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VOLUME: 20 ISSUE: 2 Fall 2014

Urbana Theological Seminary Hosted Third Annual Tolkien Conference

The third annual Tolkien Conference on September 20th offered a stellar lineup this year, including three recognized Tolkien Scholars and two Urbana Seminary Students. Graduate Certificate students Bethany Ross and Robert Pratte both presented excellent papers they had written for the *Inklings* class that was offered here over the summer. Laura Schmidt, archivist of the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College, an internationally-recognized study center that focuses on the works of C S Lewis, Tolkien, and their friends, explained who the Inklings were and why their work matters today, while American Representative of the Tolkien Society Mike Foster regaled the audience with stories of different



Tolkien Conference Speakers

people he has known who were, in one way or another, connected with Tolkien and C S Lewis. Finally, philosopher Craig Boyd, author of several books published by InterVarsity Press,

explained the role of hope in the short story "Leaf by Niggle." To see more pictures from the event, check out the Urbana Theological Seminary Facebook page!

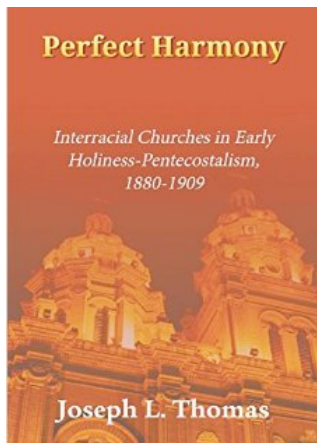


Graduation 2014: Our Largest Class Thus Far

On the 23rd of May, Urbana Seminary held its 10th Annual Commencement Exercises. The alumni association increased by a third as we added 9 new graduates who completed their programs. We were privileged to have Lin Warfel exhort the graduating class in a thoughtful and wise commencement address. Lin, a local farmer, Parkland College Board member, and poet, is a longtime friend of the Seminary.

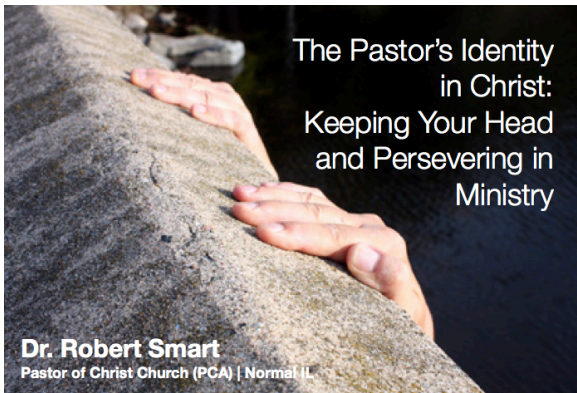
Dr. Joseph L. Thomas's New Book

Our Assistant Professor of History of Christianity, Dr. Joe Thomas, has recently published a new book. *Perfect Harmony: Interracial Churches in Early Holiness-Pentecostalism, 1880-1909*, was released by Emeth Press earlier this year. The book presents an insightful study of how the "sanctified unity ecclesiology" of the earlier Wesleyan and Holiness movements created a space for racial equality and unity in churches in the early Pentecostal movement at the turn of the previous century. This riveting read is available through amazon.com or through Dr. Thomas himself.



Provisions for Pastors Launches a New Resource for Area Pastors

Each Spring the Provisions for Pastors Initiative (P4P) has sponsored a forum on Preaching to allow pastors the chance to refine their skills and consider their craft of proclaiming God's Word from the pulpit. Now, P4P introduced a fall event designed to focus on the inner spiritual needs of pastors and others in ministry. On October 20th, the Seminary hosted *The Pastor's Identity in Christ: Keeping Your Head & Persevering in Ministry* presented by Dr. Bob Smart, pastor of Christ Church (PCA) in Normal, IL. Dr. Smart holds a Ph.D. in Church History, is author of *Jonathan Edwards' Apologetic for the Great Awakening* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), and has extensive ministry experience in church and campus settings, as well as with leadership development.



New Hires

Over the summer the Seminary made a successful transition in the office with two new hires and a restructuring. We're pleased to introduce Dr. Melody Green as the Dean of the Seminary and Carrie Blount as Director of Finance. Dr. Green is with us full-time and is using her skills and background in higher education to oversee the administrative functions of the office, as well as tending to the academic needs of our student body. Ms. Blount returned to us on a part-time basis to work with finances and handle the accounting and bookkeeping. Gee Chung continues to serve the Seminary well with her organizational skills and ability for graphic design.

Launching a Fall Semester

The Seminary's fall semester students, teachers, and classes hit the ground running. Courses began the last week of August, following a beautiful evening at the Welcome Back Picnic. We welcomed our incoming class at New Student Orientation on September 6th. Yet once again the quality of the students God sends to us is impressive. Our Introduction to Graduate Research Methods was taught on one Saturday each in September and October.



Welcome Back Picnic

Systematic Outreach

If they don't know we're here, no one will sign up for courses, or give to the school, or pray for us. As a result, the staff of the Seminary is making a systematic effort to get the name out, whether through the production of new graphically designed printed materials (courtesy of our talented artist, Gee Chung) or the presence of the Seminary's table at area churches. Two Sunday mornings in August the Seminary was at Windsor Road Christian Church. As October began our table showed up at All-Campus Worship, at U of I. More venues planned in the upcoming months. Let the office know if you'd like to have our table, and even a presentation about the school at your church.

Announcing a Contest! New Newsletter Name

Are you a creative person? Do you like naming things? Then have we got the opportunity for you! Urbana Theological Seminary is announcing a contest to change the name of our newsletter. Anyone in the UTS community is welcome to submit as many potential new names as they would like; the next newsletter will announce the new name, and the winner of the contest. The winner will also receive an Urbana Theological Seminary jacket. The contest runs from now until the last day of the semester (December 19); all entries must be e-mailed to mgreen@urbanaseminary.org with "Newsletter Name Contest" in the subject line.