

urbana
theological
seminary
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"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me."

Colossians 1:28-29

...preparing people for Christian ministry and leadership, equipping them to love, know and serve God...

october
2009



Urbana Theological Seminary welcomes the new program students...

Letter from the President:

The 2009-2010 academic year is here! This issue of the *Flame* sums up the start of the new season. Enjoy! With every Fall semester there is a sense of fresh beginnings as classes get underway and a new group of incoming students begin their programs. That tone is accentuated this year as each of us on faculty and staff can sense that Urbana Seminary is ready for the next stage in its growth and the steps forward which that will entail. There's so much to brainstorm and dream about as we look ahead. Pray for us that we each will listen carefully to God and his leading.

Keep the prayer guide to lift up the work of building leadership for Christ's church before God's throne. We appreciate each of you so much!
In and for Christ,

Ken Cuffey

Welcoming the New Class

Though Urbana Seminary graduated 7 students in May, this Fall semester we welcomed 12 new program students to the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Religion, and Certificate of Biblical Studies. At Orientation the incoming class included two from Decatur, two from Bloomington-Normal, and another from Peoria. This represents an exciting transformation from a graduate program that draws students from a localized area to a truly regional Seminary. Pray that this would continue and expand.



urbana seminary welcomes dr. joe thomas

On August 1st Dr Joe Thomas joined the faculty/ staff of Urbana Seminary as Assistant Professor of the History of Christianity and Vice President of Institutional Advancement. He will divide his time between teaching in the area of Church History and doing work to raise awareness of the seminary and strengthening its support base in all areas. Joe grew up in the nearby town of Philo, IL. After teaching high school for eight years, he entered graduate school to pursue doctoral work. He received a Ph.D. in the History of Christianity in America with a particular research interest in the story of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement. Previously he was on the faculty of Biblical Seminary in Hatfield, PA. Based on research into interracial churches for his dissertation he contributed a chapter to [This Side of Heaven](#) (Oxford University), a book that wrestles with the issues of race and church. He also had the opportunity to participate in the publication of the works of Jonathan Edwards through Yale University Press.

When asked why he would leave an established school in the East to cast his lot with a nascent seminary in the Midwest, Dr. Thomas has an immediate answer. Because of his background growing up in Illinois he “has always believed that there should be a seminary in central Illinois. When I was invited to consider coming I became very excited to help build a seminary in a region such as this, where there are a number of universities and people with such a desire to learn more. The idea of teaching and also being part of building a new seminary with such potential for impact was an opportunity that drew me.” He is also delighted with Urbana Seminary’s balanced understanding of the needs of a shifting culture in North America and Western society. Urbana Seminary is “taking an appropriate missional

approach to try and reverse the flow of culture so that Christ is again heard as a legitimate alternative. We need to continue to understand that the mission of the church is worldwide and train folks to go into the unreached parts of the world as well. This provides a nice balance between the concepts of ‘missional’ in our culture and ‘missionary’ across cultural boundaries.” As an exciting expression of the missional concept in the life of the Seminary, he has already been able to participate in the relationship forming between the Seminary and the University of Illinois Department of Religious Studies and the STEWARDship Workshop.



“those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Isaiah 40:31



Brent Dickman
Master of Divinity Student

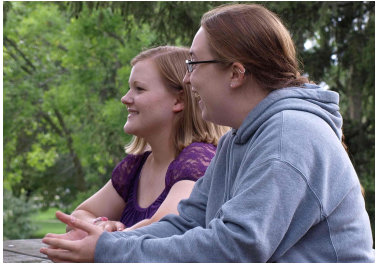
brotherton foundation grant grows scholarship endowment

In September, the Brotherton Foundation gave a grant of \$25,000 to Urbana Seminary to double the endowment for the Brotherton Scholarship fund. The goal is to build an endowment that will provide a full-tuition scholarship for one student each year. In the meantime the interest from the growing fund will provide partial scholarships for deserving students. Each year the school accepts scholarship applications from January until the end of April and awards the scholarship at graduation in May. The Seminary awarded the first Brotherton scholarship from the fund to a Master of Divinity student, Brent Dickman, at graduation on May 20th.

orientation and barbeque...

“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.”

Psalm 34:8



Though no classes had yet met on Saturday August 22nd the Fall semester was off and running. After lunch the incoming class of program students attended Orientation. This well-orchestrated afternoon, organized by the Seminary's Administrative Dean, Ann Jones, aims to equip students with what they need to know in order to navigate academic life in a graduate program and fully enjoy the life of the Seminary community.

That evening the Seminary community gathered at the pavilion in Hessel Park in Champaign for a barbeque and picnic. Over 50 students, family, faculty, staff, and board members attended the event. Matt Mooberry, an incoming Master of Divinity student, towed his family's large grill almost 100 miles from his home just outside Peoria and cooked the meat for pork sandwiches. An excellent griller, wonderful fellowship, and beautiful weather . . . an unbeatable combination!



“My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Colossians 2:2-3

fall semester underway classes began on august 24th...

The seventh academic year of Urbana Seminary's life is underway. Initial reports from Carrie Blount, Assistant Dean, indicate that the enrollment in graduate credit hours is the highest ever! For that we praise God.

This semester Urbana Seminary makes available a great set of offerings. These afford a student the chance to lay solid foundations and explore new advanced directions. Classes in the Biblical area include the standard

- *Old Testament Survey* (Ken Cuffey)
- *Hebrew 1* (Mike Shea)
- *Greek Exegesis of Colossians* (Peter Spychalla)
- along with more advanced classes on the *Gospels* (P Spychalla) and
- *Hermeneutics* (How to interpret, i.e., understand, the Bible; K Cuffey).

In Christian History and Thought:

- *History of Christianity from the Apostles through the Middle Ages* (Joe Thomas)
- *Theology 1* (Todd Daly)
- *Ethics* (T Daly)
- *Theology of Karl Barth* (T Daly)

Finally in the area of Practical Ministry:

- *Ministry and Evangelism in Cultural Context* (Mike McQueen)
- *Biblical Preaching* (Randy Boltinghouse)
- *Introduction to Heart Motives Counseling* (Min Chung)
- *Field Education* (Brett Smith)

We are grateful for the help and richness afforded for the curriculum through our Lecturers and Adjuncts, who stand alongside our resident Faculty.

why give?

When you support Urbana Seminary with a financial gift, you share in the ministry of training new leaders for Christ's service. It's one practical step you can take today that will strengthen the church of tomorrow!

"Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak."

Isaiah 40:28-29

life after seminary... graduates

Urbana Seminary is proud of the 7 graduates of the class of 2009. A brief update.

- Joel and Gretchen left for ministry in India on September 29th;
- Casey is in Dublin, Ireland and Karen in Cambridge, MA for PhD programs;
- Brian continues his lay involvement in a local church and his missional engagement with the culture through his job with the Transit District;
- Nathan is pursuing pastoral ministry;
- Marcel is working in CA as he seeks further preparation for his ministry dreams.

