

Heart Learning

The student was apprehensive, reluctant to fully engage. After all, those experiences and feelings he was asked to share were intimate—they belonged to him. The nervousness was palpable among the small group of students as they met for the first time. Thus, the faith-sharing process at Northeastern Seminary begins.

This process, a central element of the personal and spiritual formation program, is described by Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation Rebecca Letterman ('08) as an intentional place and space in which students take time to reflect on moments of significance in their lives. It provides a way for students to slow down enough to perceive God at work in themselves and others. They experience the hospitality of interested listening and also have the opportunity to learn to listen deeply to others. In this setting students discover they are not alone; others struggle with similar things in their lives and ministries. And it provides experiential learning of the theological truth: "God is at work in the world—sometimes even without me!"

Graduates recall that the faith-sharing experience, with its commitment to observing silence and creating spiritual and emotional space, is the antithesis of the curricular rhythms that are driven by significant amounts of reading and writing and the compression brought on by deadlines. Faith sharing has a counterbalancing effect as it allows for synthesizing data gathered in the classroom. As Suzanne Pearson ('09) describes, "It offers space and time ... for spiritual reflection on the massive volumes of academic material one is learning and to listen for the living word of God." John Miller ('04) agrees, "It moves the 'information' into the 'formation' of the person," while Steve Dunmire ('05) notes appreciation for the process:

"Especially in hindsight, I think it's one of the areas where Northeastern made my seminary years a time of spiritual growth, not just learning."

Likewise, according to Letterman, faith sharing serves as a counterbalance to our culture of hurry, efficiency, and the "fix it now" and "do it yourself" syndromes—a balance that enables us to live at the "pace of grace." Pearson found faith-sharing groups profoundly counter-cultural in that, "it forces one to listen to another without the violence of interjecting one's own personal experiences and prejudices on another's experience." Baiba Peele ('07) concurs, "When each person is allowed to share without commentary from the others, the group becomes a safe, accepting, non-judgmental place where differences are not divisive but become part of the whole community." Developing this discipline helps the seminarian begin to cut through the clutter of voices competing for time and attention to learn to discern the voice of God. Darlene Mieney ('09) notes that group facilitators are there to help students listen to God rather than ask for opinions from others. For Gloria Roorda ('02) "the experience allows God to touch something deep in us that up to that point we were unaware needed touching."

Central to faith sharing is profound respect for the individual, the power of listening to what is going on internally, and the power of God to work in silence. There is a constant climate of invitation to notice and respond to what God is doing or continuing to do in one's life—paying attention to one's ordinary experiences. This engenders the understanding that God is active and able to work in profound and life-changing ways.

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Even with all the fruit that may be cultivated through faith sharing it remains a challenge for some. Letterman observes that because of its focus on listening, it constrains verbal responses to others, a distinct difficulty for people who base much of their learning and ministry on words. And when students expect that the group exists for support, problem solving, or conversation, facilitator Mary Ann Fackelman suggests a readjustment take place before they can actively and accurately engage in the process.

So how did it turn out for the apprehensive student journeying through faith sharing?

“Thanks to our facilitator who was patient and accepting, and the blessing of God, we learned to let our guard down. We felt more at ease with each other and most importantly with ourselves. We shared deeper and more intimate parts of ourselves, as with the grace and love of God, our nervousness was replaced with understanding, trust, and care for one another. Personally, I started looking forward to faith sharing because I was able to learn not only new things about myself, but I also started to examine in a new light some old beliefs, patterns and behaviors. I could see a change in group members who were also sharing more intimately as a safe environment and certain confidentiality had been established. The work in ourselves had begun under the guidance and direction of God.”

NES Joins RWC Homecoming

NES students, alumni, faculty, and staff joined the Roberts Homecoming celebration by highlighting its Certificate in Christian Ministry Program in the parade. This program was established in 2006 to equip lay leaders in the Hispanic communities of Rochester and now offers classes in both Spanish and English. A special thanks to Certificate Program Director Frank Burgos and students Sharon Schmaltz and Angel Holmes, parade participants.



top: Frank Burgos, Angel Holmes
bottom: Sharon Schmaltz

McCown Symposium

Some 90 seminary students, alumni, pastors and laity gathered September 26 to glean insights on conversion from Dr. Joel Green, professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. Drawing from the Gospel of Luke as his context, Green took a careful and rigorous look at discovering what happens when someone enters the community of the people of God. His presentations included *Invitation Anxiety*, *Rethinking Conversion: Lukan Metaphors of Change*, and *Habits of the Changing Heart*.

To order a CD of Symposium messages, contact Sarah Champignon at champignon_sarah@nes.edu or 585.594.6420.



l. to r. Pam and Joel Green, Darlene and Wayne McCown, President John Martin

British Broadcasting Company Features NES

When the British Broadcasting Company was investigating a recent trend among older Americans’ desire for seminary education, correspondent Johnny Dymon selected Northeastern Seminary as the focus for a short radio documentary. Interviews with Academic Vice President and Dean Doug Cullum, current student Mary Van Houten, graduate Bill Rabjohn, and prospective student Shawn Carey provided a window into the dynamic pull second-career people feel toward seminaries and on the decision process that incurs. Listen to the [audio clip](#) that recently aired in the United Kingdom on BBC radio.

Jobs in Ministry

Check out the ever-changing list of job opportunities at the [career services website](#). Positions include spiritual growth chaplain, youth pastor, hospice care, lead pastor, and more. Also view a list of recent postings around upstate N.Y. [here](#). See if they are a good fit for you.

Comprehensive Distance Education Program Approved

Northeastern Seminary is approved to offer an accredited comprehensive distance education program. Recent action by the Association of Theological Schools Commission on Accrediting means the Seminary can now further develop both online and video conferencing methods of instruction to make theological education even more accessible to students across New York State. At present the approval stipulates that up to 50 percent of the Master of Divinity program can be offered through distance education.

Northeastern Society Welcomes New Members

A special group of individuals who share their God-given gifts and resources to strengthen the Seminary's distinct role of preparing people for Christian service has recently welcomed eight new or returning members:

- David Basinger, *NES and RWC faculty*
- Dean Davis, *NES and RWC alumnus*
- David Leupold, *friend and RWC alumnus*
- Janice Lum, *NES alumnae*
- J. Richard Middleton, *NES and RWC faculty*
- Phil and Judy Ogden, *retired RWC faculty and former NES staff*
- Susan Shafer, *NES adjunct faculty*
- Elizabeth Spetz, *friend and RWC alumnae*

One hundred percent of the members' contributions support scholarships for seminarians thus enabling them to enter ministry with greater confidence to serve and less burden of debt. We share our student's gratitude for such generosity.

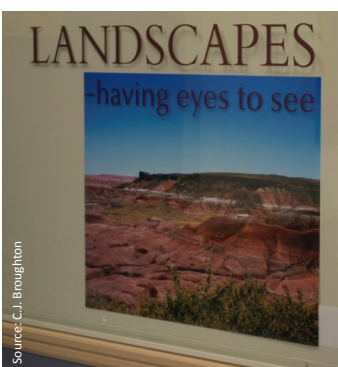
"Having Eyes to See" and the Scholarship for Ethnic Diversity

With about one-third of our students coming from ethnically diverse backgrounds and the strong commitment to diversity of former Assistant Dean Brian Babcock it made sense to establish the *Babcock Scholarship for Ethnic Diversity* scholarship upon his departure in 2008. For the past three years earnings on the \$30,000 endowment have been awarded to students of African American or Hispanic ethnicities preparing for careers in ministry or theological education. To broaden the felt impact of the award and assist even more students, the goal of raising an additional \$20,000 in endowment funds by June 30, 2012 has been set.

Coincident with championing ethnic diversity at Northeastern Seminary, Dr. Babcock is an avid amateur landscape photographer—his images are on display through December at the B.T. Roberts Memorial Hall Art Gallery in the exhibit titled "Landscapes—Having Eyes to See." Bringing together his two interests of scholarship assistance and photography, and in appreciation for gifts to the *Babcock Scholarship for Ethnic Diversity*, he will provide one of his photographs to anyone who contributes a gift of \$500 or more. Those who give \$1,000 or more will also receive a 2012 Calendar with photographs selected from the show.

Gifts can be made outright, or pledged over a three-year period. Gifts will be matched dollar for dollar from an existing matching fund. Please send your gift

to Northeastern Seminary, 2265 Westside Dr., Rochester, NY 14624 or online at www.nes.edu/onlinegiving.



Brian Babcock, former NES assistant dean shares about establishing the seminary's gallery, his photographs, and his commitment to diversity.

NES Gear

Zip-front fleece sweatshirts \$40 ▪ Ball caps \$15 ▪ T-shirts \$12 ▪ Mugs \$5 ▪ Window decals \$2

To order contact Sarah Champignon at 585.594.6800 or champignon_sarah@nes.edu. Give your name, email or phone number, quantity, and size, as needed. Pick up and pay for your order at the reception desk at the Seminary (Rochester campus) or inquire about shipping.

SPRING EVENTS

Greater Rochester
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Worship Service
January 16

Conference on Ministry
Series: *The Crisis of
Community* with
Theresa Latini
March 28

Women's Retreat
April 27 - 28

Commencement
Dr. Richard Mouw
May 12

Working Preachers
Workshop
May 21 - 23

Conference on Ministry
Series: *The Future of
Evangelicalism* with **David
Fitch**
June 12 - 13

ART EXHIBITS

*Madonna Series and
Cuban Portraits*
Paintings by **Alberto Ray**
January 23 - March 23

Vapors: The Brevity of Life
Portraits by
Athesia Benjamin
April 2 - June 30

Art Exhibit:

Landscapes—Having Eyes to See
September 19 through December 15
B.T. Roberts Memorial Hall

What at first glance might seem like a series of photos journaling excursions through some of the wonders of our State and National parks, upon closer examination becomes an invitation to look beyond the obvious to that which is revealed in and through the landscapes. The scripture text from Romans 1:20 inspired Brian Babcock, former assistant dean of Northeastern Seminary, to see the ineffable qualities of both creation and the Creator—"By taking a long and thoughtful look at what God has created, people have always been able to see what their eyes as such can't see: eternal power, for instance, and the mystery of his divine being. So nobody has a good excuse," the Message.

The exhibit is open to the public for viewing daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the B.T. Roberts Memorial Hall Art Gallery, located in the Seminary building.



Opening reception for the exhibit was held September 26 as part of the McCown Symposium.

All-Seminary Retreat

Intimacy with Others
November 12, 2011

*Cultural Life Center, Roberts Wesleyan College and
Northeastern Seminary Campus*

Retreat leaders Drs. Mark and Lisa McMinn are professors of psychology and sociology, respectively, at George Fox University. Lisa holds a Nursing Diploma from Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing, Portland, Ore., an undergraduate degree from George Fox

College, a M.S. in Sociology from Portland State University, and a Ph.D. from Portland State University. Her latest book is *Walking Gently on The Earth*.

Mark received his undergraduate degree from Lewis and Clark College and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Vanderbilt University. His latest book is *Sin and Grace in Christian Counseling*.

When not teaching, speaking, or writing, they are likely working with bees, digging in dirt, walking in the woods, or tending an orchard on Fern Creek.

Retreat cost for students, alumni, and faculty/staff are covered by the Personal and Spiritual Formation program. Spouses are welcome and can attend for nominal cost.

Visit www.nes.edu/asr for details and registration.



Lisa McMinn



Mark McMinn

Information Meetings

Tuesday, October 11	6 – 7:30 p.m.	2265 Westside Drive, Rochester, N.Y.
Tuesday, November 8	4:30 – 6 p.m.	2265 Westside Drive, Rochester, N.Y.
Monday, November 14	6 – 7:30 p.m.	6500 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville, N.Y.
Tuesday, December 6	6 – 7:30 p.m.	2265 Westside Drive, Rochester, N.Y.

Contact [JP Anderson](mailto:JP.Anderson@nes.edu), director of admissions

Community News

Alumni News:

Reggie McGill (C15) was consecrated as bishop on September 17 at New Life Fellowship in Rochester, N.Y. Bishop Alfred A. Owens, Jr. presided as consecrator and Min. Jesse Campbell served as guest psalmist.

Darlene Mienev (C16), pastor of Parma CrossPoint Free Methodist Church spearheaded a partnership with Victory Fellowship, pastored by current student **Pete Dillard (C25)**, to offer VBS on Lyell Avenue in Rochester, N.Y.

Kathrine Page (C3) has relocated with her husband to Corning, N.Y. and is working at the Glass Menagerie Gallery. She says “operating a commercial gallery is totally different from running an academic gallery!” but she loves the work and the people she works with.

Phil Schultz (C19) serves as the worship and fine arts ministry assistant at Hope Lutheran Church in Rochester, N.Y., where he is actively involved in teaching vacation Bible school and the sixth grade Quest class. Phil is enrolled in the Pastoral Colloquy program of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which leads to ordination as an LCMS pastor.

Jack Staversky (C18), is the operations director of Youth for Christ in Rochester, N.Y., where he is changing kids’ lives through relationships, life coaching, leadership development, and helping them to embrace and develop a living faith in Jesus.

Sheritta Williams (C22), holds an adjunct position with Bryant Stratton College in Buffalo, where she teaches a critical thinking course in the philosophy department, as well as several career internship prep and first year experience seminars.

Student News:

Cohort 27 members **Nate Lesher** and **Rachel Lewis** joined the pastoral staff of Harvest Chapel Free Methodist Church, Fredonia, N.Y. Nate serves as pastor of youth ministries and Rachel assists with youth.

Faculty News:

NES faculty facilitated sessions at the COGIC Institute of Christian Education, held August 17 to 19 at Roberts Wesleyan College. **Dr. Nelson Grimm**, director of field education and associate professor of applied theology, presented “The Life Cycle of a Church” to help pastors understand their church’s place in the cycle and steps to take to keep the church healthy. **Dr. Rebecca Letterman**, associate professor of spiritual formation, also presented as well as certificate program faculty, **Pastor Joanne Colon** and **Pastor Francisco L. Burgos**, director, who presented “Ministry of Wholeness” and “Spiritual Formation,” respectively.

Academic Vice President and Dean **Doug Cullum** spoke at Pleasantville Free Methodist Camp in July and in August at Asbury United Methodist Church where **Rev. Susan Shafer**, adjunct professor of ministry, is pastor.

Dr. Elizabeth Gerhardt, professor of theology and social ethics, was panelist for *Supporting domestic violence victims and their children and working with perpetrators* at a Faith & Family Workshop, held September 17 at the Roberts Cultural Life Center. The workshop dealt with the role of faith in overcoming domestic violence.

Northeastern Seminary faculty and staff participated in a retreat on ethnic diversity with Dr. Peter Cha, associate professor of pastoral theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. The retreat was held August 23 at Mercy Prayer Center in Rochester, N.Y.

Recommended Faculty Reads

After 40+ years in ministry adjunct professor **Robert Shoesmith** counts Paul D. Hanson’s *The People Called, The Growth of Community in the Bible* (Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), in his top 10. “This book focuses on the development of community throughout the Bible, tracing a unique triadic notion of community that can be seen as a vital spiritual core for today’s faith community.”

Of particular interest are the historic changes in Old Testament community as Israel moves within and throughout the context of the Biblical lands and culture and the development of various communities of the Church in the New Testament.

A foundational book for anyone interested in congregational systems, adaptive organizational change, and various transformational issues around the focus of ‘church and society.’ “

Come See Us at These Events

North American Baptist Annual Meeting
Houghton College Grad School Fair
Project Urge Meeting
Pastor’s Lunch—Howard Dayton Stewardship
Basic College Ministries Fall Conference

Oct. 14-16	Getzville, N.Y.
Oct. 18	Houghton, N.Y.
Oct. 22	Rochester, N.Y.
Oct. 25	North Chili, N.Y.
Oct. 28	Rochester, N.Y.



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