churches, and the community
- 3) Setting tables: making space for Christians and others to come together around the big questions of life

For more information about the Christian Study Center movement, see <https://cscmovement.org/>. To learn more about Pascal Study Center and find out how you can support this ministry, contact Director Emily G. Wenneborg at ewenneborg@urbanatheologicalseminary.org

From the President's Pen...

Finally! After a pandemic-induced hiatus, we held our first commencement since 2019. It was wonderful to rejoice with our graduates and celebrate their work and God's hand in their lives, as another Spring Semester drew to a close.

At the same time, we eagerly anticipate what God has in store for the future. Yes, Summer Sessions are beginning again, followed by a new Fall Semester. But there is more afoot. For example, in early June the faculty will have their first retreat since the pandemic hit. This will be dedicated to brainstorming our curriculum—

thinking more about what we teach and how. As we have watched the church and our culture broadly changing at a rapid pace, we desire to sense God's leading for the future. Please pray for creative wisdom and discernment of the voice/leading of the Lord, so that we could address developing needs for the years ahead in new and impactful ways.

In Christ,
Ken

Introducing our New Hires:



Dr. Emily Wenneborg

Director of the Pascal Study Center

At the start of 2022, Dr. Emily G. Wenneborg joined Urbana Theological Seminary as the new Director of our Christian Study Center, a ministry of Urbana Theological Seminary to the University of Illinois community. The Christian Study Center, renamed Pascal Study Center, is a member of the Consortium of Christian Study Centers, a network of Christian organizations adjacent to colleges and universities across the United States which seek to support students, faculty, staff, and members of the wider community as they

develop a truly thinking faith. Emily received her PhD in Philosophy of Education and Religious Studies from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in May 2021. Her research focuses on the challenges and possibilities of Christian formation in the midst of deep pluralism. In her free time, Emily enjoys reading, learning new languages, and playing board games and video games with her husband, Mark, who is a security engineer at the University of Illinois. Emily has been an active member of a local church for nearly eight years, and is excited to continue working and worshipping in her adoptive hometown. You can get to know Emily more by contacting her at ewenneborg@urbanatheologicalseminary.org.



Lindsey Myers

Director of Marketing

The seminary would like to welcome back Lindsey Myers as our new Director of Marketing. Lindsey has done wonderful work for us in the past as an Office Assistant and we are excited to see what new directions she will explore. Lindsey brings with her experiences in healthcare and coaching that will provide a unique perspective on marketing and interacting with prospective students. You'll see her hand in our Social Media and various

outreaches to students and the community as well as providing an overarching organizational plan. She, her husband and daughter live in one of the rural communities surrounding Champaign-Urbana where they enjoy walks in the woods and taking care of the land God has blessed them with. She enjoys playing tennis, walking, and reading. Feel free to reach out and get to know her by emailing her directly at lm Myers@urbanatheologicalseminary.org.



Susan Beaumont

Accreditation Officer

Susie is new here but brings many years of experience to her job working to accomplish our accreditation. Before her retirement in 2018, she had dedicated 40 years serving at-risk, low-income individuals and families through employment at a private, not-for-profit agency (Embarras River Basin Agency) where she enjoyed resourcing, writing and implementing state and federal grants to provide funding for remediation of poverty barriers. Her duties over the years included: Operations Manager, Affirmative Action Officer, Grievance Officer, Human Resources Manager,

Homeless Department Director, Programs Coordinator, Continuum of Care Lead, and Grant Writer. She earned a Project Manager certification from the University of Illinois. She recently developed and managed a Coordinated Assessment System for eighteen counties across South Central Illinois to provide a comprehensive, consistent, and effective services delivery system to homeless individuals and families. Susie enjoys watching her six grandchildren as well as studying and travelling. She works part-time for Market Place Chaplains as an Industrial Chaplain while working remotely for Urbana Seminary and looks forward to meeting more of our community in person!

An Interview with Al Hany



Al is currently the president of the seminary board and an Urbana Seminary alum.

What led you to study at Urbana Seminary?

I had heard good things about a seminary in Champaign with reasonable costs, solid teaching, close location and no denominational bias. Once I met Dr. Cuffey, I was hooked.

What prompted you to pursue a Seminary degree?

I wanted to be of more service in the local and international church. I was looking for a solid theological backbone to prepare for post-retirement work in teaching and discipleship. I knew a seminary course of study would be more concentrated, broad-based, and intentional than what I had been trying to do on my own for many years.

Can you describe learning something particularly eye opening or especially impactful?

Discovering the depth of connectedness between the Old Testament and the New Testament has really been helpful.

What are some strengths of the faculty, classes, and the Seminary community?

I have always appreciated the engagement, kindness and care from the faculty. The class size was conducive to learning and interaction. The classes have all been relevant and the personalities and backgrounds of faculty blend well with the topics they teach. And though the Seminary community is small, it's mighty.

How has what you learned at Urbana Seminary benefited you? (in your work? life situation? spiritual walk?)

It has given me the tools to interpret the arc and story of scripture in a very concrete way, and to share with others, whether through teaching or guiding church leadership through hard issues.

What would you say to folks that are unsure about taking classes or pursuing a degree from Urbana Seminary?

Just do it. While a certain amount of commitment is necessary, classes can be audited or taken for credit. There are online classes that don't require your physical presence. There are also ways to structure your educational strategies and goals, from a single class to a certificate or a full-on degree from a great institution!

Al is retired from 33 years in various leadership IT and Marketing positions at Country Financial in Bloomington, IL. He enjoys the pace of retired life with some seasonal agricultural work, video and sound consulting, and as much biking as he can fit in. He and his wife, Keri, remain active in their local church, where they have served in many roles. They live on the rural edge of a small town in central IL.

Summer Course Schedule

Classes will be taught online for remote access using Zoom.

Celtic Christian Spirituality **FM 740 130**

Join us in exploring the spirituality of the native Christian faith of the British Isles. The course gives special attention to the forms, content, and emphases of Celtic Christian prayer and how these can be applied today. Theological themes include God as Trinity; the goodness, grace, and presence of God in creation; and a theology of place and journeying. Get acquainted with Patrick, Brigid, Columba, Iona, Aidan, Brendan, Columbanus, Lindisfarne, *Anamchara* (soul friend), the *Book of Kells*, *Carmina Gadelica*, and more. We will explore how Celtic Christian theological, ascetical, and devotional themes are expressed in Celtic spiritual practices, poems, hymns, literature, artwork, and symbols. We also examine contemporary appropriation of early Celtic themes in the imaginative literature of George MacDonald, church work of George MacLeod, and current revival of interest among Christians in all things Celtic.

May 31 — August 2

{Note: No class on June 14 or July 18}

Time: Tuesday, 6:00 - 8:30 pm

Credit: 2 hours

Instructor: Dr. Peter Spychalla

Faith, Art, and Devotion **PM 740 105**

The creative arts (music, visual arts & poetry) can enhance and broaden our personal worship of God, the original creator. In this class we will explore ways that the arts can be a whole-person participation in expanding our relationship with Him, while also learning to help others worship God.

June 22 — August 10

Time: Wednesday, 6:30—8:30 pm

Credit: 1 hour

Instructor: Dr. Judy Webb

Share Jesus Without Fear **PM 760 650**

A Biblical and practical analysis of what it means to share Jesus in a world that is increasing hostile to Christianity. We will look at motivations, barriers, and fear factors in communicating the Good News. The relationship between discipleship and evangelism, the differences between witness and evangelism, and dealing with the power of the Bible and prayer will be explored. Models of presentations will be considered, and there will be opportunities to try them out.

June 6 — June 29

Time: Monday and Wednesday, 6:00 - 8:30 pm

Credit: 2 hours

Instructor: Dr. Mike McQueen

For more information, please e-mail the Dean, Dr. Melody Green, at mgreen@urbanatheologicalseminary.org.

Training through Travel 2022 — Turkey and Greece



In the Footsteps of Paul

By Dr. Mike McQueen

From March 8 through March 20, seventeen intrepid souls traveled throughout Turkey and Greece to follow in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul and visit six of the seven churches from the book of Revelation. Ken Cuffey was our host and resident scholar; Melody Green and I were touring faculty members, and we traveled with other friends and students from Urbana Seminary. It was a great time of both fellowship and learning. After landing in Istanbul (old Constantinople), we flew to Izmir in swestern Turkey and began our tour. Ephesus was the most excavated of the sites, having had archeologists hard at work for more than 100 years. To the opposite extreme, we also visited the site of biblical Colossae, which is a very large green mound on the Turkish plateau, where archaeological research is scheduled to begin for the first time this year. The museums were full of incredible artifacts, from dazzling gold jewelry and rusty swords to idols, including the ancient

Artemis of the Ephesians. In Greece we visited Thessalonica, Philippi, Athens, and Corinth, and walked the ruins of cities where Paul preached and wrote letters to their newly founded churches. We also saw Delphi and even Mt Olympus from a distance. These helped us understand the context in which Christianity was birthed. In Athens I stood on Mars Hill where Paul preached to Areopagites, and looked back at the ancient Acropolis on which the famed ruins of the Parthenon stand.

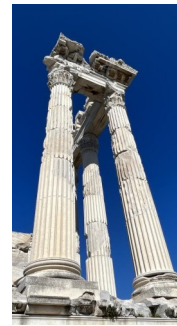
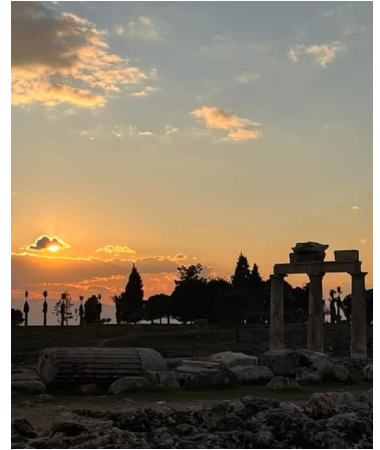
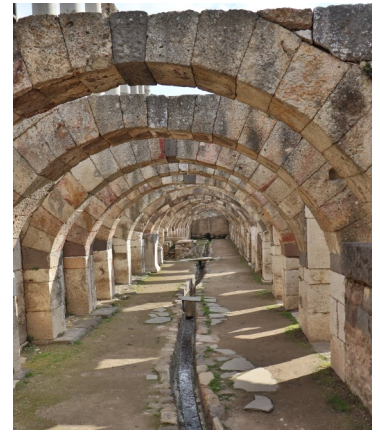
Both of our tour guides were scholars and wonderful people. In Turkey our guide was a believer with a Muslim background who came to faith while guiding Biblically-themed tours. He not only enabled us to get a better picture of the ancient context of the Bible, but also helped us understand the current situation of the church in Turkey. Our Greek guide was a sister in the Lord who enabled us to see many spiritual lessons at each site, as well as understand what it means to be a Christian in a very different context. As with going to Israel, this trip truly helped me to contextualize my readings of the Scriptures. Now when I open my Bible, I no longer must imagine, but I can visualize what happened so long ago.





In the words of one participant:

“ I think one of the most valuable outcomes of the tour was a greater understanding on my part of the culture by which Paul and his team were confronted. . . I’m considering taking the UTS course in church history to broaden my understanding of how the church survived. ”



Coming in 2023! Join us for our next Training through Travel tour

The Land of Israel

March 7-18, 2023

For further information contact Dee Hoiem at travel@urbanattheologicalseminary.org

Training through Travel

Faculty Speaking Engagements

Ken Cuffey

- Mar 8-20 Footsteps of Paul: Turkey and Greece tour
Apr 9 Presenting The Big Story (narrative of the whole Bible in 3 hours) at River Valley Christian Fellowship in Bourbonnais , IL

Todd Daly

- Feb 11-12 Attended a Fellows meeting at Trinity International University in Deerfield, IL, sponsored by the *Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity*. Discussed bioethical issues ranging from updating the definition of death and the associated criteria for determining brain death to gender dysphoria.
Mar 6 "Blessed Are the Peacemakers" (Matt. 5:9) sermon at Cornerstone Fellowship in Urbana on the Beatitude
Mar 21 Guest lecturer on the theology of Soren Kierkegaard to doctoral students at Evangelical Seminary

Melody Green

- Jan 9 Sermon on Luke 4:14-21, Quest Church, Urbana , IL
Jan 23 "What is a Parable?" Cornerstone Church, Urbana, IL
Apr 30 Roundtable Discussion, "Why stories matter: The transformative power of narrative" Evangelical Church Library Association

Mike McQueen

- Feb 13 Preaching at First Christian Church of Newman, IL
Feb 22, 29 Preaching at Peoria, IL Chinese Christian Church

Peter Spychalla

- Mar 20 "A Call to Whole Life Worship (Romans 12:1-2)" Christ Community Church, Chenoa, Illinois.

Joe Thomas

- Feb 7 Taste of Seminary *Christian Bootcamp in the Third Reich; Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Approach to Seminary Training* (Champaign, IL)

Emily Wenneborg

- Feb 8 Guest lecture, "Homeschooling," EPOL 405, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign,
Feb 11 Concurrent paper session, "The Rites of Authenticity: Spiritual Communities in an Individual Age," Southeast Philosophy of Education Society (Decatur, Georgia),
Mar 4 Concurrent paper session, "The Rites of Authenticity: Spiritual Communities in an Individual Age," Midwest American Academy of Religion (online),
Mar 12 Panel participant, "Post-secularism and Philosophy of Education," Philosophy of Education Society (San Jose, California)

Faculty Publications

Dr. Melody Green

Review of *The Undiscovered C.S. Lewis Essays in Memory of Christian W. Mitchell*. *Mythlore*, 40.2 Spring/Summer 2022

Dr. Emily Wenneborg

"*Visions of Exile: Christian Communitarianism, Christian Secularism, and Faithful Presence*", *Mere Orthodoxy* (blog), January 13, 2022. <https://mereorthodoxy.com/visions-of-exile-christian-communitarianism-christian-secularism-and-faithful-presence/>

Review of Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *Scholarship & Freedom*". *Teachers College Record* (March 28, 2022).

Pray for the Seminary

We treasure your prayers for the ministry of the Seminary. Here's some ways that you can pray for us.

- Praise for a good spring semester in classes!
- Praise for a successful Commencement and that God will lead our graduates in their next steps — that they would serve Him well.
- For **strong enrollment** for the Summer and Fall — that the Lord would lead many to deepen their faith and understanding here at the Seminary.
- For **focus, inspiration and productivity** for those faculty who will be writing over the summer.
- For **sensitivity** to the Holy Spirit as we seek creative ways to engage the community with the Good News.
- For God to raise up many **new monthly and regular givers to the Founders Fund**.

Mark Your Calendars!

June 18 Ancient Israel in Chicago tour

August 20 Welcome Back Picnic

August 22 Fall Semester starts

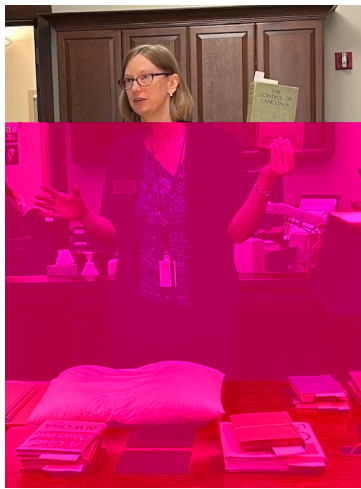
March 7-18 2023 The Land of Israel tour



Wading in Deep at the Wade!



In late April, Dr. Green's C.S. Lewis class travelled to the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College to see C. S. Lewis's wardrobe, desk and other treasures. They were able to spend time researching in the reading room with the assistance of Laura Schmidt the Wade Center's archivist.



...Johnson continued from pg 1.

biblical receptiveness to the Spirit was not only refreshing but helped expand my understanding of God and my relationship with Him. Just recently, I guided a few different people in our church family through some of the spiritual discernment practices we learned in that class. It was incredibly helpful for them with the big decisions they were in the process of making.

I completed my Graduate Certificate this past year. Each class along the way has helped to deepen my love for the Lord and aid me in my apprenticeship to Jesus. My education at Urbana Seminary has served me well as I've become a pastor! In October of 2020, we planted Rantoul Community Church in Rantoul, Illinois. As I shepherd our church family, I plan to continue my education here in the pursuit of a master's degree. If you're considering taking seminary classes, I know UTS will not disappoint you either. Their broad biblical approach to education will be edifying for saints at any point along their discipleship journey. I invite you to pray for God to continue using seminary education in my life and in the lives of those that I am ministering to.



Support your favorite Seminary with swag from the **REDBUBBLE Store!**



Are you looking for a unique gift for your Urbana Seminary Alum, student, favorite professor or favorite person? Or do you want to show your school pride? Urbana Seminary has a Redbubble store with dozens of items displaying three different designs! To find this goodness, simply open up your computer's browser and type in the

link below. That will take you to a page with three pictures—one of each of the logo variations on an item. Clicking on the grey link that says "Shop all Products" will take you to the store displaying all items with that image. Coffee mugs, notebooks, even a shower curtain (because who doesn't want an Urbana Seminary shower curtain?) are among the fun options! Check it out here:

<https://www.redbubble.com/people/UrbanaSeminary/shop?asc=u>

Do you do shop on Amazon?

If so, you can donate to Urbana Theological Seminary while you shop! Go to www.smile.amazon.com/ch/37-1332634 for more information.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.



Ancient Israel in Chicago Tour June 18, 2022, 1 p.m.

Have you ever wanted to get to know the world of the Bible better? Well, you can! The University of Chicago's Oriental Institute houses a collection of artifacts from ancient Israel, Assyria, Canaan, Egypt, and Babylon. Our own Dr. Cuffey leads a tour of these artifacts, focusing on the items that are most relevant for understanding the Old Testament better.

Cost is \$25. Register at

[http://www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org/
event/israel-in-chicago/](http://www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org/event/israel-in-chicago/)

For further information contact
mgreen@urbanatheologicalseminary.org

Classes Coming Fall 2022!

Biblical Studies

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 PM 2 credit hours
Dr. Ken Cuffey

Women Then and Now

Wednesday, 6:00-9:00PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Ken Cuffey

Greek 1

Monday and Thursday, 4:00-5:45 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Peter Spychalla

Christian History and Thought

History of Christianity 1

Thursday, 6:00-9:00 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Joe Thomas

Bonhoeffer

Tuesday, 6:00-9:00 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Joe Thomas

Theology 1

Monday, 6:00-9:00 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Todd Daly

Ethics

Modular: Sept 9-10, October 7-8,
November 11-12, Dec 2-3 3 credit hours
Dr. Todd Daly

G. K. Chesterton: An Introduction

Wednesday, 6:00-9:00PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Melody Green

Practical Ministry

Launching, Landing and Leaving: Preparing for the Missions Adventure

Tuesday, 6:00-9:00 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Anne Alexander

Jesus and Muhammad: Building Bridges with Islam

Monday, 6:00-9:00 PM 3 credit hours
Dr. Mike McQueen

Registration opens soon!



Because I've studied with Urbana Seminary my ideas and convictions about orthodoxy and how it relates to our lives has deepened. I have been able to better find the connecting points between what I believe and how I live, moving closer and closer to bridging the gap between the head and the heart. Theological pursuit becomes a way of seeing all of life, rather than the pursuit and apprehension of knowledge merely for knowledge's sake. The pursuit only makes sense when it touches real life and moves us closer to God.



Michelle Lewis, UTS Audit Student

