GROWTH
A SEASON OF SUSTENANCE AND GROWTH.

“...and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” Ezekiel 47:12
GROWING
OUR
GIFTS
As you receive this year’s Report on Philanthropy, I am overwhelmed with gratitude and resolve: gratitude for all that we have and for all you have shared, and a resolve to grow our treasures even more.

This report’s motivating theme, “a season of sustenance and growth,” demonstrates that CST continues to take care of your gifts while we plan and pray for more growth. It is inspired by a verse from the Hebrew Bible. We trace Ezekiel’s prophecies to between 593 and 571 B.C.E., during the period of the fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity. Ezekiel is a priest called by God to deliver His messages:

“By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” Ezekiel 47:12

This is a message of deliverance and restoration. Similarly, after emerging from some trying times, we at CST are being restored: restored in relationship with UMC founders, ecumenical and interfaith partners, extensive and various communities. Later, you will read about our Campus Master Plan, our resourcefulness, and our planned improvements — all with an eye toward sustenance and fruitfulness.

You will read also about students wisely using land resources and teaching others to do the same; alumni/ae creating housing for the un-housed and healing broken communities; faculty speaking boldly about mental health issues, interfaith relations, and gun violence; and donors placing CST among the key treasures they support. Thanks to your generosity, together, we are planning for the future, rooted in gratitude.

Through Ezekiel, God said, “Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” May God bless our fruitfulness and sustain us while we help heal our world. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

Sincerely,

REV. DR. KAH-JIN JEFFREY KUAN
PRESIDENT, CLAREMONTE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
Watching Kristin Ritzau, a CST doctoral candidate in Practical Theology, with her husband and young son at their family homestead, she seems born for the job of caring for God’s creation. On their urban farm, they raise chickens and grow blueberries, figs, pomegranates, a host of vegetables, flowers, and, most importantly, community.

“We are outside every day,” said Ritzau. “Literally and figuratively, we are nourishing the foods and relationships that will sustain us.”

This homestead experience inspired Kristin to get her doctorate in Practical Theology with an emphasis on Religious Education and Spiritual Formation.

“I started seeing connections to working the soil, planting seeds, figuring out crop rotations and insect issues, alongside my neighborhood transforming, too,” said Ritzau. Naturally, she gravitated toward a degree with real-world application. “I wanted to go to a school that would allow me to deepen my view of the world, not only my theology, but also my ecological framework, in a scientifically responsible way.”

Ritzau is one of a growing number of students seeking to better understand practical ways to create a difference in the world. Claremont School of Theology is among the top 55 seminaries in North America offering coursework in faith and ecology. The listing was part of a recent report published by The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD). The report surveyed 231 mostly Christian seminaries across North America. Of those, the report states, “23 percent of these seminaries, theological schools, and divinity schools offer courses on faith and ecology.”
Through financial support, you are making a connection between faith and ecology.
CST currently offers several courses that directly engage the relationship between ecology and religion, including Eco-Feminist Theology, Theology of Creation, and Environmental Ethics. The topic also permeates a wealth of courses offered throughout the CST curriculum.

Zack Walsh, a PhD student in Religion with a concentration in Process Theology, chose CST because “it is spearheading the development of an ecological civilization across academic disciplines and religious traditions.” Walsh spent five years living in China, creating comprehensive frameworks for alternative models of development and managing financial, natural and social resources to create sustainable communities.

At CST, his broad concentration is ecological civilization – building policy roadmaps for different sectors such as education, technology, and economics, examining what it would mean to create sustainable civilizations within the constraints of 21st century growth expectations. “I’m looking for ways to shift the conversation away from quantity to quality, and understanding how we’re not just speaking of survival, but of flourishing,” explained Walsh.

He also uses his background in engaged Buddhism to “respond to the needs and suffering of others,” and shares his experience across faiths, texts, and environments. “I don’t view my salvation as separate from others. My needs are connected to needs of others, our salvation is intertwined.”

That connectedness drives recent Ph.D. graduate, Dr. Christopher Carter ’16, Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego, a private, Catholic college. Carter regularly discusses sustainability and ecology with his students, emphasizing the connections between the environmental justice movement, liberation theology, and progressive Black political thought.

“One of my goals is to expose this justice-oriented perspective of religion and ecology to what is, historically, a group of students who may not have thought critically about these subjects and how they are interconnected.”

“The way in which we eat connects us to our ancestors, but also reveals how our relationship to food is always evolving.” – Dr. Chris Carter

Read more about Dr. Carter here
Dr. Carter credits many of his CST professors, especially Dr. Grace Yia-He Kao, Associate Professor of Ethics, with helping him make critical connections. He grew up in an urban area of Michigan and regularly visited grandparents who farmed land in a nearby small town, but CST provided him the space to explore, fearlessly. Dr. Carter’s forthcoming book, *The Spirit of Soul Food: Faith, Food Justice, and Liberation*, based on his doctoral thesis, looks at the ways in which food injustice affects African Americans and offers an appropriate African American response.

“Food is one way in which everybody can be involved in a liberatory movement,” said Dr. Carter. “The way in which we eat connects us to our ancestors, but also reveals how our relationship to food is always evolving. As African Americans we have always adapted in order to survive in this country and we are at a point now where we must adapt and re-conceptualize our eating habits.”

Ph.D. student Walsh agrees that a change in thinking and being does not have to mean scarcity. He suggests that we use different language when talking about sustenance, the language of flourishing. “When we discuss our understanding of the resource constraints we have to face, let’s envision a stable environment in which students, faculty, and outside communities can thrive rather than feel deprived.”

“I want my neighbors, and especially my boys, to understand that with this life we are given, we don’t just have to work, we get to work, and turn our homes into places of production instead of consumption,” said Ritzau, who birthed her second child in August. “My son gets to gather the eggs every day and while he picks snap peas off the vine, our neighbors stop to talk. Our house witnesses to the community. It makes us think about - especially in a city like Los Angeles – how we can do life in ways that are sustainable and resilient.”

“I wanted to go to a school that would allow me to deepen my view of the world, not only my theology, but also my ecological framework, in a scientifically responsible way.”

– Kristin Ritzau
Retirements: Say It Isn’t So!

Three pillars of the CST community retired this year.

After long careers of service to the School, Dr. Jack Coogan, passionate supporter of the arts on campus; Elaine Walker, the former Director of Circulation at the School’s Library and involved community leader; and Bishop Charles Jordan, the School’s longtime Bishop in Residence retired this year. Together, the three hold a trove of memories and stories about the School, from its early days through this year, and we miss them already.

Dr. Coogan, Professor of Communication Arts, retired after fifty years of teaching and enriching the CST community. He earned both his graduate degrees from CST and started teaching at the School in 1965. In his time at the School, Dr. Coogan’s interests included religion and the performing arts, and religion and media. He supported these passions on campus, overseeing theatrical productions, concerts, and more. The newly created Dr. Jack Coogan Award for the Creative Use of the Arts in the Life of the CST Community honors his commitment to the institution.

Elaine Walker retired from her post as the Director of Circulation at the School’s Library after nearly 38 years. Walker began her career at CST in 1978, serving in the Library as well as on many crucial task forces over the years, including the Committee on Diversity...
and Inclusion. Walker, who self-identifies as an African American, a womanist, and a Southerner, has been an important presence and an influential mentor to students. To honor her service, the School created the Elaine Walker Scholarship for an African American Woman, first awarded to doctoral student Clemette Haskins at the start of the 2016-2017 academic year.

Bishop Jordan retired after serving as the Bishop-in-Residence at the School for fifteen years. Prior to his election to the United Methodist Church episcopacy, Bishop Jordan served as a pastor of local churches and as a District Superintendent. He sat on the General Board of Global Ministries, the General Council on Ministries, and the General Board of Church and Society. In Southern California, he also served on the board of Directors of Progressive Christians Uniting and Pueblo De Fe Unido Para Justicia Para Los Trabajadores. At the School, Bishop Jordan worked with the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and the Pan African Seminarian Association in support of social justice and inclusion.

Together, the three hold a trove of memories and stories about the School, from its early days through this year, and we miss them already.
Board Approves Promotions for Three Faculty Members

At its February meeting, CST’s Board of Trustees approved the promotion of three faculty members – Professors Monica Coleman, Duane Bidwell, and Najeeba Syeed.

Dr. Monica Coleman, Professor of Constructive Theology and African American Religions, made full Professor – the first African American woman full Professor at CST. Coleman is a philosophical theologian who works with a process metaphysic and the black and womanist theological traditions. Her research interests include process theology, new movements in black and womanist theologies, African traditional religions (Yoruba-based traditions in the Americas), mental health and theology, and religious pluralism.

In April, Coleman – also co-Director of the Center for Process Studies and Director of Process and Faith – organized an inaugural, one-day online conference called “Real Spirituality for Your Church.” In this school year, she is teaching Becoming a Public Scholar-Activist and Advanced Topics in Womanist Religious Scholarship, as well as co-teaching a course on the History of African-American Islam with Najeeba Syeed.

Coleman’s new book, Bipolar Faith: A Black Woman’s Journey with Depression and Faith, was published in July and she is currently working on a book that discusses the intersection of multiple religious belonging and African American perspectives.

Dr. Duane Bidwell, Professor of Practical Theology, Spiritual Care and Counseling also made full Professor. He focuses on liberating marginalized people by engaging pastoral theology, spirituality, social psychology, and mental health. His teaching, advising, and mentoring are shaped by experiences as chaplain, pastor, spiritual director, pastoral counselor, HIV/AIDS professional, and non-profit director.

Bidwell’s current work focuses on the intersection of pastoral theology and Buddhist-Christian studies, developing and promoting a comparative theological paradigm for pastoral theology, and exploring religious multiplicity. In June, he lectured in Switzerland at the Inaugural Conference of the International Association of Spiritual Care regarding “Spiritual Care, Migration, and Multiplicity: Care in the Context of Complex Religious Bonds.” He is also working on a book for Beacon Press, tentatively titled Spiritually Fluid: What We Can Learn from JuBus, Hinjews, and Other Religiously Multiple People, to be published in 2017.

This fall, Bidwell is on research leave, studying at Vietnam National University in Hanoi and teaching M.Div. students at Wesley Theological College in Ho Chi Minh City/Saigon.

Learn more about Dr. Coleman here

Meet Dr. Bidwell here
CST promoted Professor Najeeba Syeed from Assistant to Associate Professor of Interreligious Education. Syeed chairs national conferences on Muslim and Interfaith Peacebuilding, serves as a mediator in many cases, and founded mediation programs at several institutions. She advises government-sponsored initiatives on the local, state, and federal levels and in international conflicts in Guam, Afghanistan, Israel, Palestine, India, and France.

Syeed’s research focuses on mediation between law enforcement and communities, intersections of law with religious minority communities, and interfaith just peacemaking. She also blogs regularly for Muslim Voices, Feminist.Com, and Huffington Post and has been featured in the Los Angeles Times, on NPR, and on PBS.

“In a year when Muslims are being told they can’t run for President or should not be allowed to migrate here, I am thankful for Claremont School of Theology, a Christian school of theology that epitomizes the Christian commitment to hospitality and social justice,” said Syeed. “According to the Christian teachings of Matthew 5:9, ‘Blessed are the peacemakers,’ and CST is a wonderful example of an institution that maintains a solid grounding in Christian roots while implementing interreligious peacemaking.”

Dr. Kao Co-Edits Asian American Christian Ethics

Professor Grace Yia-Hei Kao co-edited a new book called Asian American Christian Ethics: Voices, Methods, Issues. The text features twelve Christian ethicists of Asian descent who “identify the purposes and chart the contours of what constitutes a distinctly Asian American Christian ethical approach to moral concerns.” Topics range from traditional concerns of Christian ethics to those of special interest to Asian Americans, a spectrum that includes gender, sexuality, racial identity, immigration, the environment, and cosmetic surgery. “We hope to inspire more scholars to do the ongoing work of Asian American Christian ethics with us,” says Kao.

More Dr. Kao publications here

“CST is a wonderful example of an institution that maintains a solid grounding in Christian roots while implementing interreligious peacemaking.”
— Najeeba Syeed

Learn more about Dr. Syeed’s work here
Jackson Delivers Britt Lectures in Hawaii

Professor Jack Jackson, E. Stanley Jones Associate Professor of Evangelism, Mission and Global Methodism, delivered the 2016 Britt Lectures in February 2016. The annual lecture series on theology and the Bible is sponsored by the Hawaii District of The United Methodist Church and is endowed through the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Clarence Britt.

Jackson’s theme – Offering Christ: John Wesley’s Vision for Nurturing Disciples and Congregations Today – guided the lectures, each of which addressed a different angle to help contemporary Christians more fully engage and understand Wesley’s vision.

Dean Publishes New Anthology of Works by Hildegard of Bingen

In 2016, Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, Dean of the Faculty, Professor of Practical Theology and Religious Education, and Vice President for Academic Affairs for Claremont School of Theology, published her latest book, entitled Hildegard of Bingen: Essential Writings and Chants of a Christian Mystic—Annotated & Explained.

Hildegard of Bingen – visionary, abess, composer, dramatist, poet, and healer – served as a brilliant and passionate precursor of many of the great women mystics of the Middle Ages. Kujawa-Holbrook’s translation and annotation of Hildegard’s works in this new book introduces readers to Hildegard’s world and writings by presenting a wide range of her texts grouped by theme which provides a deeper understanding of this influential spiritual figure than can single-themed collections.

“I have been working on Hildegard’s texts for over three decades - ever since I heard some of her chants in the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York,” commented Kujawa-Holbrook, who feels called to help others deepen their spiritual life by introducing them to the works of medieval women mystics. This book is a compilation of this ongoing work. Annotations by Kujawa-Holbrook provide historical background and place selections within the wider context of Hildegard’s understanding of the spiritual life and the natural world.

Order your copy here
Many of our esteemed faculty members regularly serve as experts for local, national, and international media outlets. **Professor Najeeba Syeed**, Associate Professor of Interreligious Education, participated in the launch of the Oprah Winfrey TV Series “Belief,” a week-long documentary that aired last October. Syeed talked to the network about mobilizing interreligious communities around the country to watch the series and engage in dialogue about its content. She also lent her voice to a promotional video for the series. Syeed also contributed to “One Thing: 2015” discussing the most influential trends in the area of faith and religion. This year, she participated in a special episode of the local public radio program *Which Way, L.A.?* (which ended its run in February 2016) entitled “Race Relations: Then and Now.”

**Dr. Frank Rogers**, the Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy and the co-director of the Center for Engaged Compassion at CST, contributed to a new public radio series, *The Power of Nonviolence*. Rogers discussed his book, *Practicing Compassion*, and his journey developing the Compassion Practice he now teaches. The segment also features Los Angeles-area prison chaplains, Brother Dennis Gibbs and Sister Greta Ronningen, both of whom were trained by Rogers at CST.

**Rev. Duane Bidwell**, Professor of Practical Theology, Spiritual Care and Counseling, appeared on CBC Radio’s *Tapestry* with Mary Hines to discuss the value of understanding between those of different faiths. “The tendency to see one ultimate reality is in some ways a very Western philosophical idea,” said Bidwell. “And where there is one there is empire. I think it’s really important to hold the distinctions in order not to erase differences. Difference is very important.”
Commencement Speaker Receives Honorary CST Degree

CST’s 2016 Commencement speaker, Jim Winkler, General Secretary and President of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the School for his lifelong work as a social justice advocate.

Dr. Winkler told his “fellow graduates” it is their collective purpose to find creative ecumenical and interfaith ways to share God’s word with the world. “CST knows it’s no longer enough for a graduate theological school to imbue its students with a fundamental knowledge of scripture, literature, and theology,” said Winkler. “The needs of the church and world demand religious leaders who are innovators, capable of using the tools and frameworks of ancient traditions to bring about real and embodied transformation to contemporary life.”

Winkler learned his commitment to peace and justice from his preacher father who stood against the Vietnam War and supported the Civil Rights movement. In college, Winkler studied African American history and joined the Coalition Against Apartheid, advocating for his school to divest from South Africa's apartheid regime. He also served as a United Methodist Church (UMC) Mission Intern assigned to the South Pacific and helped organize the United Methodist Seminar Program on National and International Affairs in Washington, D.C.

In 2000, Winkler became the general secretary of the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS), the international public policy and social justice agency of the UMC. In this position, he led efforts to protest the Iraq War, act against climate change, and advocate for the Affordable Care Act. Through his work with GBCS, Winkler became involved with CST, serving on the Board of Trustees from 2011-2014.

He believes CST is creating a difference for the world and told the graduates, “The way forward depends on you. I am committed to this struggle and honored to be in it with you.”

CST Hosts Renowned Speakers and Alums

Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Mother of African Women’s Theology

In November, CST welcomed world-renowned scholar and mother of African Women’s Theology, Mercy Amba Oduyoye. Oduyoye’s scholarship in theology changed worldviews on gender, ecumenism, and restorative historiography. She shared her experience as the primary voice of African women theologians and she rejoiced at the rise of a new generation of African women theologians. “There is no such thing as voicelessness,” said Oduyoye. “There are only people who do not hear.” CST students Clemette Haskins and Toni Bond Leonard helped organize the event.

“There is no such thing as voicelessness.”

— MERCY AMBA ODUYOYE
“As a theologian, she is an exemplar of faith, who lifts and centers the lives and stories of African women as sacred text for the work of healing and transformation,” said Haskins. Bond Leonard added, “Dr. Oduyoye inspired us with her scholarship, wisdom, and wit. Our community was in the presence of greatness.”

Alumnus Addresses Queerness in Religion from an Intersex Perspective

“Bodies are diverse.” That’s the takeaway from the talk given by Dr. Adam Ackley, MA ’91, called, “Queerness in Religions/Religious Studies from an Intersex Perspective.” At a December event hosted by CST’s Sexuality and Gender Collaborative and the Center for Sexuality, Gender and Religion, Ackley shared his experience as an intersex person engaging in the study and practice of religion. “I can’t make the policing of gender and sex go away, but I can work to make it more humane,” he explained, arguing that discrimination against intersex and queer bodies is not inherently religious, but rather anthropological. He also emphasized the importance of intersex and queer allies in faith communities. “Every morning, I give thanks to God for this queer body.”

“Every morning, I give thanks to God for this queer body.” — DR. ADAM ACKLEY

Author Diana Butler Bass Speaks on Spiritual Revolution

Also in December, well-known author Diana Butler Bass came to campus to talk about her new book, Grounded: Finding God in the World – A Spiritual Revolution. Butler Bass shared her writing process for the book, which describes the change from a vertical to a horizontal relationship with God. In this horizontal relationship, she explained, we need not wait for grace to come down to save us. “What if grace is all around?” she asked the room. “Isn’t the idea of a world drenched in grace where our hope really emerges?”

After speaking on Grounded, Butler Bass fielded questions from the group on such subjects as the purpose of prayer, which she calls “the ultimate grounding practice,” and her use of the term panentheism (God in everything). When she first heard the word in seminary, it changed the way she thought about God.

“Isn’t the idea of a world drenched in grace where our hope really emerges?” — DIANA BUTLER BASS
Monkeying Around at Lunar New Year

CST celebrated the Year of the Monkey at our annual Lunar New Year party in February 2016. The Lunar New Year, also known as the Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, is celebrated in China, as well as Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and around the world. By some accounts, the festival traces its history back nearly 4,000 years.

There are many different myths and traditions associated with the holiday, but above all it is a time of celebration. CST students, staff, and faculty dressed in festive red colors, gathered to eat dim sum and other Chinese foods, and received the traditional red envelope gifts given at the Lunar New Year, all while enjoying some social time.

Gamward Quan, CST’s Vice President for Business Affairs and Chief Financial Officer, helped organize and fund the event. “I wanted to support a purely social event where people could meet without any serious agenda or programming,” said Game.

The Wide World of Chaplaincy: CST Hosts Advanced Screening

For some, the word “chaplain” still conjures images of clergy dressed in black, ushering in a time of death. The audience at CST’s Kresge Chapel knows otherwise. On October 8th, as part of the Truman Barrett Speaker Series, CST screened the documentary Chaplains, a project of filmmaker Martin Doblmeier. Guests from the local interreligious and chaplain community, as well as CST, learned that this career path is
intense, colorful, and full of surprises, as it seeks to strike a balance between spiritual and secular worlds.

The film demonstrates the work of chaplains in contexts as diverse as the military, prisons, the U.S. Congress, the corporate world, children’s hospitals, and, yes, even NASCAR. “These are the people that work where the rubber hits the road,” said Doblmeier. “I think there are a lot of people out there searching and maybe this film will help them realize that they feel called to be a chaplain.”

CST Welcomes New Partnership with Spirituality Website Pioneers

With nearly 50 years of experience and research as their foundation, Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat are partnering with CST to build a brick-and-mortar presence for their Spirituality and Practice (S&P) website (spiritualityandpractice.com). The S&P name reflects a basic understanding that spirituality and practice are the two places where all the world’s religions and spiritual paths come together. Where better to celebrate that coming together than at CST, an ecumenical, interfaith campus dedicated to creating a difference in the world?

The new Center for Spirituality and Practice in Claremont will provide a meeting ground for mutual mentoring by youth and elders; opportunities to train students, chaplains, and other professionals in spiritual practices; and a place to house a vast library of spiritual books, DVDs and CDs, relying on spiritual resources from wisdom traditions and religions across the world.

CST’s Dr. Andrew Dreitcer, who teaches spiritual formation, says the S&P website is an invaluable resource. “Since CST’s interreligious practical spirituality program is already considered one of the best in the country, this collaboration will create an unparalleled selection of degree and non-degree offerings.”

DONORS BEGIN TO ENDOw SCHOLARSHIP HONORING DR. HOWARD CLINEBELL

In October 2015, Claremont School of Theology and The Clinebell Institute launched an appeal to establish The Howard J. Clinebell Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship benefits students in the Ph.D. program in Spiritual Care and Counseling at CST.

Dr. Clinebell – a pioneer in the field of counseling and religion – helped found the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and served as its first president. He also helped establish the Ph.D. program in Pastoral Care and Counseling at CST, where he taught for 30 years. His former students and colleagues are now international leaders of the pastoral counseling movement. It is our hope that this endowment will help support and encourage more scholars and practitioners of pastoral counseling.

To honor Dr. Clinebell and advance pastoral care and counseling, add your gift today. Contact the Office of Advancement at (909)447-2535.
THE YEAR IN WORSHIP

At least once a week, from September through early May, CST students, faculty, staff, and guests preach, teach, and worship together. We participate in services honoring a wide variety of traditions—from a classical United Methodist worship with Charles Wesley hymns, to an outdoor re-creation of the Hajj, celebrating the annual pilgrimage to Mecca made by over two million Muslims each year. This CST tradition helps us better understand one another in body, mind, and soul.
HYBRID STUDENTS: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

PASTOR LORI TAPIA, M.DIV., DOC

“I transferred to CST after I became aware of the hybrid program, and the amazing partnership with Disciples Seminary Foundation (DSF) for students from the Disciples of Christ. The hybrid program provides the opportunity for me to continue to be fully immersed in ministry while completing my M.Div. The time on campus for intensives is all-consuming, but extremely rewarding as I get to learn in a face-to-face environment with so many amazing people.

“CST provides an environment that challenges me in so many ways. I am challenged in my own way of walking in the world, in my encountering others, and in loving my neighbor. My ministry is enhanced by those learning with me and by professors who have my growth in mind as they push me to dig a bit deeper and go a little further.”

Lori Tapia leads Community Worship in Kresge Chapel.

SONDOS KHOLAKI, M.DIV., ISLAMIC CHAPLAINCY

“My priority in this season of my life is definitely my family: my husband and two children, ages eight and ten. Being a hybrid student allows me the flexibility I crave to nurture my children while nurturing my mind and soul at school.

“Bayan and CST provide a forum where current events, religion, and community can be discussed through an American Muslim lens at the graduate level. Being able to communicate in “Muslim-ese” to reach creative solutions to current challenges in our community is significant. The students are already at a certain level of understanding of Islam and Muslims. It’s exhilarating and inspiring! I am so grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to study alongside and under the best and brightest. And, because chaplaincy is a new career field among Muslims, Bayan and CST connect me with resources – people and otherwise – as I pave the way for Islamic chaplaincy in my circles.”

Sondos Kholaki, her husband, and children.
REV. JARROL TAYLOR, M.DIV., AME

“The hybrid program at CST is the next best thing to being in class. My virtual community supports me. I’m in contact with professors at any time, even on weekends. Also, all the resources I need are online; I can read or print documents, play videos, and get feedback almost immediately. Plus, I can wake up on a Saturday and start class in my pajamas!

“My spiritual growth and life has grown by leaps and exponential bounds ever since I started attending CST. God is walking with me, as always, and even as I am constantly gleaning information about other people, their beliefs and non-belief systems, this still edifies my faith walk and shows me that we are all on a walk for purpose… I just want to fulfill my purpose.”

CHINA ISLER, M.DIV., DOC, AND CATHERINE “CACKIE” TAYLOR, M.DIV., PCUSA

CHINA: “I’m a California native. Cackie lives near Washington, D.C. We originally met through my husband, Seth, on Facebook. They attended junior high and high school together in Cleveland, Ohio. As Cackie began to investigate various seminaries to attend, she started following my posts, became eager and inspired, and made the call to CST’s Admissions Office! Now, we are sharing this journey together, thanks to Facebook… and CST!”

CACKIE: “I visited CST from DC and fortuitously ran into an admissions director, Meagan Wood, whose thoughtful engagement empowered me. And, it seemed that whenever I doubted going to seminary, China would post something that helped me recapture my lifelong determination to attend seminary. Her posts inspired me and framed my ultimate faith that I was being called. In the end, I applied only to CST, was awarded a Presidential Scholarship, retired from teaching, and began the Hybrid/Online M.Div. program (which is fabulous)! Now, I am an associate pastor intern near my home in Northern Virginia!”
As your Director of Alumni/ae Relations, I logged thousands of miles and hundreds of hours on the road this year, traveling from coast to coast and all corners of the United States. It may sound tiring, but an interesting phenomenon takes place in me as I visit you, our alumni/ae: I come home feeling revived and excited. And, that makes total sense to me.

Read about Reunion 2016 here
Why? The Latin word “alumnus” means “someone who has been nourished by an institution.” Claremont School of Theology provided nourishment for each of you, and, now when I travel, you return the favor and give me sustenance. You do this by reminding me of all the faithful, smart, creative, compassionate, engaged people who represent this alma mater (there's that root word again).

You are Creating a Difference for the World We Live In, giving of your time and money, referring students, and advocating for justice and love, worldwide.

Thank you for your generosity, your loyalty, and friendship.

—Noemi Ortega, Director of Alumnalae Relations
Top Row
The Lemon Tree during January Intensives
Rev. Mark Bollwinkel preaching and potting
Young Lan Kim, D.Min., Community Worship

Second Row
Raymond Elias, M.Div. ’16, Interfaith Halaqah
Emily Rose, M.Div. ’16

Third Row
Class of 2016 in its glory
Ph.D. student Girim Jung at Gratitude Day
Faculty participate in “Chaplains” screening
Top Row
Janice Hal, CST Bursar, receives communion
The Allers with Brad Nussbaum, M.Div. ’16,
Gratitude Day
Screening, “The Story of God with Morgan Freeman”

Second Row
Allura Davis, Alumni Relations
Tu’uta Sekini, M.Div. student & Pacific Islander
Community Choir

Third Row
End of year Interfaith Service
Passing the peace at Community Worship
Josefina Perez, Interfaith Chaplaincy M.Div. '18
The pager message read simply, “Make yourselves available.” CST doctoral students – the Rev. Angela Li and the Rev. Saul Barceló – knew it meant more. As full-time chaplains at Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC), they deal with trauma every day – comforting parents of a dying child; holding hands with chronically ill patients, again; caring for fatigued staff members, and listening to everyone else who crosses their paths. Even with all of this exposure, these veteran crisis responders were stunned by the trauma at their door on December 2, 2015.

A husband & wife killed 14 people and injured nearly two dozen more at an employee holiday party in San Bernardino County. The injured, worried, and grieving came to LLUMC. Revs. Barceló and Li caught and cradled family members as they tried to locate their loved ones, and cared for those who realized their loved ones weren’t there. At all.

“I comforted grown men as they broke down – imagining the worst when we knew so little – telling them it was okay to let it out,” remembered Rev. Barceló. “I drove home wondering if one husband ever found his wife and was so relieved to find out she survived.”

Being able to communicate across belief systems in an appropriate, culturally-competent way is crucial to assisting those experiencing trauma. In addition to offering care, Revs. Li and Barceló knew the attackers were being described as Muslim, so they worked diligently to undo any misperceptions or sweeping generalizations, making LLUMC a safe sanctuary for all. Their chaplaincy training involves people of all faiths and traditions, and Muslims are often part of the counseling and support responses to these atrocities. “The conversations we shared at CST prepared us for the real world and diverse ways of thinking and believing,” said Rev. Li. “Our core message is always compassion, love, and leading by example.”
Five months later and three thousand miles away, Rev. Thea Racelis – CST ’14 and UCC pastor – offered her love and leadership in Orlando. She flew in with a team from New England to comfort families and friends of those massacred and maimed by the killer at Pulse nightclub on Latin Night. For her, this was not a community “out there”; she knows it intimately and knew it needed her presence.

“As a Queer Puerto Rican Minister, I bring the fullness of my intersectional self into the work I do,” said Rev. Racelis. “My Queer, Brown, Fat body was there to receive the rage, was there to hug and hold, was there to stand in solidarity, and to embody the gospel message: show up! Don’t just open your doors, don’t just sit and pray, don’t just light a candle, but find a way to show up to the places where pain meets Christ.”

That pain increased when volunteer clergy/chaplains brought messages of condemnation, or mere tolerance, to the bereaved LGBTQIA and Latinx communities; and when language around gender identity and sexual orientation lacked understanding; and when some of those in charge consistently mispronounced the names of the dead and the waiting. Like her chaplain colleagues at LLUMC, Rev. Racelis’ culturally-competent personhood provided safe harbor.

“For some of the people I met, I was an invitation to consider a new paradigm: a church with leadership that looks and sounds like the Latinx community and that welcomes God’s rainbow tribe,” said Rev. Racelis. “Dios ama a su gente. Sin excepción.”

God loves God’s people. Without exception.

Connect with Somos Orlando here
A FOUNDATION OF LOVE AND DIGNITY: 

CST ALUMNUS BUILDS HOMELESS HOUSING REVOLUTION
“Simply because someone is poor they should not have to have poor (or no) housing,” said the Rev. Dan Bryant, CST ’84 and senior pastor of First Christian Church, Eugene, Oregon. “We can provide safe, secure, attractive, and truly affordable housing and return to the resident a new sense of pride, joy, responsibility, and dignity.” And he would know.

Rev. Bryant is the executive director for Square One Housing, a non-profit that provides transitional shelter for the homeless using micro-housing and self-government. It started as a parking lot program dedicated to providing a safe space. Their first housing community – OpportUNITY Village Eugene (O.V.E.), built in 2013 – houses up to 35 people who stay an average of nine months.

“We have several residents who have gotten jobs, earned degrees; we’ve even had two weddings,” explained Rev. Bryant. “One key to our success is being self-governed. The residents have a simple five-step code they live by and if someone acts up, the community has a process to deal with that too.”

In Square One’s newest iteration of this project, Emerald Village, the homes are 150 - 250 square feet and the residents are not renters, but rather members of a co-operative who are purchasing a share of the village with their monthly rent. Rev. Bryant won over naysayers through building relationships – such as with city council, the police chief and fire inspector, and volunteer architects– and now these communities are flourishing. “Not only are we providing a safe, sheltered home but we also see a rise in better mental health, a sense of community and belonging, and success in the outside world.”

“We could definitely see something like this happening in our city in the future,” said CST ’15 alum, the Rev. Al Lopez, a leader with UrbanMission – a joint new church supported by the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ in Pomona, California. “Our efforts in South Pomona have led us to found UrbanMission Community Partners (UMCP), an independent nonprofit organization that seeks to promote community wholeness and sustainability in our city. We do this by working with families and individuals at risk from poverty, hunger, homelessness, incarceration, and/or inadequate education, and healthcare.”

UMCP is currently working on “bridge housing” for people coming out prison - people that are at serious risk of experiencing homelessness. “We find Dan’s approach very appealing because it not only provides housing for people experiencing homelessness, it does so by including them in the decision-making process; it promotes community and is personhood-affirming.”

Rev. Lopez and his colleagues have a “dream project” that would create the space necessary to provide dignified housing for vulnerable populations as well as the space for urban farming in a sustainable, eco-friendly facility.

Regarding dreams, Rev. Bryant offers a twist on the famous line from the movie Field of Dreams, “If you build it, they will fund and support it. We have no shortage of volunteers. This is a solid program with a proven track record. We are building in a new way and people like it.”

Pastors Bryant and Lopez appreciate the scholarship support you provided during their time at CST. “I could not have completed seminary without your financial assistance,” said Bryant. Lopez added, “Your generosity made a tremendous impact on my ability to answer God’s call and continues to make a lasting impression in the lives of my family and all I encounter in my Pomona community.”
JANUARY
INTENSIVES

You, our donors, provide daily sustenance. You are here.
How Much Can You Learn in a Week? Plenty:

For one of three power-packed weeks in January, dozens of CST students gathered for fellowship and intense learning related to their fields of study. Whether hearing from Los Angeles’ resident poet laureate, visiting a local Buddhist monastery, or launching a new program, all agree it’s amazing what we can pack into five days.

**JANUARY 4 – 8**

M.Div. students gathered first to complete some courses required for graduation, including “Interreligious Dialogue and Leadership” with **Najeeba Syeed,** Associate Professor of Interreligious Education. The course equally covered Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and Buddhist approaches to pluralism and peace. The class of 60 honed their skills in interreligious leadership for faith communities, neighborhoods, and across religious groups throughout the world. Interfaith chaplaincy student Niala Terrell-Mason said, “I left this week with a rekindled fire for interfaith work and a confirmation that my life-long interest in interreligious studies was not a fluke.”

**JANUARY 12 – 16**

CST’s Hybrid/Online M.Div. students assembled on campus to discuss everything from cultural competency to worship arts to religious leadership. Professor of Constructive Theology and African American Religions **Monica Coleman** taught students how to reflect theologically on vocation from the perspective of critical multiculturalism. Hybrid student Heather Riggs said, “Having friends in different ministry contexts all over the world has given me a whole new understanding of what it means to be connectional.”

**Kathy Black,** Gerald H. Kennedy Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics, taught *Introduction to Worship and the Arts,* which continued online for the remainder of the semester. The course helps students develop the resources needed to create and lead original worship services. “The students bring with them a rich diversity of denominational, cultural, and theological perspectives,” she says. “Their worship contexts are quite varied, and yet all are seeking to be in service to God and their surrounding communities.”

**JANUARY 19 – 23**

This week marked the first intensive session of CST’s new D.Min. in Spiritual Renewal, Contemplative Practice and Strategic Leadership. This hybrid program, which is oriented toward interreligious and multicultural spirituality and leadership, combines online, in-person, and hybrid classes, including intensive sessions during January and in the summer. The program attracts a diverse group of students who bring valuable experience to the table. CST Professor of Spirituality **Andrew Dreitcer,** architect of this new program, says, “Each of them came with vital skills in forms of leadership that connect with contemplative practice. Their wisdom and sensibilities — as well as the diversity of their contexts and traditions — formed a profound learning community for all of us.” **Candice Bist,** a D.Min. student, explains, “I arrived expecting wonders and was not disappointed. There were intelligent, compassionate professors; the delightful company of fellow students eager to learn and share; support in every way, at every turn; well-thought-out, organized course material; and a clear atmosphere of collaboration.”
As President Kuan shared with you, CST continues to take care of your gifts while planning for new growth. Right now, one of the most effective ways that we can responsibly secure our future is through effectively managing our physical space.

The land and buildings crucial to our current and future operation sit in the “academic core.” In January 2016, the Corporate Board of CST authorized our Board of Trustees to enter into negotiations with Claremont University Consortium (CUC) to discuss the potential sale or lease of the remaining parcels. After negotiations failed in August 2016, CST filed a complaint against CUC to protect our right to obtain a fair-market price for our land. We will update you as that legal process continues. Meanwhile, we press onward.

CST is partnering with two companies – Dutra Cerro Graden (DCG) Real Estate and The Lewis Group of Companies – that specialize in providing solutions to our very specific needs. DCG advises schools and churches on long-term visioning and strategic planning. The Lewis Group has a long history in Claremont and its academic community, as well as a deep understanding of the market, future supply and demand, and sustainability. With their guidance and your support, we plan to achieve three things:

• Bring CST in line with 21st century standards for education, accessibility and building safety
• Generate revenue from surplus land
• Provide a housing and growth solution that works for the City of Claremont, the greater Claremont academic community, our neighbors, and supporters

Eventually, under the direction of our new Vice President for Advancement and Communications, the Rev. Sharalyn Hamilton, CST will launch a capital campaign to further secure our finances.

Our Corporate Board, Board of Trustees, and President Kuan are confident this is the appropriate path to take – a path that will lead to a more sustainable, substantial future; a path that will insure our continued leadership in theological education; a path that will help us create a difference for the world we live in.

If you have further questions, please contact the Office of the President, at 909-447-2552, or jkuan@cst.edu.
Claremont School of Theology (CST) is one of a select group of schools recently recognized by The Center for Faith and Service as “Seminaries that Change the World,” Class of 2016 – 17. Each year, the Center identifies a small group of seminaries and divinity schools offering innovative courses, programs, and opportunities for students seeking to engage in social justice and service work while in school.

“We appreciate this important recognition,” said the Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, CST president. “CST works diligently to foster an environment where students can both learn and put their knowledge to action. In the midst of global religious conflict, rampant Islamophobia, and xenophobic rhetoric, CST understands that diversity and interreligious education are the necessary foundations for social justice and service in the world. We are on the right path and it’s encouraging when others notice our commitment.”

The Center chose CST as a standout seminary for its “commitment to fostering interfaith dialogue and educating leaders for the dynamic realities of a multi-faith world through initiatives such as the interfaith chaplaincy program,” said Alison Burchett, Managing Director, The Center for Faith and Service. “We love that students can choose between on-campus, intensive, online, or hybrid courses. This kind of flexibility empowers students to pursue their education and their passions for justice and service in the way that makes sense for them.”

Reflecting on this year’s list of Seminaries that Change the World, Wayne Meisel, Executive Director of the Center, remarked: “Anyone seeking to change the world ought to at least consider seminary or divinity school as an option to grow personally in one’s faith and to inspire, sustain and deepen his or her commitment to neighbor, community, country and the world. Through their commitment to collaborate, this diverse group of schools [embodies] the best of faithful and justice seeking communities.”
Last October, Claremont School of Theology welcomed to campus His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and 118th Patriarch of the See of St. Mark. His Holiness joined in the inauguration of St. Athanasius and St. Cyril Coptic Orthodox School (ACTS), which trains both Coptic Orthodox clergy and scholars of the Coptic Orthodox tradition. The event in Kresge Chapel also formalized the recent agreement between CST and ACTS, making it CST’s newest ecumenical partner.

At the event, President Kuan emphasized the vital importance of ecumenical engagement and education, saying, “Claremont School of Theology has learned that there is nothing to lose in opening its doors to students and partners of a wide diversity of traditions. It has been our experience that exposure and engagement with traditions different from one’s own result in greater depth and clarity of belief and practice.”

Pope Tawadros II added, “This world needs strong theological education, now more than ever. I hope that [ACTS] produces not just graduates who have knowledge, but rather, that it produces thinkers, theologians, illustrious men and women who can rise to the questions of today.”
CST HOSTS POPE, PARTNERS WITH COPTIC ORTHODOX SCHOOL
Maclay Society Member, Rev. Arthur Richardson, certainly parlayed his God-given business talents and speaking voice into an exceptional career. It all began in high school when CBS-affiliated radio station WNAX hired Rev. Richardson as an announcer to replace Tom Brokaw. His journey includes serving as a radio announcer, preacher, University Director of Church Relations, University Executive Vice President, and, ultimately, University President.

Even though various broadcast stations courted Rev. Richardson, he remained true to his ministry call. “I like the earthiness of it,” he said. “Growing up near the Black Hills of South Dakota, I knew early on that I needed to be part of something bigger. The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of God stands forever (Isaiah 40:8).”

Now “retired,” he teaches International Business at the University of Houston and volunteers with MyHeartsAppeal.org, a special education provider in Liberia, West Africa.

This son of South Dakota attended Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Nebraska and spent a semester abroad at University of Cambridge. Two mentors, John Hicks at Cambridge, and Jerald C. Walker at Wesleyan, inspired Rev. Richardson to come to Claremont School of Theology (CST), where he received a Presidential Scholarship for each of his four years. While at CST, his wife, Charlene, taught school and made it possible for him to concentrate on his studies.

After graduating with his Rel. D., Rev. Richardson returned to South Dakota and served as a pastor at two different churches for a total of six years. From there, he served as Director of Church Relations at Westmar and subsequently Boston University’s School of Theology. At BU, Arthur encouraged an alumnus to provide $375,000 to establish a chair in Evangelism. His success in academia led to his becoming President of Westmar University in Northwest Iowa where he served for almost a decade.

With an MBA in International Business (Finance), Rev. Richardson also traveled for Oklahoma City University raising money and speaking in China, Malaysia, and Singapore. The Chinese government awarded him the status of Economics Expert for creating the business plan for one of their country’s first private colleges.

Rev. Richardson says coming to Claremont was one of the best decisions he ever made. He plans to honor Charlene’s commitment to the church and her devotion to him by establishing a CST endowed scholarship with a bequest from his estate plan. In addition to honoring his wife, Rev. Richardson says this is a way of paying it forward for future students. The couple chose to make their gift through the donation of a life insurance policy. We are very grateful for the Richardsons’ loyalty and commitment to CST.

Give to CST online today!
The relationship between Claremont School of Theology and Los Altos United Methodist Church (LAUMC.org) in Northern California is rooted in a shared philosophy that we grow deeper as individuals when we grow together in community. LAUMC’s ministry is based on enhanced practices of fruitful discipleship: Bold Service & Social Justice; Extravagant Generosity; Deepening Faith; Passionate Worship; and Radical Hospitality.

“Our discipleship pathway leads us to grow beyond our church into our local, national, and worldwide community,” said Margie Gong, a long-time LAUMC member and CST Trustee since 2014. “For example, we began a compassion ‘weekend’ three years ago. Now it’s expanded into ‘Compassion Week’ and a lifelong way of discerning and being in service.” During last year’s Compassion Week, LAUMC engaged with the “Stop Hunger Now” team to produce 40,000 meals distributed worldwide; LAUMC men, women, and children sewed hundreds of cotton dresses for young girls in Africa; dozens more members and friends participated in a beach cleanup day, pruned vegetation at a community farm, built Habitat for Humanity playhouses, prepared and served dinners at the veterans hospital’s family retreat home and at a local resource center for the housing-challenged, and so much more.

“This began in our church but now it involves the entire community because we are borderless in our service and ministry,” said Gong. “Church, community, country, world. That’s LAUMC.”

Intentional about nurturing and supporting each ministry it commits to, LAUMC gives of its time, talent, and treasure. The church supports CST financially with the annual Rev. Dr. Mark S. Bollwinkel Scholarship, named for a beloved LAUMC senior pastor and CST graduate & trustee. The one-year full-tuition scholarship is awarded annually to a full-time third-year M.Div. student whose intention is to become an ordained Elder and serve in the UMC.

“We are CST ‘friend raisers.’ We share our treasure, yes, but the sustaining value is also in spreading the good news about CST as an institution – the only Methodist-founded seminary west of the Rockies. And, above all, we pray for CST. As Jesus taught us, ‘Where lies your treasure so too lies your heart.’ And to LAUMC, Claremont School of Theology is a treasure.”

**DONOR PROFILE**

**LOS ALTOS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Meet Los Altos UMC
For decades, Elaine Walker, former Director of Circulation at CST’s Library, and Dr. Frank Rogers, Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy, have supported CST with regular contributions to the School through payroll deductions.

In her time at CST, Ms. Walker mentored many students and was a voice for justice and inclusion, serving as the Staff Advisor for the Pan African Seminarian Association and as a member of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion. In September 2016, CST awarded the inaugural Elaine Terry Walker Scholarship.

“The intentionality of my giving is the result of DNA,” said Walker. “By words and by examples, generations of my extended family have taught that we must support—consistently and however possible—the people, causes, and institutions that have meaning in our lives. The School’s mission aligns with my personal belief that theological education should promote the common good. CST has indeed added meaning to my life and so, as the ancestors taught, I give my thanks and my support.”

In addition to teaching, Dr. Rogers is also co-director of the Center for Engaged Compassion as well as a spiritual director and retreat leader. He serves the school in many capacities, most recently as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee that charted a course for CST’s future. Dr. Rogers is also deeply involved in the social life of the School and recently threw out the first pitch at CST Night at the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes game.

“I donate monthly because I believe in what CST stands for,” said Dr. Rogers. “From the beginning, CST has promoted a culture of dignity and inclusivity. Every voice is honored, every person respected, every religious tradition welcomed and celebrated. In a world where divisiveness, denigration, and violence—much in the name of religion—are destroying the bonds that bind us together, communities like CST are sanctuaries of hope and inspiration, exploring how the world’s spiritual traditions, working arm in arm, can promote peace, compassion, and a just world for all.”
For decades, Maclay society member, the Rev. Dr. James W. Pierson, has championed Claremont School of Theology as an alumnus and as a donor. Rev. Pierson is a member of the last class of M.Div. students to enroll at Maclay College at the then Methodist-affiliated University of Southern California. He moved with the seminary to start The School of Theology at Claremont, meeting in borrowed buildings and charting a new course. “It was great fun. Our faculty was marvelous and the discussions were amazing,” said Rev. Pierson. “My wife and I were among the first to move into the apartments.”

After completing his master’s and doctorate degrees, Rev. Pierson served at Wilshire Christian Church, then taught religion at the University of Missouri, Columbia, while also serving as a local pastor. After a brief stint with the American Theological Schools of Ohio and Indiana (ATSIO), he returned to Wilshire Christian Church where he served 21 years, retiring in 1992. Rev. Pierson also served on the World Council of Churches as well as in various capacities at Claremont School of Theology and the Disciples Seminary Foundation.

CST’s spirit of ecumenism and openness is what attracted this life-long student, and it’s what keeps him committed to our future.

“I love the work of the church, of being in relationship. Claremont supported that while also teaching me to find my own meaning as I live my life. I feel good about the fact that CST is an open place that gives students a good education and the tools they’ll need to find answers. Claremont gave me that foundation.”

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