



LOGOS

*the journal of CAPSR,
the Community Association of Pacific School of Religion*

March 2008

Hearts & Minds: Talking with Christians about Homosexuality

by Laura C. Engelken

It is perhaps not a perfect analogy, but I liken it to being bilingual: the ability to speak the Christian dialects of conservative and progressive. I acquired these two different languages for understanding and communicating about the divine through my personal experiences and various faith communities, both out of choice and necessity.

In high school, I chose to accept Jesus as savior, becoming “born again” in response to God’s unconditional love. As a teenager struggling for self-worth and meaning, connecting with a love that embraced me despite all my faults and self-doubts was a necessity. However, when coming out as a lesbian to myself and others in my early twenties, God’s great love became conditional upon my sexuality. My spiritual and physical survival then became dependent upon finding a new language: one that assigned me worth and dignity as a child of God – worth and dignity that came with my

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Above, the Israeli wall surrounding Palestinian territories stretches across the countryside. Reflections and images from the PSR/Disciples Seminary Foundation trip to Israel and Palestine continue on pages 6-8.

Please Note: LOGOS is a publication by and for the Community Association of Pacific School of Religion (CAPSR). The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Pacific School of Religion, CAPSR, or CAPSR Council. This newsletter exists to encourage and continue the dialogues happening elsewhere on campus, and so we invite submissions from all community members.

Logos Submission Guidelines

Who can submit

All members of the Pacific School of Religion community are invited to submit to Logos: students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, family members, and supporters of PSR.

What to submit

Original work of interest to the PSR community:

- Opinion pieces, news, feature stories
- Reviews: books, movies, concerts, albums, lectures
- Poetry, Prayers
- Event and group announcements
- Drawings, Sketches
- Photography: artistic, news-related, social events

How to submit

Email: adecoursey@psr.gtulink.edu

When to submit

Upcoming Priority Deadline: **April 6 (Sunday)**
Spotlight on the Arts at the GTU

**Also, submit to and look for the
Special Poetry Insert**

More guidelines

-Please limit submissions to 1,000 words.

-Publication is subject to the needs of the newsletter and the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and Logos Editorial Board. The Editor-in Chief and Editorial Board reserve the right to edit submissions for publication.

-If you have any questions about submissions, feel free to talk with the Editor-in-Chief or email her at adecoursey@psr.gtulink.edu.

Thanks. We look forward to hearing from you.

A new LOGOS Editor?.... it could be you!

Are you interested in being the new LOGOS Editor-in-Chief? Contact CAPSR Council Moderator Jeanette Brodersen for more details about the position. (Reach Jeanette by email at jeanette.brodersen@gmail.com or by phone at 605.691.8986) Feel free to talk to current editor Audrey deCoursey with questions about the job.

In brief: The LOGOS Editor spends approximately 30 hours per month soliciting, editing and formatting submissions and publishing the completed newsletter, both online and in paper. The Editor is also responsible for facilitating meetings with the LOGOS Editorial Board and reporting to CAPSR Council and Community Life. Experience with Adobe Indesign or Pagemaker is of special benefit in the technical aspects of producing LOGOS.

The new editor would start working on the May issue, the last issue of this spring semester. The position would run through the 2008-9 school year.

Next month's issue will turn a spotlight on THE ARTS (we pushed back the issue because we got so much great stuff on other topics for this issue). We invite submissions of poetry, paintings, photography, drama, fiction, film reviews, art reflections, or anything else that's artsy and fits on a page. Come on out, all you CARE fans! The priority deadline for the issue is April 6.

Announcing the next DASU Contextual Education Session, on April 12

CLERGY, SEXUAL ABUSE AND MANDATED REPORTING will be the subject of the Spring Contextual Education event offered by the DisAbleD Student Union, for all interested PSR students on Saturday, April 12, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in Mudd 100.

Workshop presenter **Mary K. Stroube** is a licensed Marriage & Family Counselor, an attorney who serves as a Special Master for the California State Bar, and well-known authority on domestic partnership law. She recently authored a new book entitled *I Do, Don't I*, which is intended for GLBT persons and their legal advisers. Written with compassion and insight, it advocates for gay and lesbian people, taking a gently enlightening yet persuasive look at the intricacies of the domestic partnership law. Mary's Masters degree in Marriage and Family Therapy is from Sacramento State University, along with a Bachelors degree in psychology and political science from the University of California at Davis and a Juris Doctorate degree from McGeorge School of Law. She is a frequent speaker to professional and community organizations on the subject of mental health law and the ethical treatment of clients in the mental health system.

Since all clergy people are mandated reporters under California Law (if you don't know what a mandated reporter is yet, this workshop will tell you!), this contextual education event is designed to educate and equip emerging pastors for their own legal protection as they minister to their congregations. Ms. Stroube will cover the applicable laws relating to child abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and other forms of domestic abuse as they relate to the requirement for pastors to report abuse to the proper civilian law enforcement organizations

The DisAbleD Student Union (DASU) endeavors to present at least one contextual education event each semester to PSR students, to engage with subjects that are pertinent to pastors but not covered at the curricular level. Previous workshops have included "The DisAbleD Congregant: Issues of Mercy and Justice" and "Ministering to the Mentally Ill Congregant." Tentative future workshops include "Ministering to Veterans" and "The Ministry of the Chaplain." All students are welcome to join the DisAbleD Student Union. Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in the small dining room at D'Autremont Hall. While many of the founding members are students with disabilities, it is not necessary to be disabled in order to participate in DisAbleD Student Union activities. For more information, contact Campus Moderator Robyn Hamilton at (510) 666-1240 or Internet Moderator John Lowell at (415) 533-7857.

"Sports, Religion, and Social Justice"

Panel Presentation and Discussion

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

6:30 - 8:00 pm

Bade Museum, Pacific School of Religion



- Do pastors really need to know anything about sports?
- What can sports teams and sports fans teach Christians about community? How do athletics serve a liturgical purpose?
- Are sports competing with church in US society? How so? Is that a bad thing?
- What sermon will you give on Super Bowl Sunday?
- How can sports and religion cooperate to bring about justice and improve people's lives?
- What are some ethical implications of the Olympic Games?

Pizza and beverages will be served.

Panel hosted by Seminararians to End War and the Beatitudes Society
Questions? Please contact Audrey at sewpeace@gmail.com

Reflections on Performing in the Vagina Monologues

by Patricia Wood

I had not been in a play since elementary school, although as a fifth grader I played an all too convincing schoolteacher. I was, after all, the eldest child of seven and often left in charge, so I had plenty of experience getting children to do what I wanted. I also had never seen Vagina Monologues though I had heard it was quite bold, even for its time. When I heard the casting call, I knew I wanted to try out. The same desire to witness against war and violence that propelled me to organize a monthly Women in Black vigil from my mountain community in 2003 drove me to the tryouts. Though I may seem fairly average - Anglo, middle class - I have done bold things all my life when they involved witness, justice, peace, or women's liberation. I enjoy stepping outside the expectations of who I am.

I was taken aback however when my role involved representing a MTF transgender woman. What could I know about the struggles and context of this woman? Kelly Williams encouraged us to see several recent films and she arranged for our five-person monologue team to meet with a woman living into this transition. These were helpful, but could not directly address an older, fifty-something person's experience.

I was thrilled therefore to happen upon *Screaming Queens: The Riot*, a film by Susan Stryker and Vidor Silverman, 2005, described as "Transgender prostitutes fight against police harassment in a 1966 riot in San Francisco," by the Free Speech TV station on DISH TV. I taped the film and watched it at least five times, hearing the story (they were not all prostitutes), seeing archival footage of the women in 1966, leading up to and after the riot at Compton's Diner, and observing current interviews with the women and others from the time. I saw how much alike we looked in those early years and how the women blossomed and had aged, after their full transformations. I heard the yearning and sometimes the self-rejection in the early interviews and the relief and peace later when society, in the form of doctors and enlightened clergy, began to accept them as female. Aleisha said, "After surgery, life began, more than I had ever dreamed . . . I was able to blossom, to be myself."

It was in these words and pictures that I took my inspiration. A window, limited though it was, opened for me to remember those '60s and '70s, years when the streets and college campuses rang with protests, marches, and liberation demands. I cannot know what it would have been like to be struggling in the wrong sexed body, name, and expectations, but I knew what it was like to be alienated from my body; child sexual abuse does that to its victims. Some of the emotions encased in the words of my character were wrenched from the body of that abused child. I do not pretend to know the pain of the daily, public fear, rejection, or torment of the transgender women who made it through the mid and late 20th century, but I can and did use my own pain to provide a small, shadowed witness for them.

This experience has already had significant effects upon me personally and I hope upon my ministry, now and future. I actually feel more healing of my wounded self after expressing some of my own pain in body as well as in words. I can see more clearly the difference between speaking on behalf of versus speaking for, someone else. I have no right to speak for others, however testimony on behalf of another can be honest and ethical when permission is granted. In this case, the play was permission because I was in a role, not taking someone's voice from them. I think, however, we might have explored asking MTF transgender persons to play these roles, though perhaps the roles are too close to pains not ready for such exposure.

The most surprising feedback I have received challenged me to examine my persona. The response was, "I saw a new side of you. You were so confident and sure of your wholeness. That is who you are, unafraid to be yourself." Perhaps he has a point. Perhaps I am able to stand for me, in my heart, in my shoes, see that I really am worthy and worth standing for, standing with. Just writing this makes me cry, imagining me whole, or at least whole enough, to offer witness to the power of the Spirit to heal the impossible, the deep, too awful hurts. I pray I will offer witness to the possibility that such unworthiness is the perception of our limited view, not the clear vision of the God of my understanding.

THE PROMISE OF MY FRIEND

(REFLECTIONS ON LAZARUS' DYING THOUGHTS BASED ON JOHN 11:1-45)

ONE DAY I FELL ASLEEP AND THOUGHT IT WAS THE END
THIS JOURNEY NOW COMPLETE EXCEPT TO SEE MY FRIEND
I'D HOPED HE'D COME, I WAITED AS LONG AS I COULD FIGHT
WAITED ONCE AGAIN TO EMBRACE AND HOLD HIM TIGHT

I LONGED TO HEAR HIS VOICE, ONCE AGAIN TO HEAR HIM SAY
I AM THE TRUTH, THE LIGHT; TO GOD I AM THE WAY
I LOVED HIM AND I MISS HIM, I HOPED THAT I MIGHT SEE
THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE THROUGH THIS ONE FROM GALILEE

MY SISTERS, THEY WILL MISS ME, I KNOW HE LOVED THEM TOO
AND IN TIME THEY WILL SEE, WHAT I SAID OF HIM WAS TRUE
HE CAME TO FREE THE CAPTIVES, TO COMFORT THOSE WHO MOURN
MAY HE COMFORT THEM IN SORROW, MAKE WHOLE THEIR HEARTS NOW TORN

WHAT WAS IT THAT HE TOLD ME, THE NIGHT I SAW HIM LAST?
"THOUGH MY TRAVELS TAKE ME FROM YOU, TO YOUR FRIENDSHIP I HOLD FAST
REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU, NO MATTER WHAT LIES AHEAD
WE WILL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN, IN OUR JOURNEY FROM THE DEAD"

GOOD-BYE MY SWEET, SWEET TEACHER; I FEAR TO GO TO SLEEP
BUT IN YOUR WORDS MY COMFORT, MY SOUL IS YOURS TO KEEP
TO YOU I CAST MY CARES, MY HOPES, MY DREAMS THEY END
I TURN TO YOU NOW TRUSTING, IN THE PROMISE OF MY FRIEND

- TIMOTHY G. AGAR
23 FEBRUARY 2008

*THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD IS "THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED" AND IT IS HE AND NOT JOHN WHO WROTE THE FOURTH GOSPEL, STOOD AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS AND WHO RACED TO THE TOMB WITH PETER ON THAT FIRST EASTER MORN (WWW.LAZARUSCOMEFORTH.COM).

Reflections on Palestine, from the Holy Land Intercession Trip
by Stephanie Gameros

In addition to the culture-shock of being in an active war zone and being awakened to the realities of oppression, segregation, discrimination and injustice against the Palestinian people by the Israeli government and military, something unexpected and serene took place inside me amidst the chaos and reality of violence and evil in our world.

Not only did I see countless soldiers with their huge machine guns, walked fearfully through the hamster-cage-like check points, and stood by the massive segregation wall. I also experienced the wonder and awe of God's presence, which permeated each holy site and the Palestinian people and the land itself. I got in touch with Jesus while skipping rocks alone on the Sea of Galilee, and realized for the first time since my youth that I am Christian to my core. While I looked across the lake at the surrounding villages, I imagined Jesus' first travels in his ministry along with his disciples.

As I breathed in the fragrant hushed calm stillness of the water, I envisioned Jesus walking across it towards me. He was with me, and I with Him. The resurrection became real to me in that moment, and I fully committed myself to God and following Jesus for the rest of my life.

It dawned on me in the beauty, simplicity and clarity of that moment that I had been making believing in Jesus far too complicated. We are all called, and I know that I am called, to take part in Jesus' service to God through seeing and loving the humanity in everyone, and challenging the status quo that keeps systems of oppression in place.

Jesus' message to us is just as radical now as it was two thousand years ago, especially in the holy land that he loved and served and gave his life for God's work of justice, peace and love for all. O Palestine, you are always with me, in prayer and, soon, action.





As a ten-year-old having read what you consider the best book ever, it might be fun to write a book report about it and share the story with your friends. As a seminary student visiting an active military occupation for twelve days, it is much harder to know how to share what you have seen, heard, and felt. And yet we are compelled to share what we know.

I stayed in the home of a Muslim family one night. As we talked about their life in occupied Palestine I asked him, "What do you want people to know back in the United States?"

His reply: "Tell them, I am not a terrorist."

- Jerri Handy

AN UPCOMING EVENT:
Contemporary Way of the Cross: A Liturgical Journey along the Palestinian Via Dolorosa
 Friday March 21, 12:00 pm
 Meet outside the PSR chapel.



"Blood Brothers" by Elias Chacour
 Review by Jerri Handy

Chacour transports the reader into his experience as a Palestinian child growing up amidst the turmoil of Zionist takeover in Israel. This book shows a side to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict that is far too often untold or dismissed. It is the side of the exiled, those forced off their land to create the modern nation of Israel. In no way is this book a polemical jab against the Jewish nation; rather, it is the true story of a Christian Palestinian working within Israel to create a peaceful land where all are truly welcomed and are safe. Like Mitri Raheb's book these personal stories need to be told time and time again until people finally listen.

Recommended Reading on Palestine/Israel

Naim Stifan Ateek, Justice and Only Justice (Orbis Books: 1989).

Elias Chacour, Blood Brothers (Chosen Books, a Division of Baker Publishing Group: 2003).

Mitri Raheb, Bethlehem Besieged.

Rosemary Radford Ruether and Herman Ruether, The Wrath Of Jonah (Fortress Press: 2002).

Rosemary Radford Ruether, Faith and Fratricide (WIPF & Stock Publishers: 1995).

Called to Hope
January 2008

*Plant an olive tree,
one tree, if that is all you can;
'tho it comes up short
by almost any measure,
to replace a million lost.*

*The bulldozer,
unfeeling, unrelenting, unknowing,
ploughs under -
without regard -
centuries'-old groves,
their only "sin,"
setting root in soil
tilled by the other "'am ha eretz,"
the people of this land,
uprooted, as their precious trees,
from the land they loved
that loved them back.*

*Plant one tree,
if that is all you can.
Perhaps the Holy Dove,
always hovering
on the wings of human affairs,
will pluck from its young branches
a single sprig of hope.*

Poems from Palestine
by Mary Heron Dyer



The Bubble
Jerusalem Road, 3 January 2008

*Bone-tired, snugly tucked in tourist bus,
we speed through gathering dark--
Jerusalem to Bethlehem.*

*Lightning flashing from the north
Splits the cloudy sky,
Fleeting glimpses of the Wall,
barbed wire, guard posts,
reveal a none-too-friendly land.*

*I wipe my hand across the window
to clear away the fog,
but still, the thin skin of the tourist bus,
my passport, my privilege,
separate me from the suffering this road has
seen -
the blood of martyrs for a Jewish state,
the tears of Palestinians, ancient lands
wrest from work-calloused hands*

*Hurtling in the dark toward Bethlehem,
where some say a Prince of Peace was born*

When will his reign begin?

(Hearts & Minds, continued from page one)

sexuality and not in spite of it. This choice to describe the boundless love and nature of God using a new and different vocabulary from my fundamentalist past was a necessity.

Theologian Elizabeth Johnson emphasizes that our symbols for God shape our experience and construct our world. For example, if we only envision God as male – calling him “Father” – we readily embrace patriarchal power structures as the only appropriate way to “do church.” This deification of a particular gender translates to sexuality as well and thus heterosexual partnerships become the only acceptable expression of God’s divine gift of sexual love. Consequently, I resonate more with names and descriptions such as Holy One and the Divine rather than Father or King. Even the language of “God” does not particularly work for me, given the default assumption of divine masculinity: an unquestioned association similar to assumed heterosexuality.

“When coming out as a lesbian to myself and others in my early twenties, God’s great love became conditional upon my sexuality.”

Yet, when talking with friends and acquaintances whose language reflects a more conservative Christian theology and perspective of the world, I often choose words and concepts familiar to their ears although they taste somewhat foreign on my tongue. Too often we demonize people who speak a different language – particularly regarding the holy – and thus derail opportunities for understanding and connection before conversation occurs. At times it is a tongue-twisting challenge to honor and express the realities of who I am and what I believe in a way that can be conceptualized and understood by a conservative Christian yet creates space for new understandings and possibilities for all of us.

“Too often we demonize people who speak a different language – particularly regarding the holy – and thus derail opportunities for understanding and connection before conversation occurs.”

This engagement with a language and worldview that does not fully resonate with the core of who you are – and may even render pieces of you invisible – takes significant energy. It is a cultural immersion that makes it even more important to find communities that speak your own language. It is crucial to find faith communities and friends with whom you can let your tongue wag freely and draw upon shared meanings and vocabulary as you develop relationships with each other, yourself and the divine.

When you are an exchange student, there comes a time when you begin dreaming in your new language. I have begun dreaming in mine: dreaming of a life fully affirmed by the divine; dreaming of a faith community where I can be loved and love in return and not be considered a project or a liability; dreaming of attending seminary to pursue ordination within the United Church of Christ. All these dreams have become reality, as I have learned with joy and humility that no language can fully capture the great and wondrous nature of the divine.

This essay is due to be published in a book-length collection about the Christians and homosexuality. Engelken is an MDiv student at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, and currently lives in Santa Cruz, CA. She can be contacted at engelken@gmail.com.

December PSR Graduate Tim Hamilton Ordained in Los Angeles February 16th
Photos and Article by Tim Agar



It was a privilege to join other students and alumni from PSR at the ordination of Tim Hamilton, held at the Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles on Saturday, February 16th. It was a beautiful day and a beautiful ceremony, with numerous clergy attending from the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches and other faith traditions. It was especially gratifying to see a number of current PSR students at the event, including several who participated in some way during the service.

Rev. Tim Hamilton completed his studies at PSR this past December. He began work this past week as a chaplain with Kaiser-Permanente in the Los Angeles area.

About the day and in gratitude to the PSR community, Rev. Tim wrote:

“An amazing day came about that causes me to pause and recognize the love that surrounds me. There are many, but Doug Adams and his influence comes to mind, as does the leadership of Hillary Marckx and C.A.R.E. I am grateful to the many who came down from PSR to attend my ordination: Adriene Thorne, Jeff Acido, Masatao Kato, Kelly Williams, Tim Agar, Elizabeth Blair, Lindsey Reed, and Israel (Izzy) Alvaran. PSR is a place for diverse expressions of kindness and care, where we should never have to be fully understood in order to feel cared about and supported. I certainly felt that care during my ordination. There were people from Texas, Colorado, Australia, New York,



and other far away spots and many different faith traditions. It was a warm group. I am filled with gratitude. Namaste, Tim”



In addition to current students, PSR alumni in attendance included Rev. Terri Echelbarger, Senior Pastor of Peninsula MCC in San Mateo, where Tim finished an advanced Field Ed. Internship, and Rev. Patrick Rogers, Interim Pastor of Topeka MCC.

If you wish to send a note of congratulations to Rev. Tim, you can e-mail him at: thamilca@gmail.com

“Penny Wise and Pound Foolish”

by Mary Heron Dyer

former International Student tutor at PSR

“Cognitive dissonance.” It’s a term I learned while pursuing a master’s degree in counseling. It basically refers to the conundrum one faces when holding two disparate and mutually exclusive beliefs in one’s mind. It is sort of a “forced choice.” This is the phrase that came to mind when I learned that, as part of the belt-tightening we at PSR are doing to keep in the good graces of the re-accreditation team, the belt-tightening is now negatively affecting the international students.

PSR prides itself on its breadth of vision, its interfaith dimensions, and its appeal beyond national boundaries. Of our current student body, about one-sixth of our students are officially classified as international students, not to mention US citizens who are bi-cultural, bi-racial, bi-lingual. It seems that we have succeeded in this regard, and we are all richer for it.

We claim to both recruit and welcome these international students, as well we should. International students add a depth and perspective to our theological educations. Both their personal lives and their stories of faith, as shaped by their own cultures, enrich us all as we seek to learn how to proclaim the gospel beyond our own communities and culture.

Those students from other countries with whom I have interacted this past semester have challenged me, enlightened me, given me hope. I came into contact with these students when I was hired as a tutor, to help them with the English language as they wrote papers for classes. It didn’t take a lot of my time. The position for which I was hired was only for five hours a week, which I rarely matched, at the prevailing \$10 an hour. Yet, I know that it was not only helpful but crucial, not only to the students themselves, but to my own commitment to global ministry.

Yet I was informed last week that this very small position (which at most would have cost PSR \$1,500 for both semesters, according to my calculations) has been cut. I can certainly survive without it, although, more than anything, I will miss the privilege I had to work with students from China, Japan, Korea, American Samoa and Tonga. I am saddened that this particular program was cut.

And the “cognitive dissonance” I alluded to at the beginning? Yes, we pride ourselves on having top-notch international students who are coming here both for their own theological education and to enrich ours. At the same time, we are cutting what I consider not only an essential but a justice-mandated program which helps them succeed.

So . . . where do we go from here? We have several choices:

1. “Oh, well. Too bad, but I have other things to do and bigger fish to fry.”
2. “Well, maybe we should raise our standards for English proficiency and we wouldn’t have to deal with this.”
3. “Perhaps we need to call PSR to accountability regarding their allocation of funds (or lack thereof) for international students.”

It’s your call. Will it be number 1? Number 2? Or number 3?

Pagans Practice Non-Profit Management

by Michelle Mueller

On Valentine's Day 2008 I attended a Winter Intensive held by Cherry Hill Seminary, an institution for Pagans learning skills in pastoral counseling. My participation in the seminar was made possible by a CAPSR scholarship. Workshops from "Growing a Pagan Nonprofit Organization" touched on many issues also covered in specific PSR classes, such as Organizational Leadership, Christian Worship, and Theology & Ethics in Christian History. I also learned new perspectives on money and religion, to which I had not been exposed at PSR.

The Material: Growing A Pagan Non-Profit Organization

Leaders and members of religious groups often wish to avoid the topic of money. Religious experiences feel cheapened when money is a priority. However, without money, organizations cannot survive. In Organizational Leadership and the Winter Intensive, seminary students learn to integrate a budget into other aspects of religious leadership. The budget becomes one of many responsibilities for the religious community.

Fundraising was an important topic at "Growing a Pagan Nonprofit Organization." According to Holli Emore, special events do not qualify as fundraising. She believes that special events draw attention to the hosting organization. This surprised me, because my most successful attempts at raising money for a cause had come from special events! Just recently I participated in the Vagina Monologues, which raised over \$3,000 for SafeHouse. I have also collected donations for women's shelters in exchange for admission to punk rock shows at a local church. Once I see a phonathon seven times as successful, I might discount the value of special fundraising events.

At "Straighten Up & Fly Right: Information Management for Grassroots Groups," I learned about grassroots organizations' communication. They interact with donors, staff, boards, members, students, and clients. An organization needs an appropriate approach to each constituency group. The speakers at the Winter Intensive suggested time intervals between contacting each group. Cherry Hill Seminary teachers encouraged calculated, intentional relationships with donors and clients. An institution displays its professionalism in such efforts.

Patricia Allen, a friend and mentor from my Middler Committee, presented "Care and Feeding of the Nonprofit Workforce." Allen led an interesting exercise on hiring. She presented her students with a job description and two candidates. Students then responded, suggesting which candidate the organization should hire. Currently being at the time of my own job search, this exercise was insightful.

Allen caused me to think about which jobs I should apply to and where I should focus my energy. An organization that stimulates me might need help, but if I am not qualified for the specific tasks required, I should not waste my time. Best to find a job for which I am the best candidate, assuming I appreciate other aspects of the business.

I am grateful that the presenters at the event provided well-organized handouts. Some speakers distributed packets outlining their entire talk. At many conferences, it is difficult to attend all events and to leave with imprinted memories of each lecture. With the help of Cherry Hill faculty, I will remember a great deal of the intensive and can communicate the information well to PSR students. Students may browse my Winter Intensive folder – please contact me if you are interested.

Putting the Material into Action: Growing Cherry Hill Seminary

At the Winter Intensive, I saw a living example of a non-profit organization that has accomplished a great deal already and aims to secure its future. The topics at “Growing a Pagan Nonprofit Organization” were clearly addressed towards successful duration. A religious educational system considers finance when the organization has a clear hope of a future and needs to think practically. I am inspired by “Growing a Pagan Nonprofit Organization” because I do hope for Cherry Hill Seminary’s success. Cherry Hill Seminary has done revolutionary things for the Pagan community. Until its inception, Pagans did not have an organized seminary. Judging from the topics of the Winter Intensive, Cherry Hill Seminary still has many ways to grow, a reason why I am glad to be a seminary student now.

Cherry Hill Seminary encouraged its students to attend the Winter Intensive. After their admission, any like-minded folk interested in the theme were invited. I attended because of the conference’s intended audience. Although I am not a Cherry Hill Seminary student, I see the value in the institution and hope to learn from it. I enrolled at the Pacific School of Religion because I respected its curriculum, had objectives for field education, and wanted a degree from an accredited school.

Cherry Hill Seminary faculty and staff have taken steps towards accreditation. I believe that Cherry Hill will become an accredited seminary in time. However, that time has not come. Until then, I happily attend the Pacific School of Religion with a limited connection to Cherry Hill Seminary. In Angels Fear, I will design a spiritual recovery program for people with eating disorders. I will create a syllabus, which I could later use to teach a course at Cherry Hill Seminary on Paganism and Eating Disorders. I will complete my PSR requirements, with Cherry Hill Seminary close to my heart so that I may best serve both institutions.

Swedenborgians See it This Way Some Basics on Our Perspective

by Rev. Kim Hinrichs

Adapted from John Hitchcock, It's About Living: Swedenborgian Thought in Practice. Swedenborgian Church of North America, 1996. Pamphlet.

In reading the February issue of LOGOS, I appreciated Michelle Mueller's article on the PSR chapel service that the Swedenborgian community facilitated last October. Her reflection as a non-Swedenborgian contained only a few elements of the Swedenborgian perspective and spurred me to share with LOGOS readers a more complete elucidation of Swedenborgian faith.

What are the beliefs of Swedenborgians? What especially distinguishes the Swedenborgian Church today? What are these people with the funny name up to, anyway?

Spirituality can be understood as the way in which we consciously integrate our understanding of the transcendent into the way we live our lives. In this sense, Swedenborgians might describe their spirituality this way:

It's about living. Our lives are a theater for the unfolding of God's love and wisdom into the world. God is the source of all creation, and the purpose of our lives is ultimately to return the love by which we were created. It happens here and now, in our real, embodied, messy, potent lives. It happens in prayer, in relationships, in our work, in the choices we make, in the lofty, in the mundane, in our suffering. Every situation in our path is an opportunity to deepen our understanding of God, others and ourselves.

It's about genuine inner spirituality. The source of our spiritual life is the divine itself. The theology of Emanuel Swedenborg, our tradition's namesake, is emphatically metaphysical, drawing grand arcs between the source of the universe, the nature of the Lord, and the purpose of human life. In this way, the divine center, both within and without, is the root of all life in all its developments, from the most natural physical processes and acts to its highest spirituality and grandest vision. As we welcome the spiritual dimension of life and practice, we become aware of that deep sense of oneness that is the form of human love the Greeks called *agape*.

It's about pluralism. Swedenborg was far ahead of his time in the 18th century when he proclaimed that all who sincerely live their faiths and practice goodness are members of the kingdom of God, no matter what their religion. The diversity of humanity is an aspect of God's tremendous variety, and the truths of all religions ultimately point to the essential oneness of God. Swedenborgians draw on the insights of many faith traditions while remaining centered in the Christian tradition.

It's about symbolic understanding. Swedenborg saw metaphor as a step toward a symbolic understanding of life itself, as well as the world in which we live. Swedenborgians read the Bible on multiple levels, one of which is a symbolic level that speaks to a spiritual understanding of the Lord and of our own journeys toward wholeness. For Swedenborg, eternal truths concerning divine love and wisdom lie within all of the forms of the things of nature, and we can learn to see those truths within, or through, all natural things. In this way nature itself is both a signature and gateway into understanding the nature of God.

It's about uses. The essence of God is actualized in the physical world through the "uses" that we perform—from simple acts of love and care to finding a true vocation that serves others. Uses



Photo © Mike Moats

growth itself as illuminating and instructive. Our lives—on both the individual and social level—are dynamically unfolding processes which reflect the nature of God. Swedenborg saw the goal of creation as the formation of a “heaven from the human race,” which begins with learning here how to build a truly constructive social fabric.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), son of a Lutheran bishop, was a Swedish scientist-turned-theologian who never intended to found a church. Instead, he believed that the spiritual insights he received through mystical experience were meant to reform the distortions and hypocrisy of the church of his day and to bring people toward a new and truer Christian church. A group of followers nevertheless formed a church in London after his death which is the antecedent of four different ecclesiastical bodies worldwide today. Swedenborg’s ideas have been remarkably influential on artists and philosophers through time, including William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Helen Keller, D.T. Suzuki and Jorge Luis Borges, just to name a few.

Thus, even though we have a funky name, the spirituality of Swedenborgians is actually very accessible and down-to-earth. Our worship services and polity are not so different from mainline Protestants; our differences mainly come down to the emphasis we place on spirituality and the mystical dimension of life. We welcome the challenges that our perspective meets at PSR, for example, to articulate social justice as part of our core theology. Our students and faculty speak often and passionately on how our tradition can do this for a new era. From time to time we challenge the mainline Protestant tradition as well, to acknowledge and explore the depths of the spiritual dimension of life and worship.

Our community is small, but we hope that our perspective offers something valuable to the world. If you’d like to find out more, stop by the office below D’Autremont—we’re always there with free chocolate and good conversation!

Kim Hinrichs, a PSR alum (MDiv ’00), serves as director of outreach for the Swedenborgian House of Studies at PSR. She can be reached at khinrichs@shs.psr.edu.

Meet the Man on the Street Person in the Dining Hall

Reporter: Jon Dodson; Photographer: Laumanu Ika

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What is your favorite pet (in your context) and why?



<Jeffrey Acido: "Cats. They don't crave attention. They just sit there."

>Stephanie Gameros: "My dog, Finnegan. He's a terrier mix. He's loveable and sits on my lap. But beware because he's timid! He has issues. But so does humanity. So he is worth getting to know!"



<Bela-Botond Jakabha'zi (Belu): "Dogs. I like the dog's personality. It is faithful and honest. Dogs cannot lie. And they are playful!"

>Akiko Miyake-Stoner: "Fish. Because they taste good!"



<Eric Eide: "No favorite, I like them all! I see God in all animals."