

SAVE THE DATE!

Provisions for Pastors: Preaching Forum March 7, 2016

Mark your calendars for the fifth annual Provisions for Pastors Preaching Forum! This year Dr. Charles Zimmerman of Biblical Theological Seminary and pastor of Calvary Church in Souderton, PA will be speaking on balancing faithfulness and relevance in preaching. The forum will be occurring on Monday, March 7. Look for more details to come!



Dr. Charles Zimmerman is chairman of the department of practical theology. Charles' ability to make biblical principles clear, meaningful, and relevant accounts for his high demand as a conference speaker and lecturer. He brings experience and practical insights to the challenge of vision casting and team building.

Recruiting News

The Seminary was represented at three different graduate school fairs this October: Wheaton College, Augustana, and Bradley University. Pray for our contacts, and for next year's class of incoming students. Now is the season when many are making decisions about direction for the future that will send them on to Seminary. Please be alert in your own church and circles for people who desire Seminary training. Encourage them to look into Urbana Seminary. Put us in contact with them and we will gladly follow through to answer any questions.

Spring Classes

This coming spring, we have an excellent line up of classes that you do not want to miss! This includes the following: Ethics, George Whitfield, Ministry and Evangelism in Cultural Context, C. S. Lewis, Wisdom Books, and a whole lot more! Check out the full line up at:

<http://www.urbanaseminary.org/courses/spring>

Christianity and Doctor Who

This fall semester the class on Christianity and Doctor Who has been having a great time exploring the connections between Christianity and the science fiction TV series Doctor Who. Some of our students in the class have had short writings accepted by a blog that explores these connections. Check out some of what we have been doing here:

<http://christianityanddoctorwho.blogspot.com/>

Counseling Cohort

Interested in counseling training as a layperson? Urbana Seminary would like to start a Counseling Cohort for just that purpose! For more information, contact Dr. Melody Green at mgreen@urbanaseminary.org

✂ "cut and return"

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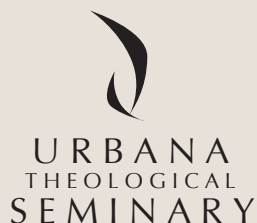
From the President's Pen

The Fall semester is well underway. Classes in motion, and a sense of energy with a new school year. Pray for us! I'm delighted with the creativity of the courses that help people think as Christians about our culture and life. I'm grateful for the solid job that our faculty perform as they introduce students to basic and essential areas of knowledge and skills for ministry. It's a privilege to serve here, and I continue to be proud of the quality of our teachers and students and their interactions in and out of the classroom.

Gratefully,
Ken

Ken Cuffey, President

PS. Please note the "Life Happens" opportunities. I'm excited as to how these can make such a huge difference in the lives of the students!



"Life Happens!" and You Can Help

Sometimes, Life Happens. Sometimes it happens to all of us, and no one ever expects it. Whether it is unexpected medical bills, the loss of a job, or unplanned demands from providing for a family, unexpected crises happen. In fact, several of our amazing students here at Urbana Seminary have had unexpected things make it difficult, if not impossible, to pay their tuition. We, the faculty and administration, know that each of these is a person with a heart for the Lord and a deep passion for ministry. We are confident that their training will be put to excellent use and that God will make a significant impact through each life, using the things they have learned here. While we are not sharing their names to protect their privacy, we can say that we have solid proof of both their calling and passion--for example, two are involved in planting new churches, and are modeling a willingness to step out in faith, trusting God. But because the unexpected has happened, they are now behind on their tuition bills.

So here is what we are asking: we would love to raise the funds to pay off the back tuition for these students. We would especially love to have this taken care of by early December, so that those students won't have to worry about tuition as well as everything else during the Christmas season, and can instead focus on God and the gifts he has given us through his Son, Jesus Christ. So between now and December 2 (Giving Tuesday), we are asking you to pray and consider making a one-time gift to the Seminary's "Life Happens" fund. We will use these gifts towards the tuition bills of a handful of students who have been screened by the faculty and administration, who can see that beyond question there is a valid need in each case. If you feel called to join with us, there are three ways you can donate to the "Life Happens" fund:

1. You can mail in a check and write "Life Happens" in the memo line.
2. You can use the response form to get us your credit card info and write "Life Happens" on the form.
3. You can set up a one time gift through paypal at this address:
<http://www.urbanaseminary.org/giving-uts/donate/>

It will be an investment well worth it. You touch the lives of worthy students and offer a "helping hand" to recover from the unexpected in life and keep on course with preparation for their futures. You also share in the impact they will make in the lives of those they will touch in the years to come.

Fourth Annual Tolkien Conference

On September 19, Tolkien fans and scholars gathered at Hessel Park Christian Reformed Church in Champaign, IL for our fourth annual Tolkien conference. Guests travelled from as far away as Michigan to hear an excellent lineup. This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Charlie Starr, professor of English at Kentucky Christian University and author of several books, including *Light: C. S. Lewis's First and Final Story*. Dr. Starr spoke on the view of myth shared by C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Other speakers included Mike Foster, the American representative of the Tolkien Society, who spoke on two of Tolkien's short stories, "Farmer Giles of Ham" and "Smith of Wootton Major," and Dr. Billie Jarvis-Freeman, who spoke on the presentation of art and artists in Tolkien's fiction (hint: if you meet a character who creates art, they are probably a good guy). Rick Williams from University Baptist Housing Ministry shared ideas about goodness that Tolkien presented in his little-known short story *Roverandom*. Dr. Melody Green from Urbana Seminary shared about the uses of metaphor in one of Tolkien's best-known poems, "The Riddle of Strider." Those who attended the conference also enjoyed the rare experience of a Hobbit Birthday party thrown by the Wheaton College Tolkien Society. The party included cake, games, songs, and interactive drama.



Tolkien Conference Speakers

Seminary Library

Exciting things are happening at the Urbana Seminary Library! This past school year we have had over 3,000 books donated by several very gracious donors, and in the past month we have also had a lot of help sorting, cleaning, and cataloging these books. There is, however, still plenty of work to be done, and we could certainly use more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering at the seminary library, either call the office or contact mgreen@urbanaseminary.org for more information.

A special thank you to the library donors:

Ken Cuffey
Jim Egli
Patricia Fuller
Melody Green
Eugene Hall
U. Milo Kaufmann
Richard Miller
Bill Secor
Bob & Mary Sievers
Rick Snyder
Willa Stroughman
Shirley Walker
Ruth Wegman

Looking for Christmas Presents?

Looking for ideas for Christmas for your Urbana Seminary student, Grads, or any friend of the Seminary. Don't forget to check out our online store at: <http://www.cafepress.com/urbanatheologicalseminarygiftstore>

Spring Semester Preview: Ageless Gospel in an Ever-Changing Culture?

by Mike McQueen, Associate Professor of Intercultural Studies

When I began to teach *Ministry and Evangelism in Cultural Context* in 2005, the biggest issues of contention were the Emergent Church and worship wars. There had been a paradigm shift from the age of modernism where the biggest challenge was "secular humanism", to this postmodern age of relativism. Prior to the 1980's peoples' biggest question about Christianity was, "Is it true?" Now however that question is not even on peoples' radar. "How does it make me feel?" is the question that postmoderns resonate with. But even that doesn't approach the cultural confusion with which we must deal today. Spirituality is in, religion is out. Relevance is in, truth (if there is such a thing) is out.

But the culture in which the church finds itself has grown even more confusing. Freedom of religion is losing ground to freedom of sexual expression. Gay marriage is in, traditional marriage is, well, misunderstood at best, even among those who profess it as the only true kind of marriage. Transgenderism poses a more significant problem for the church as it "flies beneath the radar" because it's not seen.

How do committed Christians answer the cries of "irrelevance" and "bigotry" leveled against them? How does the church go about making, nurturing and reproducing disciples in a generation that loathes authority, eschews categories of "in" and "out", and finds "church" to be a place full of intolerance? *Ministry and Evangelism in Cultural Context* is designed to help American Christians think through the mega-changes taking place and find ways in which to use our paradigm to rescue people from the kingdom of darkness and bring them into the kingdom of Light.

Second Annual Spiritual Life Forum for Pastors

For the second year, the Seminary's Provisions for Pastors Initiative sponsored a Fall Spiritual Life Forum to address issues of inner growth and formation for people in ministry. The focus for 2015 was on *Family Life in Ministry: Why ministry leaders need the gospel for marriage and parenting*. This time we were privileged to have Dr. Bob Smart, pastor of Christ Church in Normal, IL, guide us in thinking through this arena of life. As a husband, father of five, and a grandfather, Dr. Smart was able to draw on a rich (both enlightening and humorous) set of experiences to encourage each person and couple who were in attendance. The treatment of family life amidst the pressures of ministry began with a consideration of what it means that each of us has been created in the image of God, drawing from the first chapters of Genesis. That image was designed to be glorious, has been ruined by sin, and is accompanied with the promise of redemption in a Savior. To trace this story in each of our lives points us to our sense of calling, which includes our vision and dreams for the future of a marriage, as well as how couples may stand alongside each other in serving Christ. It also bears implications for those who are parents, balancing between communicating responsibility to children and staying actively engaged with their lives as Dad or Mom. The final session of the day centered on gospel issues and applications in family life, which pointed us to how to be with God in solitude, and be freed from self-protection and the demands we make on others that are obstacles to truly and deeply loving another. This paved the way to practical help for resolving conflict and increasing sexual intimacy within a marriage. The day was practical and Biblically challenging. The benefits accrued as we traced through the idea of the gospel and how it is lived out and "loved out" in the home.



Won't You Join Us?

Yes, you can be part of the support team of the Seminary. For example, **join the Prayer Team**. People who commit to pray for the school receive periodic prayer requests for the life of the school and its people. Send an e-mail to office@urbanaseminary.org and we'll gladly add you to the list to receive the electronic prayer notices at several junctures in the year. In addition, consider joining the ministry here as well **through your financial gifts** to the Seminary this fall. We invite you to join in the work here by giving on a monthly basis through ACH withdrawals. See the form at the end of the newsletter for directions on how you can do this. Or for a one-time gift, consider the opportunity to give to our "Life Happens" campaign that will run from now until December 2 ("Giving Tuesday") and touch the lives of deserving students who will impact many others in the years ahead.

Urbana Theological Seminary 2015 Founder's Fund

314 E. Daniel Street | Champaign, IL 61820 | www.urbanaseminary.org | 217-365-9005



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- Please add my email to a list for UTS updates.
- For "Life Happens" Fund
- I will pray regularly for the school and its ministry

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More information on back.