

McCormick Day

2022

HeartWork Rising

The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing

Trust in the LORD with all your **heart**, and do not rely on your own insight. *Prov 3:5 RSV*



Rev. Dr. Lis Valle



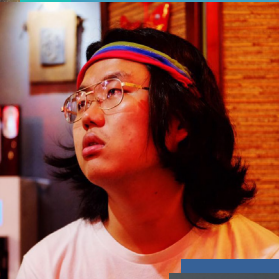
Eyvette Jones Johnson



Jane Sawyer



Rev. Thomas C. Hart
Distinguished Alumnus



Seyo Oh



Rev. Vickie Johnson



Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton



President David Crawford



Rev. Violet Johnicker
Rising Star Alumna

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022 9:00am - 5:00pm CT

To register visit mccormick.edu/events

President David Crawford

Friends, greetings from McCormick! We look forward to being together in person again for McCormick Day 2022!

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, unspeakable violence in our city, denominational and church decline, and a nation still divided, please know that McCormick remains steadfast and strong, teaching, learning, serving, and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world. We have much good news to share even as we fend off the forces that are challenging the value and relevancy of not only theological education and the church, but our democratic form of government.

This is an important moment for all of us as we radically reimagine what it means to be a seminary in the 21st century. Change is indeed possible if you are prepared to do the hard work it requires. You must be prepared, as activist Julia Wright says, “to grow old in the work.”

I guess it is now fair to say I am growing old in this work and I am grateful. And so it is with great joy that I have accepted the Board’s offer to extend my term one more year through the academic year 2024. Since 2017, we have dedicated ourselves to a vision of repair, healing, and community building and we look forward to sharing that vision with you as we celebrate together McCormick Day 2022!

With gratitude,

David



Rev. Nannette Dixon, Vice-President CEAR

Greetings All,

Welcome! Welcome! Welcome! Your presence in this space has surely been missed. Yet, your energy thru virtual means has been felt. Even today, as we gather in hybrid fashion the energy is palpable and the smiles genuine.

Our hope is that what you hear and experience on today will fuel your hope that healing is possible. Healing is possible because of the intentional work that we must commit to, not only for ourselves, but for others with whom we share life, space and community. Trauma healing, is not an easy work, it is a worthy work that we must be equipped to engage. So, as we listen to the experts, the advocates, the researchers and the front liners, (even access the care team that has been assembled for individual conversation as needed), let us not forget to also listen for the voice of God and how the church and the broader community are to be epicenters of healing. Your presence today is not by happenstance, but by design, a design of hope, acquired skill, and commitment to continued learning and healing.

May we each be blessed and our lives made richer because of our time together! Welcome to McDay 2022.

Blessings in Abundance,

Reverend Nannette Dixon

Vice President for Community Engagement and Alumni Relations

nbanks@mccormick.edu

O: 773.947.6322



Dr. Steed Vernyl Davidson, Vice President of Academic Affairs

Greetings!

Do you remember Rev. Robert Alden? The pastor on the television series *Little House on the Prairie*. This character depicted ministry at a time when all that was needed was a deep love of people and God. Such piety enabled native skills of patience, kindness, nurturing, and with any luck a way to communicate simple truths of the gospel. Though filled with nostalgia, that image of ministry as uncomplicated still remains with a number of persons. Thankfully anyone who has graduated from seminary or been closely involved in ministry no longer holds that view.

Ministry today requires multiple skills. These diverse skills become more urgent forced by the complexities of our modern life. Even more, the need to situate the church in relevant ways in the lives of people as not simply a weekend pastime means engaging in the difficulties of what it means to live in these days.

Seminary education needs to be robust in order to equip graduates with diversity of skills to serve effectively. Educating for trauma healing takes us one step in that direction. The classical division of a seminary curriculum that gives a taste of core areas of Bible, Theology, and History with some space to develop ministry skills has proven to be inadequate. The skills needed to practice ministry, rather than study and reflect upon ministry, are numerous. Anyone involved in ministry today should aim to hone as many useful and marketable skills as possible not simply in order to have alternative sources of income. These skills are needed because they are required in order to effectively meet the needs of people.

Trauma too often remains that invisible dimension that can be overlooked. Its invisibility allows shows like *Little House* to pretend that it does not exist. This show set among Norwegian migrants to the United States as a result of poverty and famine in Norway fails to capture how Rev. Alden ministered to people carrying deep pains. McCormick has agreed we cannot afford to look away. Neither can we fail our students in this urgent time.

Best wishes



Steed Vernyl Davidson, PhD

Dean of the Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Rev. Dr. Lis Valle-Ruiz, Assistant Professor, Homiletics, Worship

Beloved Siblings,

Welcome to McCormick Day 2022! This year's theme, "HeartWork Rising – The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing" is particularly close to my heart as I hope it will be to yours. The organizing teams that made this day possible worked hard to offer you tools and resources for you to educate and equip leaders for trauma healing. Please honor our efforts by savoring and enjoying all offerings in this event.

After McCormick Day, please stay connected to the wider McCormick Theological Seminary community throughout the year worshipping and praying with us in our weekly and occasional worship services. Every Wednesday lunch break, we worship together. Every Wednesday evening, we practice contemplative spiritual disciplines. Every Monday morning, the deacons lead us in prayers. Occasionally, manifestations of evil in the world become unbearable and we gather to pray. You will receive in our weekly e-newsletter details on how to join these worship services, moments of meditation, and moments of prayer. Hopefully, you will join once per semester, once per month, once per week, or at every opportunity, according to your availability. We look forward to continue to worship and grow together!

Peace and Blessings,

Rev. Lis Valle-Ruiz, Ph.D.

(she, her / ella)

Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Worship
and Director of Community Worship Life

lvalle@mccormick.edu



Thehil Singh, Alumni Council President



Thehil Russelliah Singh

serves as the Alumni Council President. She is a PhD candidate in Biblical Studies, with a major in Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and a minor in Cultural Anthropology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. She holds an MTS degree from McCormick Theological Seminary, a BD from Gurukul Lutheran Theological College & Research Institute and a BA in English Literature from Women's Christian College. Thehil is currently working on her dissertation titled, "The Ancestress of Ancient Israel: How She Constructs Kinship and Shapes Identity." Her dissertation aims to offer positive and concrete claims about the role of the ancestress character in constructing kinship and thereby shaping familial and national identity in ancient Israel. Thehil's other research projects have covered a range of topics including socio-historical contexts and archaeology of the ancient world, gender roles and dynamics in living and ancient societies, power and agency of biblical characters, and identity and kinship in ancient Israel. She has taught courses in person and online in seminaries in the US and in India and she serves on the teaching team of McCormick's Solidarity Building Initiative at Cook County Department of Corrections. On behalf of the McCormick Alumni/ae Association, welcome to McCormick Day 2022!

**Rev. Dr. Leslie Diaz-Perez, Senior Director of Enrollment;
Gina Lackland, Administrative Assistant**

McDay 2022—From the Office of Admissions and Enrollment

Greetings to all!

On behalf of the Office of Admissions and Enrollment, please receive a warm welcome! Whether you join us in person or online, thank you for participating in this year’s McCormick Day. Enjoy every bit of the different events planned by the Office of Community Engagement and Alumni Relations, the Alumni Council, and so many others here at McCormick. This year’s program, HeartWork Rising – The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing, is the perfect opportunity to reconnect, renew and recharge in community.

McCormick graduates understand the great heartwork that takes place in and out of the classroom. As a double alumna, I have personally experienced and been shaped by the teaching and learning here. McCormick continues to be a place for formation and transformation. In this new role as Senior Director of Enrollment, now I have the amazing opportunity to help others experience the possibilities and reach their theological education goals.

McCormick offers the following learning pathways:

| Certificate Programs | Masters Programs | Doctoral Programs |
|---|--|--|
| Executive Leadership Black Church Studies Latinx Theology and Ministry Solidarity Building Initiative (SBI) Environmental Leadership & Ministry | Master of Divinity Master of Theology Master of Arts in Ministry Master of Arts in Ministry— Latins Concentration/Spanish Language Master of Theological Studies | Ecumenical Pastoral Care Korean DMin Prophetic Leadership ACTS DMin in Preaching Latinx Concentration/Spanish Language |

McCormick is the place for lifelong learning. As theological scholarship continues to advance, consider returning and enrolling in courses through our continuing education opportunities. Returning to McCormick is easier than ever. Contact the Admissions Office today!

Our McCormick alumni network is our best marketing tool. Please continue to refer new candidates to any of our life-changing programs. We are grateful for all the ways you support McCormick and our recruitment efforts.

Blessings!



Rev. Dr. Leslie Diaz-Perez

Senior Director of Enrollment
 Ldiaz-perez@mccormick.edu
 (773) 947-6284



Gina S. Lackland

Administrative Assistant, Office of Admissions and Enrollment
 glackland@mccormick.edu or admit@mccormick.edu
 (773) 947-6276

Stephanie Moore, Director of Development

Grace and peace,

I am excited that we are able to welcome our alums and friends to McCormick Day 2022 in person, as well as virtually. It has been a long journey to get to where we can be together with our alums and friends in the same space.

In this journey many of us have experienced some trauma directly or indirectly. The theme for McCormick Day 2022 is *HeartWork Rising—The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing*. This event will give us the tools we need to start the healing process for ourselves or to help others.

As the Director of Development, I would like to thank you for your financial support. It is your support that allows us to have these kinds of educational events and programs. If you would like to support our program with a gift, here are some options:

1. Scan the QR code



2. Give online at mccormick.edu/support

3. Mail your check to:

McCormick Theological Seminary

Attention: Development

5460 S. University Ave

Chicago, IL 60615

Thank you!

Stephanie Moore

Director of Development

smoore@mccormick.edu

Office: 773- 947-6282



Rev. Julian DeShazier, Office of Experiential Education

On behalf of the Office of Experiential Education, welcome to McCormick Days! The experience of our past couple of years makes a sacred occasion out of every opportunity we have to gather together, and we pray that this time of “homecoming” will nourish us all.

As an integral partner in the seminary experience, the Office of Experiential Education – and the Field Studies program in particular – offers students an integrative program of experience, study, reflection, and assessment. Students are placed in supervised ministry sites that are acting and responding faithfully to the challenges of today’s world, and partner with them across a yearlong internship to get close to the work, do the work, and reflect deeply on how these experiences expand their sense of vocation and capacity for leadership.

Students engaged in experiential education and field studies are in a process of spiritual, academic, and professional formation while simultaneously developing, practicing, and refining the arts and skills of ministry. This integrated approach provides the student with opportunities to reflect critically and theologically as they interact with the wisdom of the supervising mentor, the care of the ministry site, and their classroom cohort. In this setting the relationships between theology and experience, between private convictions and public actions, take center stage.

Experiential Education and Field Studies also serves as a discernment opportunity that invites students to more deeply explore God’s call on their life. Whether through ordination or lay leadership, in the local church or in service agencies, our students are challenged to continue their transformation into thoughtful practitioners and skilled reflectors. Through experiential engagement, we fulfill our mission of equipping God’s faithful for exemplary Christian leadership.

It is a blessing to have so many MTS alum in the Chicagoland area that are ready and willing to participate in the ongoing formation of 21st century faith leaders. Whether you have served before as a field site supervisor-mentor; are serving as one now or have interest in the future; or are practicing ministry and are opening the doors for students to learn from your work...we thank you!

You may have an idea of how we can collaborate. Please, don’t hesitate to reach out! (jdeshazier@mccormick.edu) This is my first year serving as director of the Office of Experiential Education, and I am excited to find ways for us to partner on behalf of our students. Please be in touch, and enjoy McCormick Days!!!



Rev. Julian DeShazier

Director, Office of Experiential Education

Affiliate Faculty

Rev. Dr. Stacy Edwards Dunn, Director-Center for African American Ministries and Black Church Studies

Friends,

Grace and peace be unto you! On behalf of the Center for African American Ministries and Black Church Studies, we say “Welcome to McCormick Day!”

McCormick Day is a time where we take a time of reflection, replenishing, re-centering, healing, and reconnecting! It’s a time where we not only learn, but it’s also a time of coming together and obtaining spiritual fuel for our future work in the community and around the world!

Our amazing team at McCormick has planned a day of life-giving education, fellowship, fun and soul-stirring work for you. It is our prayer that at this year’s McCormick Day, where we will focus on “Equipping the Church to Offer Trauma-Informed Care”, that your minds might be inspired, bodies strengthened and your souls might be set a fire to do the liberating work our God has called each of us to do.

May God bless you and keep you. Enjoy your time.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Stacey Edwards-Dunn

Director

Priscilla Rodriguez

Coordinator



**Rev. Dr. Leslie Diaz-Perez, Director, El Centro;
Priscilla Rodriguez, Program Coordinator**

A heartfelt WELCOME from the Rev. Dr. Leslie Diaz-Perez, Director and Priscilla Rodriguez, Coordinator of El Centro! We are confident that your participation in this year's McCormick Days will be filled with joy, connection, and a renewed sense of purpose. It is our prayer that you are blessed by all the events, workshops, and services that will take place today. May this year's theme, "HeartWork Rising: The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing" bring us to a place of healing, discernment, and challenge.

We also would like to take the opportunity to let you know about **El Centro**. El Centro is committed to providing programs, services, and resources aimed at strengthening the formation and renewal of Latinx theological education, church leaders, and congregations. At the heart of its mission is the development of models of Latinx theologies, leadership and ministries that are public, holistic, liberating, and intercultural.

You are invited to visit El Centro on Facebook where we will be focusing on the following subjects throughout the **2022-2023 Academic year**:

September: "The Growing Role of the Latinx Church"

October: "Models of Leadership"

November: "The Learning Journey"

December: "Celebrate Latinx Culture in Ministry"

January: "Initiating a Successful Year of Learning"

February: "Making the Most of Every Relationship"

March: "Putting Belief into Practice"

April: "Sustaining Yourself Spiritually in all Seasons"

May: "Mental Health, Faith and Latinx Communities"

August: "The Best Way to Approach Class Lectures"

Share with us any other topics that you also feel are important within and outside of ministry with the Latinx community. Ideas and suggestions may be sent to, Priscilla Rodriguez at prodriQuez@mccormick.edu.



Rev. Dr. Leslie Diaz-Perez

Director, El Centro

Priscilla Rodriguez

Coordinator, Academic Affairs Centers

Rev. Dr. Anita Crittenden, Alumni Relations Coordinator

It is with great joy that we welcome you to McCormick Day 2022!

To all of our Alumni/ae - I am so grateful for the amazing ways you use your gifts for the Glory of God. Listening to your stories, your journeys - I am humbled to serve you. I joy in the relationships I have with each of you.

McCormick Alum, you are everywhere - from the United States, Asia, thru Central America to Malawi. You have truly fulfilled your God-given purpose, making your voices known and heard. Congratulations to our 2022 honorees, Rev. Tom Hart and Rev. Violet Johnicker. Thank you for your leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ and for your commitment to serve the world. Class of 1972, we salute you for 50th Years - Wow! Class of 1997 (25th Year Milestone) you 'rock for Jesus.'

Thank you Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton and the Trauma Healing Initiative for keeping us trauma-informed for the challenging times we live in. I'm reminded of Ella Baker who said, "*Give light and people will find the way.*" That's what the Trauma Healing Initiative is all about -*Healing*, as a work of the heart, as a work of the light. So, we gather today despite the challenges of 2020 and 2021, despite all our losses, our pain, all our trauma - today, through our worship, storytelling, our remembrances, we experience God's possibilities of light and hope.

Again, welcome all to this space of theological reflection, prayer and healing.

Rev. Dr. Anita Crittenden

Coordinator, Alumni Relations



SCHEDULE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022

- 8:00am - 9:00am** Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00am - 9:15am** Welcome
Rev. Nannette Dixon, Vice President of Community Engagement & Alumni Relations
Rev. Dr. Anita Crittenden, Coordinator, Alumni Relations
- 9:15am - 9:50am** Opening Worship
Rev. Dr. Lis Valle Ruiz, Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Worship and Director of Community Worship Life
- 9:50am - 10:00am** Break
- 10:00am - 11:15am** **Plenary 1: HeartWork Rising – The Work of Educating and Equipping Leaders for Trauma Healing**
- McCormick Theological Seminary’s HeartWork Rising Trauma Healing Initiative (THI) engages in institution-wide learning and practices in order to cultivate a trauma-informed and healing-centered culture of theological education. Supported over a three-year period through a grant from the Lily Endowment, THI aims to equip staff, students, clergy, and community partners with the knowledge, connections, and skills to respond to trauma from a healing-centered perspective. McCormick Days provides an opportunity for alumni to learn more about the initiative through interactive experiences and up-close conversation with partners in this powerful work!
- Rev. Dr. Stephanie M. Crumpton, Director, Trauma Healing Initiative*
Eyvette Jones Johnson, Urban Possibilities
- 11:15am - 11:30am** Break
- 11:30am - 12:00pm** The Center For Reparatory Justice, Transformation and Remediation
Dr. Iva Caruthers, Executive Director
Rev. Antonia Coleman, Program Coordinator
- 12:00pm - 12:45pm** Lunch Break – Musical performance featuring:
Seyo Oh, McCormick student
- 12:45pm - 1:45pm** State of McCormick – Mr. David Crawford, President
- 1:45pm - 2:00pm** Break

(Continued on next page)

SCHEDULE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022

(Continued)

2:00pm - 3:15pm

Plenary 2: Celebratory Movement & Worship

Movement 1 – Cook County Arts Collective – *Artist Jane Sawyer.*

The Cook County Arts Collective connects teaching artists in Chicago with women at the Cook County Department of Corrections, and with returning citizens at Grace House. Their goal is to create space for joyful movement with women wherever they are.

Movement 2 – Healing Ritual: Moving with Divine Wisdom – *Dr. Lis Valle-Ruiz*

Finding the wisdom within helps us move toward healing with the Divine. Dr. Lis Valle-Ruiz will help us listen to our bodies during a short healing ritual that incorporates bodily posture and artistic expression.

3:15pm - 3:30pm

Break

3:30pm - 4:35pm

Alumni Celebration – Opening with Musical Selections featuring
Pastor Vickie Johnson, McCormick DMin Student

Celebration of Distinguished Alumnus 2022
Rev. Thomas C. Hart (Tom), MDIV Class of 1986

Described as well-equipped, faithful, and transformational - Tom led the Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque into increasingly innovative and culturally sensitive engagement with the larger world. While reflecting on the nomination of Rev. Hart, colleague Rev. Trey Hammond (1980) shared, "I have always been impressed by those who emerge from the crucible of McCormick's empowering education to serve the larger church." As this year's Distinguished Alum recipient, Rev. Hart has done just that during his esteemed career.

Celebration of Rising Star Award 2022
Rev. Violet Johnicker, MDIV Class of 2018

Recipient of the inaugural McCormick Alumni Rising Star Award, Violet Johnicker is Pastor of the Brooke Road United Methodist Church and Associate Director of Rockford Urban Ministries, an interfaith social justice advocacy nonprofit. Rev. Johnicker works alongside community leaders to advocate for restorative justice, gun violence prevention, reproductive health rights, and LGBTQIA+ inclusion. Through the United Methodist Church, Rev. Johnicker has recently established a justice center for the Rockford area.

Celebration of Class of 1972 (50th Year Anniversary)
Celebration Class of 1997 (25th Year Anniversary)

4:35pm - 4:45pm

Annual Council Meeting – Alumni Association (All Alum)
Voting on incoming slate for 2023

4:45pm - 5:00pm

Thank you and Charge

Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton

Director, Trauma Healing Initiative

Associate Professor of Practical Theology

As Director of the Trauma Healing Initiative, I welcome you to McCormick Day 2022.

McCormick Theological Seminary's HeartWork Rising Trauma Healing Initiative (THI) engages in institution-wide learning and practices in order to cultivate a trauma-informed and healing-centered culture of theological education. Supported over a three-year period through a grant from the Lily Endowment, THI aims to equip staff, students, clergy, and community partners with the knowledge, connections, and skills to respond to trauma from a healing-centered perspective. McCormick Days provides an opportunity for alumni to learn more about the initiative through interactive experiences and up-close conversation with partners in this powerful work!



Pastor Vickie Johnson

Rev. Vickie D. Johnson serves as Pastor of St. Thomas Lutheran Church. Her journey began as a Sunday School Teacher to primary students as a teen and she has been teaching the Word of God ever since. She preaches the gospel simplistically so that women, men, girls and boys can come into the knowledge of God. Pastor Vickie's ministerial focus is with Social Justice working with Community Organizations and the 3rd and 4th District Clergy Committees of the Chicago Police Department.

Pastor Vickie is currently an ACTS DMin student at the Lutheran School of Theology Chicago where she works on the Antiracism Transformation Team. She earned her B.A. in Psychology from Chicago State University, M.A. in Inner City Studies from Northeastern Illinois University, and MDiv from LSTC. She also serves as Co-Pastor with her husband in ministry at Come Alive Ministry of Faith and they are the parents of 6.

Pastor Vickie is a classically trained vocalist who has sang with many groups across the United States and abroad. She sits on various boards and has received numerous awards. She loves to swim, crochet, and read, but her greatest love is for God's people. "This is my commandments, that you love one another, as I have loved you." St. John 15:12.



Artist Rev. Seyo Oh

Seyo Oh... was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea. He is interested in Minjung Theology and urban issues, and is interested in space and place. He wrote 'A Study on the Loss and Recovery of the Language of Minjung: Centered on Han and Madness of Minjung' as his thesis for M.Div. in the Graduate School of Theology at Hanshin University. Seyo is the co-founder of Okbaraji Missionary Center, an anti-gentrification social movement organization. He enjoys listening to all kinds of music, and among them, he likes psychedelic hard rocks the most. Rev. Seyo Oh is an ordained pastor who belongs to the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).



Eyvette Jones Johnson

Eyvette Jones Johnson is an empowerment educator, social entrepreneur, and story strategist. A network TV producer for 15 years, she delivered stories for the world's largest media outlets including CBS, NBC, ABC and PBS. She then founded Urban Possibilities, a nonprofit that uses narrative skill and stage performance to empower hundreds of homeless job seekers to reimagine and rebuild their futures.

A passionate keynote speaker and skilled facilitator, Eyvette works with corporate, academic, and nonprofit clients to unlock their story power. Together they explore topics like: Breakthrough Thinking, Creating Healthy Narratives, Collective Healing, Culture and Collaboration; and Strategic Innovation and Change.

She recently co-founded the *Brush Harbor Retreats for Visionaries of Color*, designed for changemakers to come apart and reenergize as they lead and inspire others. Eyvette's work has been recognized with the "Hero" award by the Center for the Advancement for Non-Violence, and the "Life Changer" award by the Rainbow P.U.S.H. Coalition.



Rev. Lis Valle-Ruiz, Ph.D

Rev. Lis Valle-Ruiz is Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Worship and Director of Community Worship Life at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL. She earned her PhD in Homiletics and Liturgics from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, where she also studied gender and sexuality. Her dissertation, "As One Among Many: Affirming a Multitude of Embodied Preaching Practices," analyzes pulpit preaching through public speech, street preaching through symbolic action, and preaching through theater and proposes that these are three paradigms among many others in the repertoire of embodied Christian preaching practices among which preachers may choose. Rev. Valle received a ThM in Homiletics from Princeton Theological Seminary and an MDiv from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She also holds a JD and a BA in Education from the University of Puerto Rico. Theater is her life-long passion. Lis has been an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) since 2013 and has been leading Theater of the Oppressed workshops since 1995.



Jane Sawyer

Jane Sawyer is the founder and director of Cook County Arts Collective and Director of Young Dancer's Programming at the Hyde Park School of Dance. She is a graduate of The Ailey School Professional Division in New York and holds a BA in Dance from Columbia College Chicago. Ms. Sawyer trained and performed with Deeply Rooted Dance Theater between 2011-2017, and is committed to creating space for joyful movement through dance and arts programming at the Cook County Department of Corrections and beyond. Ms. Sawyer is the primary facilitator of Cook County Arts Collective programming and is a recipient of the 2022 Changing Worlds Survive and Thrive grant.





McCormick Theological Seminary
D I S T I N G U I S H E D
A L U M

Distinguished Alumnus – Rev. Thomas C. Hart

A son of a visionary minister and creative mom, Tom Hart has been imaginative and curious his whole life. That inventive spirit was nurtured as a child on the laps of countless church members and has taken various forms including traveling, brewing, parenting, cooking and storytelling.

Experiencing church as family shaped Tom’s understanding of the world and himself. His gregarious and somewhat irreverent nature was shaped at potlucks and in the family station wagon. He loves conversation and opportunities to build connections. His theology is rooted in the grace found in each person’s everyday experiences. It is lived out in the spaces of welcome he creates, where each person, regardless of age or circumstance, can know they are seen and loved.

After college Tom spent time backpacking around Scotland and India considering his life’s trajectory. When he washed up at McCormick a year later, he didn’t know what he was stepping into, only that the road provides. That initial semester, in Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell’s first class, he discovered a passion for nurturing the faith of others that defines the call he continues to pursue.

Tom has served numerous churches, primarily in New Mexico. Officially recognized among the 100 pioneers of the craft brewing industry, Brewpastor Tom co-founded Rio Grande Brewing, where he brewed award winning beers, including “Decently and In Order Wheat Beer” created for the 208th meeting of the General Assembly. Tom is a National beer judge, columnist, pastor, artist and, most proudly, the dad of two spectacular sons.





Rising Star Award Alumna – Rev. Violet Johnicker

Rev. Violet Johnicker is using everything she learned at McCormick in serving the community of Rockford, Illinois where she is pastor of Brooke Road United Methodist Church and Associate Director of Rockford Urban Ministries, an interfaith social justice advocacy nonprofit. She earned a Master of Divinity degree concurrently with a Master of Public Policy degree from Adler University and loves to learn. Violet took McCormick’s teaching to “do theology in the public square” to heart and is very involved in civic issues, writing a regular editorial column in the local paper on the intersection of politics and religion. Dr. Steed Davidson encouraged his students that “writing is fighting” and Violet can testify that this is true. She has worked alongside leaders in the community to advocate for restorative justice and reducing incarceration, using local and federal resources to end gun violence, supporting reproductive justice, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and a variety of other ways to build love for neighbor into policy.



As an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, Violet serves on a number of boards and chairs the Northern Illinois Conference Committee on Accessibility Ministries. Because of what she learned from colleagues and classmates at McCormick, she has worked with her congregation to open the doors of the church to many space sharing partners including congregations who worship in Spanish and Swahili, and now hosts many community resources from AA groups to citizenship classes to library programs. Violet lives in Rockford with her husband Kyle and their three year old son Lincoln and baby daughter Imogene.

Rev. Dr. Frank C. Baldwin

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

Following graduation from McCormick, I studied for a year with the theology faculty at the University of Munich in Germany under McCormick's Haus Villigst exchange program. Then I accepted a call as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Oak Park, Illinois. Shortly after I arrived in Oak Park, the First Presbyterian Church merged with the First Congregational Church to form the First United Church of Oak Park, with ties to both the P.C.U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ. During that time I completed my Doctor of Ministry Degree at McCormick in 1980 and served as president of the Alumni/ae Association.



After twenty years of ministry in Oak Park, I received a call to serve as Chaplain and Director of Pastoral Care for Presbyterian Homes in Evanston, IL. I continued with ministry to older adults in that long-term care setting for another twenty years, retiring in 2014.

I am married to Barbara Ellson and we have one son, Charlie, who is a quantum physicist in the Denver area. He and his wife Sarah are expecting our first grandchild in September.

Dr. Clark E. Barshinger, PhD

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

Helping people define and solve their problems has been a very satisfying part of my life. I work at connecting caring support with insight, exploring strengths, identifying self-defeating habits and assumptions, and mapping a path for self-improvement. I find my work satisfying and rewarding.



I work mostly with adults and teens. A large part of my practice is also with troubled marriages and their failure to communicate needs well or to achieve the experience of understanding and empathy. Another large part of my practice involves individual problem solving and addressing troubled emotions with adults and college students.

It is a joy for me to work with teenagers around making sense of their life situation and helping them develop a strategy that can make life work better for them.

Class of 1972

Rev. John F. Burnett

Class of 1972 - Master of the Science of Theology S.T.M.

After completion of the MDiv, I continued studies at McCormick for an S.T.M. under the Weyerhaeuser Fellowship in Pastoral Care. During that year our first son, Rick, was born. We returned to Southern California. I served as an interim pastor and later called to a struggling church in San Bernardino in September 1973 where I was ordained in the Presbyterian Church. During this time we added two additional boys to the family, Ryan and then Sean.



In February 1977 I accepted a call to the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Westlake Village, CA. as Associate Pastor. There I had responsibilities for youth and adult ministries and pastoral counseling. In June 1980 I made the decision to return to secular employment and joined the Human Resources Department of the Northrop Corporation, a defense contractor. During this time I remained as volunteer Parish Associate at the Westminster church. In 2001 I retired from Northrop after twenty years of Human Resources Management. In 2002 I was invited to join the Westminster pastoral staff on a part-time salaried basis and served in that capacity until last year. Pat and I are now in Santa Barbara in September where I have been invited to join the volunteer pastoral staff at the First Presbyterian Church.

Pat and I celebrated our 54th wedding anniversary this year. We have six grandchildren. Our family continues to be a blessing to us. We still enjoy using our travel trailer and getting away for those occasional vacations. Pat retired from a nursing career in 2007. She enjoys her volunteer time at a school in South Los Angeles where she can occasionally use her Spanish skills and love for teaching.

We are in reasonable health with a few challenges. We look forward to living closer to our youngest son in Santa Barbara and being active in the First Presbyterian Church.

Susan Phillips Davies

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

Having been born and raised in Carter Lake, IA/ Omaha, NE, I headed off to Lincoln, NE to Nebraska Wesleyan University receiving a BA in Religion & Philosophy. I studied at McCormick Theological Seminary (Northside/ Lincoln Park) earning my Master of Divinity in 1972.

In 1969, I married T. David Davies and we enjoyed our seminary friends & neighborhood through those years.

Following that seminary experience, we returned to Nebraska and the United Methodist connection. I was ordained a deacon in 1971 and an elder in 1973 (eight months pregnant). And I gave birth to twin sons the following month!

1972 through 1991, found me serving United Methodist parishes as Pastor-in-Charge --- rural & urban-- with great satisfaction (most days). In 1991, I was appointed a District Superintendent serving first the Northeast district and subsequently the Omaha district.

In 1999, David & I opened Soul Desires Bookstore/ Coffee Shop in Omaha with tagline "Books, Hospitality & Holy Hardware" & I was appointed there by the Bishop to an Extension ministry.

Throughout my active years in ministry, I served various roles in the larger church. These are included because they were such a significant aspect of my ministry. I served numerous years as a delegate to the United Methodist General Conference. I was also a member of The General Board of Church & Society, & held the position of National Co-President of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

Less significant, but still an honor, was to receive an honorary doctorate from my alma mater, Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Faithful social justice was in the forefront of my time at McCormick - & has continued to be so throughout my ministry - and stretches into these years of retirement.

David & I currently 'snowbird' between Omaha (kids & grandkids) and Tucson AZ (mother, brother, sister-in-law) - loving the plains & the desert. Please stop by to see us when you are in either of those locations.

Mary Anne Davitt

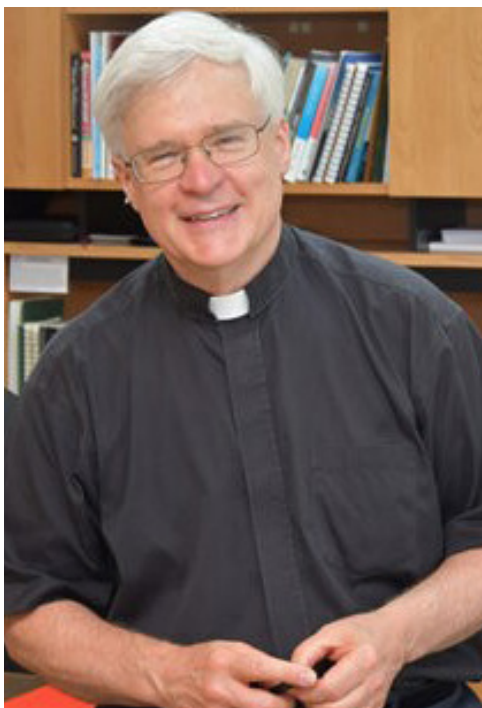
Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

After graduating from McCormick in 1972, I participated in an archaeological excavation in Israel, then on to Germany for a year of studying Old Testament and the German language, then back to the U.S. for graduate work in Old Testament.

After three years of that, I took time off from academia and moved home to Colorado, where I did some of this and that, and ended up selling insurance. From there I moved back to Chicago in 1980, to work at McCormick in the Seminary Relations office.

In the mid-80s, desktop computers were coming into use, and I found I had something of a knack for word processing. Also around that time, I realized my heart was in the Rocky Mountains, and the rest of me needed to be there as well, so I moved from Chicago back to Colorado. And then wandered a convoluted path into the field of legal word processing, where I worked until retiring in 2016.

Retirement becomes me. I'm involved in the League of Women Voters, and am a summer volunteer with the U.S. Forest Service and with a wildlands restoration group. I'm also on the boards of my homeowner association and an outdoor sports/social club, and am in several book clubs, as well as martial arts. And most important, I'm a serious fan of action adventure movies, especially the various Marvel series, and, of course, LOTR and Star Wars.



Rev. Dr. Don R. Francis

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

Don R. Francis, M.Div. (MTS '72) Ph.D. (Union Institute '92)

McCormick introduced me to Mt. (John) Hancock where God called me to urban ministry, to Armitage Avenue United Methodist "Peoples" Church where I was exposed to the city, and to the Ecumenical Institute, which became my ministerial appointment for the next 17 years, in central cities of Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, then in rural India and Korea. After a Ph.D. in Whole Systems Design, I taught for Lakeland University, Wisconsin as professor of sociology and nonprofit organization management for 23 years, including 5 in Tokyo as Dean of the Japan campus, while also serving as interim pastor in United Methodist urban and rural churches. Since 2015 I have served as full time interim pastor in UM churches of Racine, and suburban Milwaukee.

My wife and I will soon retire in Korea where we will look for a way to serve the church there. Daughter Teresa is raising her family in Indiana. Son Daniel is a space engineer at Northrup Grumman building ISS resupply vehicles. Daughter Hannah is studying for MPH at Johns Hopkins University. I pray for the church of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Neil S. Frood Jr.

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

I finished my course work at McCormick Theological Seminary in the spring of 1972. With my wife, Franny, and baby daughter, Chernee, we arrived at my first and only call, the York United Presbyterian Church in York, New York on April 1st. York, a rural hamlet, lies in the beautiful Genesee Valley about 30 miles south of Rochester. I served as pastor to and with the York Congregation for thirty-eight and one-half years.

While in York our family grew to three children: daughter Chernee, son Neil, and daughter Jamie. Franny soon co-founded a nursery school in York and worked as a teacher there for 46 years. I was very active in the York community, in a countywide ecumenical organization called The Livingston County Coalition of Churches and in our local Genesee Valley Presbytery. After a year fully retired, I worked for four years serving my Presbytery as Associate Executive for Pastoral Care.

My wife and I still live in York in the same house we have been fixing up since 1977. Our children and our six grandchildren live close by in other communities and we are very fortunate to be active with them. My wife, Franny, along with a close friend coordinate two food programs: a Backpack Program at our local school serving about 55 children and a monthly Food Distribution Mission to about 35 local families. I enjoy serving as a helper to this needed and very important work.



Rev. Dr. Dennis Maher

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

Dennis Maher lives in Whitehall NY with his wife Carol, also a retired Presbyterian minister. He plays jazz clarinet and sax, and shares his stories and thoughts on <http://sermonontheblog.blogspot.com>.

Dennis is the author of *Blue Neon Cross: A Personal History of the Church in the Modern World*. The garish, blue neon cross in his childhood church in Sioux City, Iowa, is a metaphor for the struggle of the church in our time. Civil Rights and Vietnam led him to become Christian and join the Church. He refused induction into the army, taught school, and entered seminary.

Ordained in 1972, he served churches in Minnesota and New Jersey, received a McCormick D.Min. and became an Associate Executive of Chicago Presbytery. He led Professional Development for the PCUSA, and was Presbytery Executive and Clerk in Peoria, Illinois. Biblical studies at McCormick led Dennis to become assistant director of the Westar Institute, home of the Jesus Seminar. He later served interim pastorates in Wisconsin and New York.

Following Joe Haroutunian in defining Spirit as “what transpires between us,” Dennis locates God in our highest human values, and understands church as sharing food around a table, imagining and working toward a better world.

Class of 1972

Rev. Dr. Roland Ratmeyer

Class of 1972 - Master of the Science of Theology S.T.M.

Roland Ratmeyer will soon be celebrating 60 years in ministry as a pastor in the Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Graduating from New Brunswick Theological Seminary in 1963 (M. Div.), he began his ministry by planting and serving the Church of the Good News, near McCormick's north side campus in Chicago, where he was granted an S.T.M. degree in 1972.

In 1974, he moved with his wife, Una, and their three elementary-aged children to Staten Island, NY, where he served as pastor of the Brighton Heights Reformed Church. He received a D. Min. degree from New York Theological Seminary in 1982, and was one of the founders of "Project Hospitality," an interfaith agency serving the homeless. In 1988, he moved to Jersey City, NJ, where he served as the pastor of Old Bergen Church, an RCA/PC USA union congregation. In 2003, he was assigned "retirement" status, but after interim training at Princeton Seminary, continued serving for another 18 years in ten congregations in New Jersey and New York.

Roland participated in two cross-country bike tours, in 2008 and 2013, to raise money to end the cycle of poverty. He is also an avid runner, which has included 20 Boston Marathons and 28 New York City Marathons. He and his wife, Una, make their home in Bayonne, NJ. Their three children have given them six grandchildren. Roland continues to serve as a pulpit supply on Sundays in various churches in the area.



Rev. Dr. Richard W. Selby

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

The Rev. Dr. Richard W. Selby is a minister member of Grace Presbytery, Honorably Retired.

Dick was born in Evanston, Illinois, and grew up in Skokie, a northern suburb of Chicago. Dr. Selby earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from North Park College, Chicago; a Master of Divinity degree from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago; and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin TX.

Dick most recently served for 13.5 years as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Lancaster, Texas. Immediately prior to that position, Dr. Selby served for eight years as Pastor of Ridgeview Presbyterian Church in Farmers Branch, Texas. Dick has also served as Pastor of churches in central Iowa, northwest Indiana, and Austin and Sinton in Texas.

Dr. Selby is married to Beverly Tegge Selby, a retired church organist and pianist, and a retired piano teacher. They have four grown children and ten grandchildren. Dick and Bev make their home in Farmers Branch, Texas, a northern suburb of Dallas.

These days, Dick can be seen as a regular volunteer in the food pantry at Metrocrest Services in Farmers Branch. He is also a frequent guest preacher in pulpits throughout Grace Presbytery. Dick's voice is often heard on Classical 101.1 WRR-FM as the announcer for the Sunday morning worship services at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas





Rev. Peter C. Smith

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

I met Linda (wife to be) the first day at McCormick. We were married in 1970. Our son, Graegar, was born in 1978.

My first call was to First Presbyterian Church, Lake Forest, as Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries. I served for 8 1/2 years. Highlights included establishing an annual summer senior high work camp (now in its 47th year), expanding the youth program to include middle and junior high children, strengthening the Church School, and creating opportunities for families to participate in the church's life.

In 1982 I was called to Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church in Detroit. I served for 33 years. During my pastorate we extended our outreach to the neighborhood, welcomed a diverse set of new members, "adopted" the local elementary school, creating a tutoring program and summer activities for the children, providing overnight housing for homeless people twice a year, and starting a neighborhood housing development project.

I also had the privilege of serving on McCormick's Board, being Moderator of the Presbytery, and COLA Chair for the General Assembly in 2014. I retired in 2015.

Linda and I moved back to Lake Forest to be closer to our son and his family. Love and life is good!

Rev. Michael W. Spangler

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

After graduation I was ordained by the former Madison (WI) Presbytery, and began work as an associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Salina, KS. In 1975 my family and I moved to Moscow, USSR, where I served for three years as the American Protestant Chaplain, a chaplaincy serving Americans, British and many other nationalities living in Moscow and other cities in the Soviet Union. The chaplaincy also served as an informal link to churches within the Soviet Union on behalf of the WCC and the WARC. The chaplaincy was sponsored by five US denominations, including the UPCUSA. In 1978 we moved to Geneseo, IL, where I served as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. In 1982 we moved to Brussels, Belgium, where I served for five and a half years as Pastor of the American Protestant Church (now International Protestant Church).

Returning to the US in 1987 I served as interim pastor in Woodstock, IL, Utica, IL, Geneva, IL, Rockford, IL, and Lake Havasu City, AZ. In 1995 I began work at First Presbyterian Church, Muscatine, IA. These eleven exciting years included the establishment of a partnership between the Presbytery of East Iowa and the Presbytery of Ceara, Brazil. In 2006 I retired and moved with my wife to Salzburg, Austria, where I served for three years as half-time pastor of the Salzburg International Christian Church. Full-time retirement in my wife's hometown of Sheboygan, WI followed our return from Austria, although we have enjoyed two short-term interim assignments, in 2012-2013 and 2015, at the International Protestant Church in Vilnius, Lithuania.



Class of 1972

Rev. John David Worthen

Class of 1972 - Master of Divinity

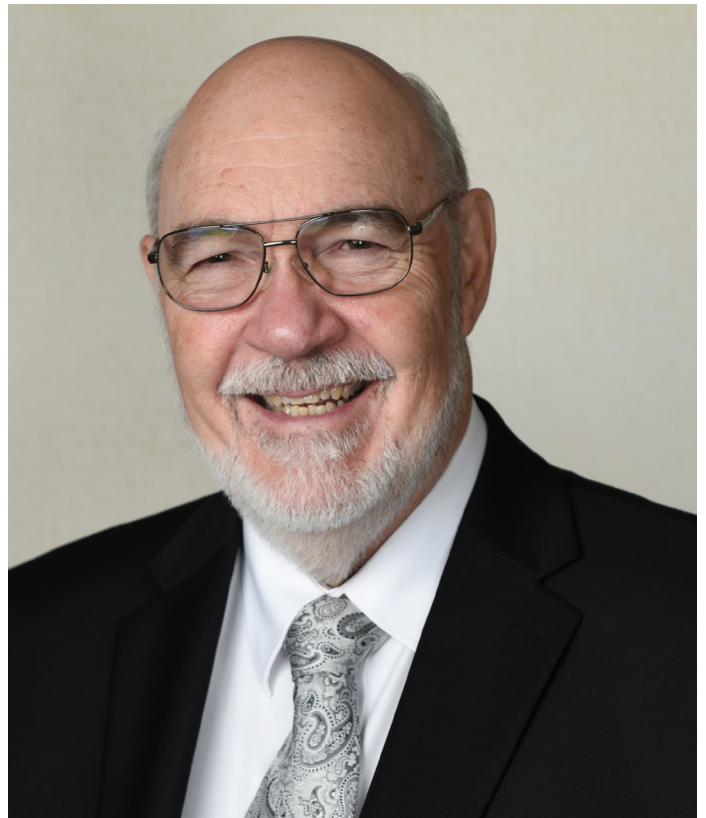
Rev. John David Worthen was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He graduated from Washington Senior High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1965; the University of Dubuque in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1969; and McCormick Theological Seminary, in 1972.

In addition to his Bachelor of Arts degree and Master of Divinity degree, he completed Clinical Pastoral Education Training - Level I, Interim Pastor Training - Level I, Stephen Ministry Leadership Training, Stephen Small Group Leadership Training, and Kairos Prison Ministry Training.

Rev. Worthen was ordained (at the first church he served) on July 23, 1972 by the Presbytery of Ohio Valley in southern Indiana. During his thirty-seven years of ministry, from 1972 - 2009, he served five Presbyterian churches in the communities of ...

Ft. Branch, Indiana
Lyons, Kansas
Estes Park, Colorado
McPherson, Kansas
Marion, Ohio

He and his wife Joanie were married in September of 1969 and traveled to seminary for their honeymoon. They have been blessed with three daughters: Rev. Heidi (Worthen) Gamble of Culver City, California, Heather (Worthen) Hendrix of Ontario, Ohio, and Dr. Holly Worthen of Oaxaca, Mexico. As well as, having been blessed with four granddaughters: Hannah Gamble, Madeleine Gamble, Kylie Hendrix, and Sarah Hendrix.





Rev. Dr. William (Mike) Youngblood

Class of 1972 – Master of Divinity

William M. (Mike) Youngblood retired from active ministry in 2013, having served 41 years in the Presbyterian Church *U.S.A.) as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree (1969) from the University of Missouri at Kansas City. He earned his Master of Divinity degree (1972) from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, and his Doctor of Ministry degree (1990) from the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Austin, Texas.

During his career he served parishes in Niles, Illinois; Iowa City, Iowa; Topeka, Kansas; Warren, Ohio; and was serving the Northminster Presbyterian Church in Evanston as Senior Pastor when he retired. He served the national Church as both a member and Moderator of the National Committee on the Self-Development of People.

Dr. Youngblood is married to Lori, recently retired literacy coach in the Evanston Illinois School District, and has two grown sons: Nathan, an Associate Consultant in Research Services and Jacob, a Senior Program Manager.

Rev. Dr. David D. Colby

Class of 1997 - Master of Divinity

Rev. Dr. David Colby is the Transitional General Presbyterian for Winnebago Presbytery in northeast Wisconsin. Prior to this call, he served pastorates in downtown St. Paul and Wilmington, Delaware. He spent fifteen years on the board of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, including as chair of the Strategy and Organizing Committee during the years leading to the PCUSA's change in ordination standards and marriage.

He lives in St. Paul and is married with two kids.



Rev. Dr. Marshall Elijah Hatch, Sr.

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Marshall Elijah Hatch, Sr. has been the Senior Pastor of the New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago's West Garfield Park community since 1993. Born 1958 in Chicago, Marshall Hatch grew up in public housing and attended public schools. His spiritual development began in Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church under the pastorate of his father, the late Reverend Elijah Hatch. He was ordained in 1985.



Dr. Hatch earned the Doctor of Ministry and Master in Theological Studies from McCormick Theological Seminary. In 1998 he was honored as a Merrill Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA. and in 2000 he was appointed an Adjunct Professor at McCormick Theological Seminary. In 2009 he was appointed as an adjunct Professor of Urban Ministry at Northern Baptist Seminary in Lombard, IL. In 2014, he was one of two recipients of McCormick Seminary's Distinguished Alum Award. In 2016, he was elected a Trustee of the Baptist Theological Union of the University of Chicago Divinity School.

Pastor Hatch has commenced numerous community outreach programs. Most notable among these are the Westside Isaiah Plan, Ezra Homes, and Pilgrim Village Homes-Washington Boulevard, new construction affordable housing development projects comprising 200 single family homes in Chicago. Hatch's landmark book, *"Project America: Memoirs of Faith and Hope to Win the Future"*, was published in 2012.

Marshall Hatch is married to the former Priscilla Murchison and they are the parents of four; Joyce, Janelle, Marshall and Maurice. They have five grandchildren.

pastormarshallhatch@gmail.com

Rev. Dr. Craig M. Jenkins

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Reverend Doctor Craig Martin Jenkins is the son of the late William and Daisy Jenkins. He was born in Albany, New York. He professed faith in Christ at the Bethel Baptist Church in Troy, New York. He received his basic education in Albany and Troy. He is married to the former Stella M. Mason. They are the parents of four children, Carmen, Courtney, Christine, Carol, and the grandparents of ten.



Dr. Jenkins was licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in February 1977. He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry, April 1981. He served as Pastor of Good Hopewell Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia from 1981-1986. Currently he serves as Pastor of Beth Eden Baptist Church - Chicago (1986-present).

Pastor Jenkins is a product of the Albany and Troy Public School system. He is a graduate of the State University of New York at Albany (B.A.), Virginia Commonwealth University (M.Ed.) Richmond, Virginia Union University School of Theology (M.Div.) Richmond, Virginia, and McCormick Theological Seminary (D.Min) Chicago, Illinois. He has served as a Seminar Leader, Lecturer, and Instructor for the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. His ministerial affiliations are with the National Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Illinois, the Greater New Era (local).

Pastor Jenkins reflects: "I have been blessed to travel for ministry in the following countries: Ghana (twice), Guyana, Italy (twice), Jamaica, South Africa (twice), Australia, and Jerusalem/Palestine. In my forty-one years as a pastor, I know that the word of God is true, powerful, life changing, challenging, and rewarding. It is a joy to serve the Lord with my local congregation, and across this nation and world."



Rev. Dr. Richard G. McFarlin

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Rev. Dr. Richard G. McFarlin received the Doctor of Ministry from McCormick in 1997. He reflects, "Forty years of my pastoral ministry took place in Montana, Wyoming, Arizona, Illinois, and Oklahoma." Moreover, my retirement in 2008 was celebrated at a meeting of Cimmaron Presbytery and included a donation to a special mission with which I have been involved for a number of years.

Marion Medical Mission is currently celebrating its 37 years of serving nearly 5 million people with safe water by installing over 45,000 wells in remote villages in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. This year's goal is 3,450 well installations. For more information please go to www.mmmwater.org.

Over the years I have served as a commissioner to General Assembly twice and on a variety of presbytery committees.

I have also held leadership roles in community ministries such as food banking, transient relief as well as volunteering as a hospital chaplain.

Having served on two shallow well teams with MMM installing wells and preaching in African churches, I am now a volunteer ambassador sharing the MMM story!

My wife Judy and I have been married for 56 years. We have two children: Kathryn Almendarez and Elizabeth Higgins and two grandchildren: Connor and Kylie Higgins.

Reverend Dr. Marilyn Pagán-Banks

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Reverend Dr. Marilyn Pagán-Banks has served as Executive Director of A Just Harvest since October, 2002. Rev. Pagán-Banks was instrumental in leading A Just Harvest through a growth period whereby the organization added advocacy and economic development programming targeting the root causes of hunger.

An ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ she serves as Pastor of San Lucas UCC in Chicago, and enjoys yoga, writing, dance, and her grandkids.

Rev. Pagán-Banks also serves as an Adjunct Professor with [McCormick Theological Seminary](#) and [Garrett Theological Seminary](#) and is a joyful contributor of [Words of Her Mouth: Psalms for the Struggle](#).

Blessings,

Marilyn

You MATTER ! and so does your support of A Just Harvest !





Rev. Jacquelyn Sowers Pinkowski

Class of 1997 – Master of Divinity

During my Middler and Senior year I served as a Student Pastor in a small church in a farming community east of Cincinnati. I was ordained there, and stayed approximately two and a half years. I learned a great deal about small churches. After leaving Bethel Burdoch, I was then installed as a Solo Pastor at Heritage Presbyterian Church in Centerville, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton, Ohio.

From Centerville to Columbus, Ohio, then Champaign, Illinois as an Interim associate pastor for education. Next came the BIG MOVE to Billings, Montana, again as a Solo Pastor. The next move was to Troy, New York. What a culture shock! I was missing family and wanted to get closer to home. God answered my prayer to move closer to Cincinnati BUT God's map and mine are a little different. My last call was in northeastern Ohio (New Philadelphia, Ohio). Cincinnati is in the Southwest corner of Ohio.

My family was all in the Cincinnati area (2 children, 3 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren). Since returning to the Cincinnati area my Husband died and I have moved to a Presbyterian Retirement Community. I love it.

THANK YOU McCORMICK!

Dr. Michael D. Reynolds

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Dr. Michael D. Reynolds joined the Division of Education at Church of God International Offices as the director of Ministerial Development and the project director of the Lilly Initiative in October 2018.



Dr. Reynolds has served as an associate professor of Christian Ministries at Trinity College and affiliate professor of Pastoral Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He also served as the executive director and associate dean of Trinity International University at the South Chicago Regional Campus in Dolton, IL.

He served as senior pastor of New Life Celebration Church of God in Dolton, Illinois, from 1992 to 2020. The church has planted eight churches and has an elementary school that serves the community children from pre-school to 8th grade.

He serves as the president of the New Life Urban Educational Center, which is a discipleship arm for the church. In addition to his local responsibilities, he serves as chaplain for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Dr. Reynolds, and his wife, Erica, have been married since 1981 and have four lovely children—Michael II, Celenna, Jonathan, Cicely Reynolds, and are grandparents to four children: Michael Reynolds III, Chloe Reynolds, and Eric and Levi Loggins.



Rev. Dr. Sandra Smith

Class of 1997 - Doctor of Ministry

Rev. Dr. Sandra Smith has thirty five years in the field of education in areas that include administration, classroom teaching, curriculum design and development, program coordination, and a variety of community service activities. Formerly, she was the Principal of Hyde Park Academy High School in Chicago, IL. Currently, she is a retiree from the Chicago Board of Education, the former Director of the Sunday Morning Bible Study at the Apostolic Church of God and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Rhema Word Ministries, Inc., founded in September, 2008.

Dr. Smith received the Bachelor Degree in 1968 from Chicago State University, the Master of Arts from DePaul University of Chicago, and the Master of Arts in 1994 from McCormick Theological Seminary, and the Doctor of Ministry in 1997 from McCormick Seminary. She has numerous plaques, awards and proclamations from city and state offices. Moreover, she has been the recipient of a Fellowship from the McArthur Foundation for the Master of Arts in Theological Studies and the Doctor of Ministry in Church and Parish Revitalization.

Dr. Smith pursued her calling and is an Associate Minister of the Apostolic Church of God where Dr. Byron T. Brazier is Pastor. She served as Director of the Christian Professional Women's Network and an instructor for the Aeon Bible College. She currently serves as a member of the Ministerial Alliance and the Women's Strategic Leadership Team.

Dr. Smith is married to Wilbert L. Smith.

Class of 1997

Rev. Betty L. Weidert

Class of 1997 - Master of Divinity

With God's leadership, I had the privilege and blessing of being called to serve the Lake City Union Church in Lake City, Iowa from August of 1997 to June of 2013. The church was a successful union of the United Methodist and the Presbyterian USA since the early 1970's. With an organ building company in the community, music and talented musicians were in awesome supply, adding to the church's worship.

I also had the opportunity to serve the Presbytery of Prospect Hill as a council member, Vice Moderator and Moderator of the presbytery, on the Committee on Ministry as chair and as acting Presbytery Executive during a transition period for the presbytery. In the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, I served on the Synod School Committee for 6 years as well as attending for 16 years. In small town Iowa one not only serves the congregation but the community as well. Thus, I was able to serve as Hospice chaplain for 13 of my 16 years in Lake City and on the board of the local center for physically and mentally challenged adults. In retirement I've served as a long pulpit supply and as occasional supply in several churches.



Rev. Francine Stark-White

Class of 1997 - Master of Divinity

Life for me has always been a blessed adventure, primarily because of the numerous jobs I have held that exposed me to a plethora of work experiences and people from different cultures and faiths. I've been blessed with opportunities to develop mental health programs for people age 55 and older, complete four units of Clinical Pastoral Education at Advocate Christ Hospital and Medical Center, work as a co-therapist in a hospital 28-day program for people in addiction recovery, and work as a chaplain for four years in a 3-level program (independent living, to 24 hour care) for older adults. Moreover, I had the opportunity to work with a group of brilliant and caring doctors and researchers at Rush University Medical Center to develop a research project with five African American churches in the Chicagoland area. This project developed a health program for reducing the number of premature deaths due to lack of exercise and poor diet.

I have developed several programs and initiatives at Third Baptist Church of Chicago (TBCOC), including a Jail Ministry. I was hired by Rev. Dr. Alan V. Ragland, Sr. Pastor, at TBCOC in 2003 as the first woman to hold a position as the Associate Minister.

My Husband and I enjoy long road trips, healthy meals, and worshipping together. I give all praise and honor to my Lord for all the blessings I have had through my life with meaningful work, and lifelong friends.

Most importantly, however, is the close and abiding relationship with my Creator-Savior-Counselor God who has nurtured, protected, and helped me through the valleys of life. Because of God's loving grace, mercy, and ever presence, my good days far outnumber my dark days, so I won't complain.



Class of 1997

Rev. Dorothy J. Williams

Class of 1997 - Master of Divinity

Since I left McCormick, I have been engaged in full-time ministry. I was ordained in the 2005 Annual Conference of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church in DeKalb, IL, where I received my first Ordination as Deacon in Full Connection. I held appointments at Hartzell Memorial United Methodist Church, Fernwood UMC Chicago and Faith UMC, Dolton, IL.

I have co-pastored and solo-pastored for approximately 23 years. I was blessed to have been nurtured by some of the finest leaders in ministry. To begin with, I must name my student advisor and counselor, Dr. Homer Ashby, here at McCormick Seminary. Along with others including Dr. Frank Thomas, Dr. Leonard Sweet, Rev. Dr. Henry Young, Interim Pastor and friend at Garrett Theological Seminary, Rev. Dr. Donald F. Guest, and Rev. Dr. Al Sampson of Fernwood UMC, Chicago.

With the gifts and graces God has given me, I have done ministry at the Dwight Correctional Prison, IL, by providing music to the women there - Oh, what a spiritually enriching time that was. Additionally, God has allowed me to design a mission program in the Englewood Community. Many young men gave their lives to Christ. OMG! I get chills each time I think of the souls that were gained in this ministry. Moreover, I worked with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, where I met Barack & Michelle Obama, prior to his election as President of the United States.

I also enrolled in McCormick's DMin in Preaching but due to illness have not completed it. I received an Honorary Doctor of Ministry from Midwest Theological Schools, and I am currently enrolled in a DMin in Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth.

To God be the Glory, for all the things he has done. There is so much more to share, but maybe at another time.

I am still engaged in the ministry of our Lord and what a joy it is to be a servant. When the one who created all things will draw the curtain on the stage of time, I want to hear the Master say, "Servant, well done. I have completed my assignment."

Praise God!



Rev. Dr. Susan G. Zencka

Class of 1997 - Master of Divinity
Class of 2015 - Doctorate of Ministry

Susan Gilbert Zencka came to ministry after working as an electrician apprentice at US Steel, and then working for ten years as a CPA. She served four calls, 2 in Illinois, 1 in Indiana, and the last one, for 15 years, in Central Wisconsin. She retired in 2021 after 24 years in parish ministry, where she developed a passion for creation-honoring Christian worship, environmental ministry, and congregational health. She was involved in interfaith climate issues while in ministry in Wisconsin. She currently serves on the steering committee of Presbyterians for Earth Care, as the treasurer.



During her active ministry, Susan also studied emotional family systems for many years with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, and continues to volunteer in Lehigh Presbytery around issues of congregational health.

In the larger church, Susan was grateful to serve as a minister commissioner to the 219th General Assembly in 2010, and as moderator of Winnebago Presbytery in 2018. While in Winnebago Presbytery, Susan was active in that presbytery's partnership with Urabá Presbytery in Colombia. Susan recently moved from Central WI to Allentown, PA where she is enjoying exploring fiber arts in retirement.

She and her husband, Carl, have three adult sons, three daughters-in-law, and a growing number of grandchildren. Susan and Carl share their home with two dogs (inside) and a lovely variety of birds, small mammals, insects, and plant community (outside).

SAVE THE DATES

McCormick Day 2023

Thursday, October 19, 2023

Distinguished Alumni/ae

Submissions Due, Friday April 14, 2023

Rising Star Award

Submissions Due, Friday April 14, 2023



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