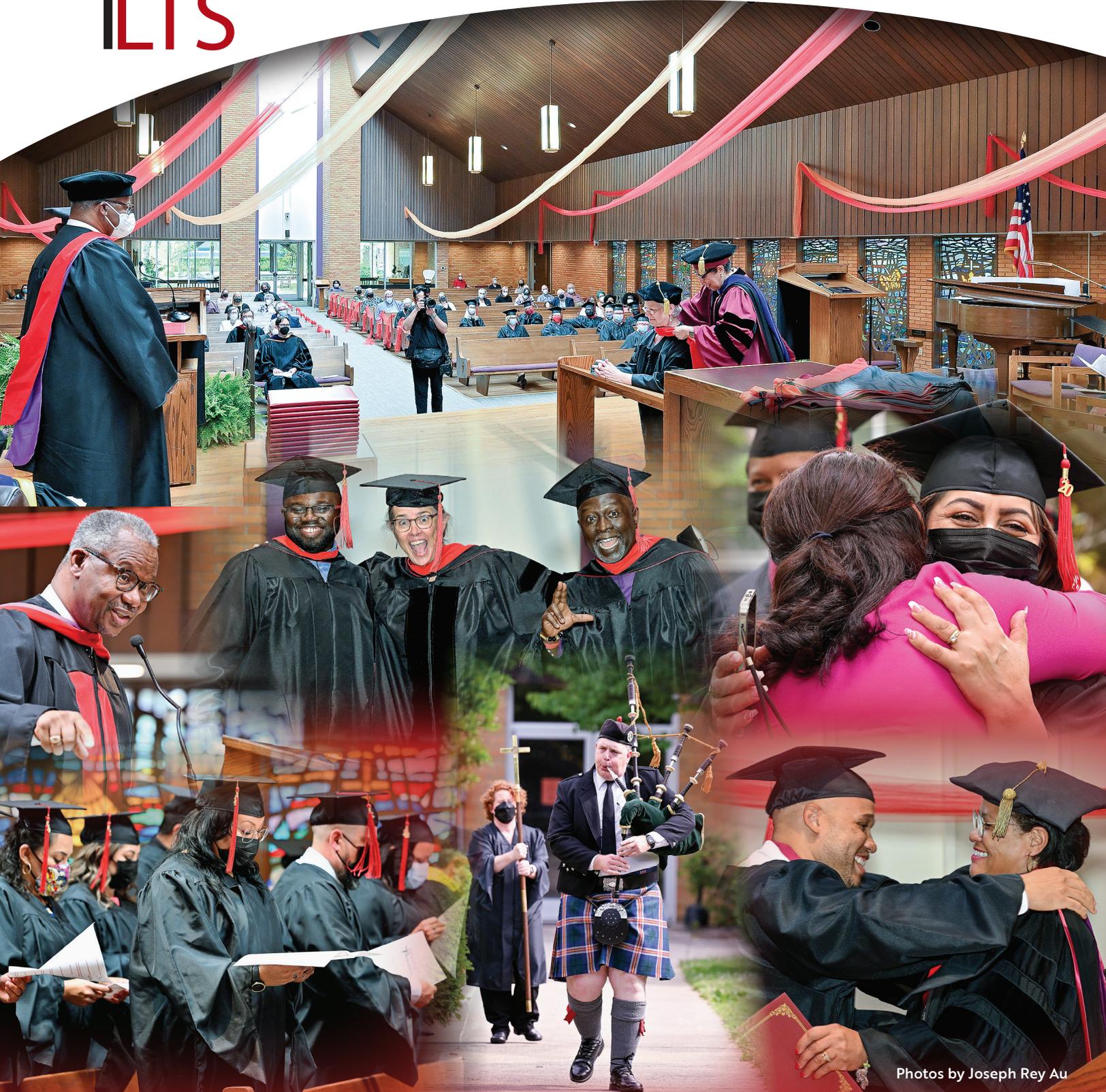


The BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Lexington Theological Seminary

Summer 2022 | Vol. 58, No. 3



Photos by Joseph Rey Au

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Graduates Receive Awards at Commencement

Each year during commencement, outstanding students receive awards that have been established in honor of former Lexington Theological Seminary faculty, Presidents, and friends.

A.J. Whitehouse Award in Pastoral Care

Mariah N. Newell, Missouri City, TX

This award is made by “an appreciative Donovan Scholar” in honor of Dr. A.J. Whitehouse, a local obstetrician who, as a special student, took pastoral care courses at the Seminary.

George V. Moore Award for Work in a Congregational Setting

Paula Kraus, Sayre, PA

Jessica Braxton, Goldsboro, NC

This award goes to an outstanding student in a congregational setting. George Moore was Professor of Field Education for many years at LTS.

Hal and Evelyn Watkins Award for Work in a Congregational Setting

Francis Stanley, Ashland, PA

This award was established by Hal and Evelyn Watkins when he served as Interim Director of Field Education. He wanted to honor a student who had done exemplary work in a congregational setting, particularly someone who had faced obstacles in such a setting.

Kitchen-Adams Pastor/Scholar Award

Stephanie Moon, North Middletown, KY
Imro Anys, Miami, FL

Ruth Kitchen stressed this award is not limited to an MDiv student; the recipient should exemplify academic excellence and pastoral gifts. The award was established by Ronald Graham to honor Ruth and

her commitment to the Church, the Seminary, and the formation of students for ministry. Ruth was registrar at LTS for almost 32 years. The “Adams” part of the award is her maiden name and honors her father, Hampton Adams, an alumnus of the College of the Bible (also a Trustee and teacher) and of Transylvania University and Yale University. He served local churches and the denomination as well as the broader church with writing and service on various boards.

Newton Fowler Award in Ethics and Society

Linda Kowatch, Boulder, CO

Jay Hartley, Tucson, AZ

Newton “Fig” Fowler was Professor of Ethics and Society. He taught at LTS for 26 years. This award was established by Ronald Graham in honor of Fig and his wife, Elsie.

Rev. Rafael Martell Award

Imro Anys, Miami, FL

Linda Kowatch, Boulder, CO

This award is granted to a member of the graduating class who will be charged to honor the spirit of inclusion that Rev. Rafael Martell demonstrated throughout his ministry and to begin a ministry of justice and equity in the recipient’s own context that would serve an excluded population that provides for their humanization. Rev. Martell was the father of Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, who selects the recipient(s). This award is sponsored by the Martell family to encourage graduating students to develop similar ministerial visions for their communities. Rev. Martell always demonstrated a heart for the forgotten, the excluded, the reviled, those

somehow considered without value in society. His ministry was never paternalistic. Rather, he treated people as brothers and sisters, as valued children of the Living God. His ministry touched many in the communities he served, whether they were “church folk” or not.

Richard Pope Award in Church History

Clayton Summers, Dietrich, IL

Linda Kowatch, Boulder, CO

Dr. Pope taught Church History at LTS after teaching at Drury College in Missouri. He authored three books: *Our Changing and Changeless Faith: Reflections on the Human Adventure*; *The College of the Bible: A Brief Narrative*; and *The Church and Its Culture: A History of the Church in Changing Cultures*. He was a much appreciated teacher and a “prince of a man.”

Riley Montgomery Award

Linda Kowatch, Boulder, CO

William Johnson, Macon, GA

Riley Montgomery was President of LTS from 1949-1965. He laid the cornerstone of the buildings on the former campus. His PhD thesis at Yale was the outgrowth of research into the college and seminary education of Disciples of Christ ministers. He also served at Lynchburg College, helped form the Virginia Council of Churches, and was on the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ and the International Convention of the DOC, which led to the formation of the Conference on Church Union. In 1954, he was elected president of the International Convention of the DOC.

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Let Us Rejoice! Let Us Make Some Noise!

Dear Friends:

The Lexington Theological Seminary community gathered in June to celebrate the fourth graduating class of the Certificate in Hispanic Ministries, the first graduating class of the Certificate of African American Ministries, and the 156th Commencement Ceremony of Lexington Theological Seminary. We rejoice and delight in being together following almost three years of living with COVID-19!

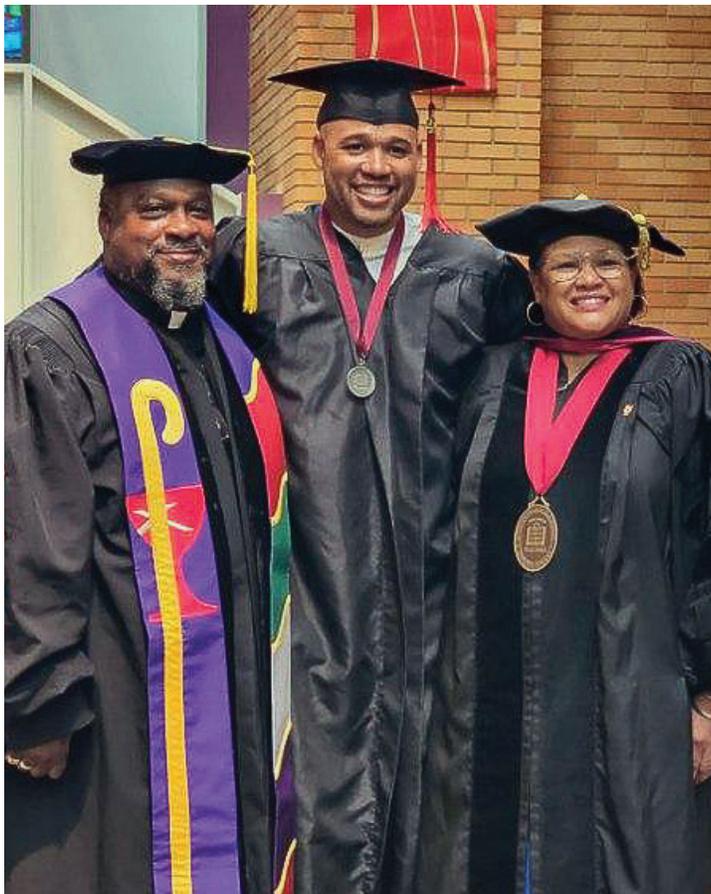
We rejoice in the accomplishments of these students and recognize their families, friends, and the faculty, staff, trustees, donors, and administrators who supported and prayed for them on their journeys. We rejoice in the holy partnerships between the students, LTS, the church, and the congregations that nurtured and sharpened God's call in them. We rejoice in these pastoral and church leaders who are saying Yes to the work of God.

Recall that some were called to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, to equip the people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. – Ephesians 4:11-13

Graduates, do the work God has called you to do. Do it with courage. Do it faithfully. Do it fearlessly.

Let us rejoice! Let us make some noise! Let us give thanks!

Dr. Charisse L. Gillett
President, Lexington Theological Seminary



Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett II, Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Kentucky, and Dr. Charisse L. Gillett, President of Lexington Theological Seminary, celebrate with their son, Jeremy, who graduated with the first cohort of students in the Certificate in African American Ministries program.

Photo by Joseph Rey Au

R. Robert and Linda Cueni Award in Homiletics

**Mariah N. Newell, Missouri City, TX
John McCarty, Pittsburgh, PA**

This award was established by R. Robert and Linda Cueni to honor the graduating MDiv student who excelled in their homiletic studies and exhibits great potential for the preaching ministry. The academic dean chooses the award recipient based on nominations from the homiletics faculty. After many years in parish ministry, Dr. Cueni came to LTS as president in Spring 2002.

Ronald Graham Capstone Project Award

**Mariah N. Newell, Missouri City, TX
Donna Webster, Princeton, KY**

The faculty chooses the recipient for having produced an outstanding MDiv capstone project. The award is in honor of Ronald Graham, who was Dean at LTS in the 1970s and Professor of New Testament for several more years after he was Dean.

Sharyn Dowd Award in Biblical Studies **Mariah N. Newell, Missouri City, TX Jessica Braxton, Goldsboro, NC**

This award was established in honor of Professor of New Testament Sharyn Dowd, who taught at LTS from 1987-1999. She wanted this award to go to someone who may not have been the best student in a strictly academic sense, but loved studying the Bible, did

a lot of it, did their best, and would use what they learned.

Stone-Campbell Award **Clayton Summers, Dietrich, IL**

The recipient of this award is selected by Dr. Jerry Sumney, Professor of Biblical Studies.

W.A. and Billie Ruth Welsh Award in New Testament **John McCarty, Pittsburgh, PA**

This award is given at the discretion of the New Testament professor. It was established in honor of W.A. Welsh, President of LTS from 1965-1974, and his wife, Billie Ruth Welsh, by Ronald and Gwen Graham in 1988.

Traditional Processional Marks 156th Commencement

The bagpiper was back!

After two years of having online graduation ceremonies because of the pandemic, it was a joyful occasion to be in person once again for Lexington Theological Seminary's **156th Commencement** on June 17 – and to revive the tradition of having bagpiper **Will Young** lead the graduates, faculty, and staff into Crestwood Christian Church's sanctuary for the gathering.

"This is the first time we've gathered as a community in almost three years," said LTS President **Dr. Charisse Gillett** in her welcoming remarks. "I am delighted to have you here today."

"It's a great morning to celebrate," added **Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell**, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean.

The featured speaker was **Dr. Emily Askew**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology. She chose Philippians 2:1-13 as her text, reminding the graduates that "God is at work in you." She said Paul was addressing a church that was fragmenting, offering them guidance for living in a fragmented community and advice for bringing it back together. "This was a radically counterculture message," she said, calling for "the art and practice of emptying."

It is advice that resounds with life today. "The divide is more insidious than red and blue," said Dr. Askew. "It's between us and us. We're systematically being fragmented by white hetero patriarchy and we might not even know it. Systemic oppression threatens our lives together and this very planet. The dominant culture stays in power and keeps us from joining together against demonic forces," she added.

"The task is to acknowledge the complexity each of us is and give up places of privilege. The struggle for equality is not a zero-sum game. We need to create one mind and stand against the structural sins that divide us. We must use the power we have for the good of others. Refuse to believe the lie that there's not enough. Be complicated and intersectional and messy. I want to see you be brave."

After Dr. Askew announced her retirement effective July 2022, the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendations of the Dean and the Academic and Student Life Committee, named her Professor Emerita of Systemic Theology for her outstanding service to the Seminary. A "fierce advocate" for LGBTQIA+ people and victims of domestic violence, Dr. Askew taught at LTS for 16 years and helped construct the current curriculum. She also created the Green Task Force.

Graduates from 2020 and 2021 were invited to this year's Commencement since they had their commencement ceremonies virtually due to the pandemic. **Cecilia M. Sheahan**, who earned her Master of Divinity degree in 2021, and **Kofi Frempong** and **Foster Kwame Frimpong**, who earned their Master of Divinity degrees in 2020, were in attendance.

Rev. Trish Standifur inducted the graduates into the Alumni Association. **Rev. Jan Ehrmantraut**, who received an honorary doctorate degree (see page 7), gave the benediction: "All of us experience a time when we say to God, 'Is it I, Lord?' God calls in the middle of the night to remind us of the pain in the world and the tremendous advantages we have. May you find sufficient sustenance

for the living of your days, the witness of your days, and the joy of your days. When you wonder, 'Am I worthy?' remember the gift of Jesus Christ."

Class of 2022

CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

Scott Buchanan
Rex Allen Harris
Angela Lee Pooley
Daphne Carol Reiley
Ronald W. Sutton

MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

William D. Johnson

MASTER OF DIVINITY

Jessica Marie Braxton
Linda K. Kowatch
Paula Kraus
John C. McCarty
Mariah Nichelle Newell
Kevin Bruce Prahar
Frances D. Stanley
Clayton James Summers
Donna Marie Webster

CERTIFICATE IN CONGREGATIONAL RENEWAL AND LEADERSHIP

Adrienne Denise Curry

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Imro Anys
Jay R. Hartley
Stephanie Moon

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY Honoris Causa

Rev. Janet M. Ehrmantraut

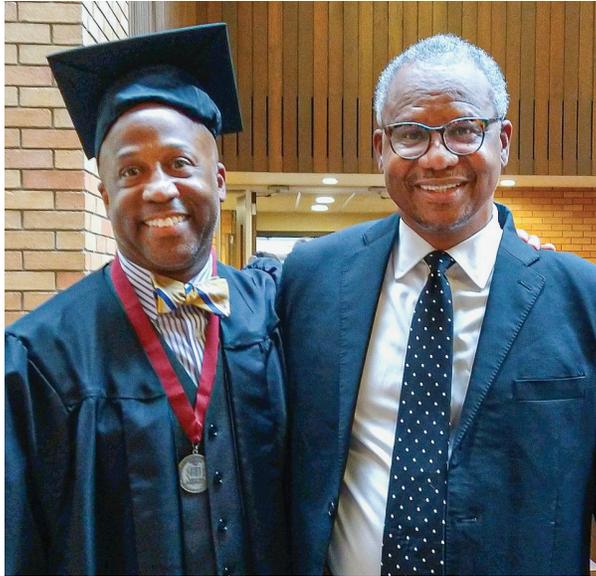
Seminary Celebrates 'Trailblazing' Graduates of CAAM Program

Rev. Dr. William Lee probably smiled as he looked out at the audience while giving the address for the first graduating cohort of Lexington Theological Seminary's **Certificate in African American Ministries (CAAM)** program on June 10. Among the graduates was **Calvin Curry**, a former member of Loudon Avenue Christian Church in Roanoke, VA, where Dr. Lee served for many years. It was Dr. Lee who told Calvin about the CAAM program and encouraged him to apply.

"I started the MDiv program at LTS several years ago," said Calvin, who currently serves Fayette Street Christian Church in Martinsville, VA. "However, due to my bi-vocational status, I was not able to complete the program because of lack of time."

The CAAM program proved to be a viable alternative because it was specifically designed to help students like Calvin continue their theological education. It provides theological, biblical, spiritual, and leadership training for pastoral leaders with a focus on the 21st-century African American congregational context. It is funded in part by the Thriving in Ministry Project at LTS with a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

"This day was many years in the making," said LTS President **Dr. Charisse Gillett**. "We are grateful for the partnerships that have made this possible – partnerships with the Black Disciples Endowment Fund, the National Convocation, the Office of African American Clergy Leadership Development, Lilly Endowment Inc., and all of our Regions in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)."



Calvin Curry (left) and Rev. Dr. William Lee

Photo courtesy of Calvin Curry

Before gracing the gathered community at the ceremony with the song "How Great is Our God," Admissions Associate **Rev. Kimberley Proctor-White** congratulated the graduates.

"You took a step of faith to enroll in the program," she said. "You are trailblazers."

Dr. Lee's message, "Lead Me, Guide Me," based on Acts 8:26-40 – the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch – emphasized God's need for effective church leaders.

"God needs some helpers in helping God lead and guide His church," said Dr. Lee, who is the chair of the LTS Board of Trustees. "If God has called you to lead, God will help you lead and guide. You're not in this by yourself. You are being led by the Spirit to lead folk and guide them. Don't be intimidated by anybody. You have something to say on behalf of God. Keep on leading and keep on guiding."

Calvin said he enjoyed the classes he took while participating in the

two-year program. "As a pastor, this program offered so many classes that challenged my approach to ministry," he said. "The Old Testament class was particularly challenging due to the subject matter. I am very thankful for the wide variety of classes."

Dr. Gillett gave a charge to the graduates: "Take everything you've learned and go out and spread the Gospel in the community where we need a strong voice. Strong, educated clergy and lay leaders lead to strong churches and strong communities. At this moment in our culture, in our history, in our society, in our nation, we need you more than ever."

"I am a better pastor because of this certificate program," Calvin said. "It gives direct tools for ministry in the African American church. I am so thankful for our professors and especially my classmates. LTS, thank you for creating this program and making it so affordable and convenient. If you are looking for a program that will challenge you, inspire you, and encourage you for ministry, this program is for you."

CAAM Class of 2022

Oscar E. Banks IV
Dale Chester Braxton Sr.
Melvia Carter
William Clyburn Jr.
Calvin DuBois Curry
Jeremy Gillett
Gerta Marcellus
Timothy O'Neal Jr.
Michael Paige Sr.
Darren W. Phelps
George William Pinkard
Cassandra D. Smith

Program Founders Recognized at Fourth CHM Commencement Ceremony

The fourth cohort of the **Certificate in Hispanic Ministries (CHM)**

Program graduated on June 10 at Crestwood Christian Church in Lexington, KY. The CHM program provides theological, biblical, and ministerial training to individuals in Hispanic and bilingual (Spanish/English) congregations. It is co-sponsored by the Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Lexington Theological Seminary. Courses in this program – all in Spanish – focus on the 16 competencies required by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

LTS President **Dr. Charisse Gillett** welcomed the students to the ceremony. "It has been two full years since we've been able to gather in this format to congratulate our graduates and rejoice with you in a commencement ceremony," she said. "You've traveled many roads, both literally and figuratively. I salute and applaud all of your hard

work and your families who have made it possible for you to be here."

She thanked CHM program founders **Rev. Dr. Pablo Jimenez** and **Rev. Wilson Hurtado**, whose dedication and labor made possible the dream of bringing high-quality, accessible theological education to one of the largest growing populations in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They helped design and implement the program and sought funding for it. Dr. Jimenez, the program's first director, gave the graduation address.

Rev. Lori Tapia, National Pastor for Hispanic Ministries in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), presented Dr. Gillett with a *Somos Uno* (We Are One) pin to show *Obra Hispania's* appreciation for her work in getting the CHM up and running.

"It takes a leader who has vision. It takes a leader who is willing to say 'yes' and 'amen' to something that makes no sense," said Rev. Tapia. "Dr. Gillett always has a 'yes' and 'amen.'"

Dr. Jimenez's address was based on a reading from Mark 6:30-44. It was a retelling of the story of the feeding of the 5,000 from the disciples' view. Jesus had sent the disciples two by two into the country to preach about the coming kingdom. Many received the message of the kingdom of God. Jesus listened to their reports when they returned and invited them to rest. It was a time of testing and preparation. Jesus was commissioning the disciples to become pastors and be part of God's plan for the world. The same commissioning was bestowed upon the CHM graduates. "Someone had to do something to keep the

people from starving," Dr. Jimenez said. "That someone was me."

The Classes of 2021 and 2020 were unable to attend their graduations in person because of the pandemic, so they were invited to join the 2022 celebration. **Ada K. Perez de Collazo** and **Kassandra Tapia Ochoa**, who graduated with the Class of 2021, were present. Members of the Class of 2020 who attended the ceremony included **Gloria Elia Carrasco Vazquez**, **Antonio Córdova**, **Claudia Córdova Nerárez**, **Briana R. Cruz**, and **Cesar A. Ortiz**.

Each year, the Seminary presents the President's Award. Prior recipients include the Fountain Family Foundation (2017); Ms. Jody and Mr. E.B. Lowman II, longtime supporters of the Seminary (2016); General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins (2015); Rev. Gary Kidwell, President of the Christian Church Foundation (2014); and Rev. Chris Hobged, GMP, and Ms. Leslie Geoghegan, former LTS Board Chair and church leader (2019).

This year's recipients were Dr. Jimenez and Rev. Hurtado. The proclamation says, "Lexington Theological Seminary deeply appreciates your service as one who helped to promote, resource, and thus establish the Seminary's Certificate in Hispanic Ministries program. The program, in its fourth year, has benefited deeply from your leadership. Your willingness to promote and support the Seminary as it transitioned to a new educational model for clergy preparation was an act of faith in God's mission and purpose for the Seminary."

CHM Class of 2022

Alberto Adorno
Jeanette Bell-Leon
Roger Bonilla
Marynellie Bores Ortiz
Brenda Calderon
Venus DeJesus
Anayeli Escobar Ordaz
Heidi Hernandez
Josue Leon
Jorge Luis Narvaez
Gloria M. Quiñones Cepeda
Carmen Rodriguez
Edwin Rojas Alcivar

Ehrmantraut Receives Seminary's First Honorary Doctorate Degree

For the first time in its history, the Lexington Theological Seminary **Board of Trustees** voted to confer an honorary doctorate degree on a well-deserving member of the Seminary community.

Rev. Jan Ehrmantraut (MDiv '83) has served LTS as Coordinator of the Mentored Ministry Program and Chaplain since October 2018. When she announced her intention to retire in May 2022, the Board chose to bestow the degree of Doctor of Ministry, Honoris Causa on her in recognition and appreciation of her service not only to LTS but to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the community as well.

"Persons who have demonstrated excellence in service to the community, Church, theological education or LTS; who have distinguished careers or are honored among their peers; who are 'good citizens,' recognized as contributing significantly to the larger community; who have been agents of change that have benefited their community positively; and/or who have made scholarly contributions of note in the field of theology, Bible, or religion are eligible to be granted a Doctorate in Ministry, Honoris Causa," the Board decreed.

"Rev. Ehrmantraut is a pioneer," said **President Charisse Gillett**. "She shattered glass ceilings as the first woman Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Kentucky and has mentored many others. She has gifts of compassion, administrative insight, humor, and the ministry of presence. Personal warmth and pastoral wisdom are the hallmarks of her ministry. She has shown us what it means to serve."

Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, had invited Rev. Ehrmantraut to come back to LTS after her second retirement to fill the role of Coordinator of the Mentored Ministry Program. Her return coincided with the global COVID-19 crisis, but she handled the challenge with grace and pastoral poise. "So many of our students attest to how her timely calls, emails, and pastoral care strengthened and blessed them during this time," Dr. Martell said. "Dr. Ehrmantraut has been a blessing to this institution and the Christian Church in ways visible and invisible. She is a true pioneer that paved the way for so many others, and I can think of no one more deserving of being the recipient of LTS' first Doctor in Ministry *honoris causa*."

"I accept this [degree] on behalf of my classmates, the Class of 1983 – folks I treasure as friends and mentors," Rev. Ehrmantraut said as she received the doctor's hood at the 156th Commencement ceremony. She expressed her gratitude to her husband, Curt, and **Rev. Elizabeth**



Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell places the doctoral hood on Rev. Jan Ehrmantraut.

Photo by Joseph Rey Au

Hartsfield, the first woman on staff with the Christian Church in Kentucky (CCKY). "She was a force to be reckoned with," said Rev. Ehrmantraut, who was also the senior pastor of several Kentucky congregations. "She made a point of saying, 'I see promise in you.' I am so grateful for the pioneering she did. The encouragement, the vision, the education not only during those three seminary years but that affirmation of ministry that continued from LTS has meant the world to me."

Rev. Ehrmantraut offered some advice to the new graduates and her Seminary colleagues in a farewell email: "God is a mystery," she wrote. "The Holy Spirit is an embrace of that mystery, and the life of Christ is an adventure in following and looking for the footsteps of Jesus. Enjoy the journey, and welcome those you meet along the way."



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and built up in him and established in the faith ...”**

Colossians 2:6-7 NRSV



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