



GRACE COMMUNION
SEMINARY

GCS NEWS

A Newsletter for Students and Alumni of Grace Communion Seminary

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President's Letter



Dear Students, Alumni
and Donors,

As we reach the end of this Fall 2020 term, it's time for our GCS newsletter. I think the most important place to begin is with thanksgiving to our Triune God.

We are first of all thankful for all our current and former students, our graduates and donors over the years. As has been true for many years, the education GCI has provided through its formal courses has contributed to our fellowship and helped build a community of lived and informed faith in God through Jesus Christ according to Scripture. The seminary is no less a faith community than the denomination as a whole. And it represents that. I am grateful for all the relationships formed and strengthened around the world, as each of you has participated in one way or another in them. I am sure you are as grateful for these special relationships as I am. I thank the Lord our God for you all.

I'm thankful for our continuing ability to offer courses and now three degrees. What has made that possible is the dedicated GCS staff, our faithful GCS Board, our quality teaching faculty, and of course, having a continuing flow of able students. The fact that all our courses are offered online has been a particular advantage at this time when we face unusual restrictions on gathering in person. All our faculty were already well adept at providing quality graduate education via our online platform. And they were grateful for that!

Of course, behind all this lies the financial support of GCI—support that was pledged

to cover this past year. I'm also thankful for our successful renewal of our accreditation through the Distance Education Accreditation Commission. I should also let you know that GCS has been approved on all fronts to offer the three-year M.Div degree. That's a development certainly to be thankful for—and one that some of you may be interested in pursuing.

But, as you know, even more fundamentally, we can all be thankful for the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ and his Word preserved for us in Scripture. Without that we would have no church and there would be no seminary. There would be no Christian worship and community at all. So, our ultimate thanksgiving must be directed to our Living Triune God.

This may sound like a Thanksgiving letter. And in a way it is—even though that holiday for us in the USA is a few weeks past us. But in this time of trial as we all face various social and civic restrictions in addition to the stresses and strains that come normally with daily life, thanksgiving is the only way to start—each day. Thanksgiving reminds us of the ultimate and victorious grace of our Triune God that even now breaks into our troubled and indeed fallen world.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God”
(Phil. 4:6 NIV).

Thanksgiving is even the right place to start in our prayers, in our supplications and requests. It is also the right posture to look towards our celebration of Christmas as we approach it through the season of Advent. For certainly,

Cont. ➔

Cont. that greatest Gift of all is what, or rather Who, we are most grateful for and for all time. The Gift of that first advent or coming of Jesus Christ points forward to his second advent in triumphant return. Then God in Christ will manifest the fullness of his rule and reign, his total victory over all evil, and the establishment of the completely renewed heaven and earth.

Thanksgiving to our Triune God is what prepares us and points us to our ultimate Hope. That Hope in God exceeds all earthly ideals and possibilities. That Hope alone continually sheds light into our

current situation, provides us our daily bread, and sustains us in our worship and witness as his people in this “present darkness” (Eph. 6:12).

I am thankful for you all. I hope all of you will stay in touch and that many of you will be able to participate in GCS as a student, alumni and/or donor. And I look forward to our upcoming Spring term for 2021 and also to our scheduled graduation ceremony next summer.

Every blessings in Christ Jesus,
Dr. Gary Deddo
 President



Create Your Portfolio



At the end of each semester, we encourage you to save your final paper as part of your portfolio. You may keep a copy at home, but for a

little extra insurance, keep a copy on the GCS website, too.

The final papers of many courses will be needed if you ever decide to pursue a Master of Divinity degree. Even if

you do not currently plan to get the MDiv, it is possible that you’ll change your mind later, so it is best to save your papers now, even before you formally enter the program. Here’s how you can put all your final papers in one place so that you will continue to be able to access them:

- Log in and go to your dashboard. In the right column is a box labelled “Private files.” Click on “Manage private files,” then upload a copy of

your papers (label them by course number), and you will be able to access them in future semesters.

- You may want to do this for previous courses you have taken at GCS.
- If your instructor makes comments on your papers, you’ll want to preserve that version.

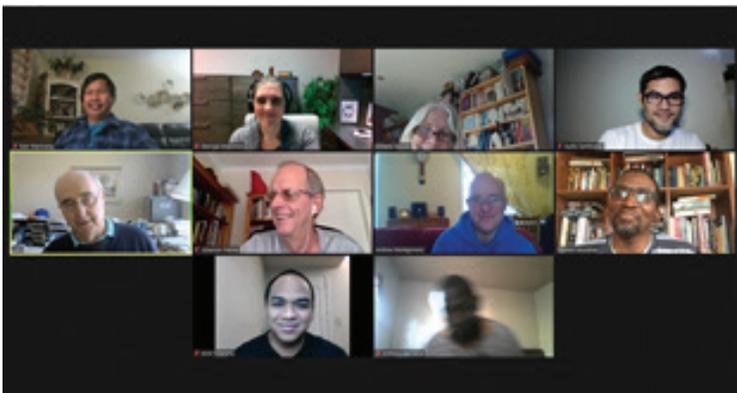
Dr. Michael Morrison
 Dean of Faculty

Classes Connect on Zoom

Some of our instructors took the opportunity to use Zoom as a way to connect with students in their classes.

Pictured here are a couple of Zoom meetings hosted by Neil Earle during his Church History course.

Thanks to technology like Zoom more instructors in the future may take the opportunity to provide live video conferencing times so instructors and students can connect with one another.



Appreciation for Service



We wish Dr. Russell Duke and his wife, Phyllis a wonderful time of retirement. Russell has served the church in many capacities over the years including being president of the Seminary until 2015. Making use of his experience at other institutions, Russell has been our resident expert on all matters of seeking and

maintaining our national accreditation status. He is now retiring from the administration of Grace Communion Seminary and will also be rotating off the Grace Communion International Board of Directors later this year. Russell and Phyllis have both served the church and seminary in many ways for many years. We not only thank him for his excellent work, but we wish him and Phyllis every blessing in their retirement years.



Russell and Phyllis Duke



Dan and Barbara Rogers

We extend our hearty appreciation to Dr. Dan Rogers for his years of service as a professor at Grace Communion Seminary, as well as his recent role serving as one of the Board of Directors. Dan and Barbara have served the church and the seminary in many ways over the years. We remember them both in our prayers as Barbara continues rehabilitation therapy as she recovers from being struck by a truck while riding her bicycle. We are grateful that Dan

will remain on the faculty, teaching Homiletics and Acts of the Apostles, as he rotates off the Board this year.

*Dr. Joseph Tkach
Chairman of the Board*



Sammy O'Dell was a GCS graduate and pastor of the GCI church in Amarillo, TX. He passed away Nov. 5, 2020. The following is a tribute from church member Rita Gehman.

Tribute to Sammy O'Dell

*"In any man who dies there dies with him
his first snow and kiss and fight...
Not people die but worlds die in them."
~Yevgeny Yevtushenko, 'People'*

Sammy O'Dell was the personification of kindness. His soft-spoken, quiet manner made him feel like you were in the presence of a truly gentle soul. This was helpful in his sales techniques because you never knew that he was persuading you until after he had you persuaded. His dry wit would often hilariously mock his own gentle disposition and would leave you searching for a good retort and finding none.

Sammy O'Dell was so beloved by his church that we all kept calling him to make some comment or ask him questions about services, and then hanging up when we remembered that he was gone. His magazine-model wife and his two stunning daughters are still reeling from his reassuring presence no longer being here. How can you still feel the presence of a friend who is no longer holding your hand?

Rita Gehman

A New Way to Learn Greek



One of the most interesting projects I've had recently is to prepare a new course in Greek. Normally, language courses are not interesting or fun, but this one is different, because it uses a different approach. The starting point is that students already have easy access to word meanings and grammatical details through websites such as biblehub.com or programs like Logos. Since those details are readily accessible, beginning students don't have to memorize hundreds of vocabulary words and dozens of inflection patterns.

Rather, what you need is how to make sense out of the data that you have. So the new course is called an inductive approach to Greek study tools. The course will go through John's first letter (some of the easiest Greek in the Bible) and uses it to illustrate how the Greek language works, and how a detailed study can enrich our understanding of the letter.



We'll start slow, because we encounter lots of things in Greek that aren't the way they are in English, and we'll explain them as we go. And in our

detailed study, we'll examine John's letter in more detail than we ever have before, and we'll talk about the way that Greek enriches our understanding.

For this kind of study, electronic resources are much better than printed ones. I've written about 20 percent of the course and I'm enjoying the study; I hope that students will as well. Scheduled for fall 2021.

*Dr. Michael Morrison
Instructor in New Testament,
Dean of Faculty*



Thank You

FOR PARTNERING WITH GCS

As the year draws to an end, we look back with grateful hearts for those whose passion and enthusiasm for GCS have moved them to partner with us through financial support and prayer. Your sharing with us is a blessing for the seminary to be a blessing to those we serve. We pray God's grace and blessing for you in the new year.

WE HOPE YOU WILL CONSIDER GCS IN YOUR YEAR-END GIVING

Financial Support from alumni and friends like you has a profound impact on the seminary's mission of "Equipping the Saints for Pastoral Ministry."

Every gift is God's provision for his work in Grace Communion Seminary.



Donations to Grace Communion Seminary can be mailed to
3120 Whitehall Park Drive, Charlotte, NC 28273
or donate online at gcs.edu/donate.

Spring 2021 – From the Registrar



Our website redesign was published in November. We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Many thanks to Jared Santibanez for his help with this project.

Georgia McKinnon
Registrar

**GCS
New
Website**



Schedule of Courses 2021

All schedules are tentative

Spring 2021: Registration begins January 4. Lectures will be posted on Mondays, January 11 to March 15. March 29 to April 4 is a study week. Easter is April 4. All work is to be completed by April 12.

BI523	Acts of the Apostles	Dan Rogers
BI524	Epistles of Paul	Mike Morrison
CH502	Church History: The Second Millennium	Neil Earle
CM503	Christian Counseling	Ted Johnston
FE501	Field Education 1	Randy Bloom
FE502	Field Education 2	Randy Bloom
TH503	The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Eschatology	Gary Deddo

Summer 2021: Registration begins April 26. Lectures will be posted Mondays, May 10 to July 12. The GCI denominational conference in Charlotte will be July 21-25. A graduation ceremony is scheduled for July 23. All coursework is to be done by August 8.

BI512	Old Testament Survey	To Be Announced
CM505	Women and Men in Leadership	Mike Morrison
CM506	Trinitarian Youth Ministry*	J. Broadnax & G. Williams
CM508	Church Planting & Development	Randy Bloom
CM511	Homiletics*	Dan Rogers
FE502	Field Education 2	Randy Bloom
FE503	Field Education 3	Randy Bloom
TH501	Nature of God and Jesus Christ	R. Duke & L. McKinnon
TH507	Theology of C.S. Lewis	Gary Deddo

*CM506 and CM511 will have meetings in Charlotte July 19-20.

Fall 2021: Registration begins Aug. 23. Sept. 6 is a U.S. holiday, so the first lecture will be posted on Tuesday, Sept. 7. Subsequent lectures will be posted on Mondays, Sept. 13 to Nov. 8. All work is to be completed by Dec. 5.

BI501	Hermeneutics	Mike Morrison
BI540	Inductive Approach to Greek Study Tools	Mike Morrison
CH501	Church History: The First Millennium	Neil Earle
CM501	Pastoral Leadership	To Be Announced
CM504	Practice of Ministry	Ted Johnston
CM507	Experiencing the Trinity	Larry Hinkle
FE501	Field Education 1	Randy Bloom
FE503	Field Education 3	Randy Bloom
TH502	Nature of Humans and Salvation	R. Duke & L. McKinnon
TH508	Christology of T.F. Torrance	Gary Deddo

If fewer than five students register for a course, it may be cancelled, at the discretion of the instructor. Capstone courses for the master's degrees are offered in all semesters. When Monday is a holiday in the U.S., lectures may be posted on Tuesday.

CONGRATULATIONS to our 2020 Graduates

These students
have completed their
Master of Theological Studies
(MTS):

Dan Krupp
Al Barthelmy

This student
has completed his
Master of Pastoral Studies
(MPS):

Mike Urmie

CTS & ADCM Earned

These students earned a
Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS):

Ebenezer Maninang
Anthony Mullins
Aron Tolentino

These students earned the
Advanced Diploma of
Christian Ministry (ADCM):

Heber Ticas	Anthony Mullins
Anthony Gachanja	Aron Tolentino
Cynthia Quarles	Audie Santibanez
John Newsom	Takalani Musekwa
Michael McNally	

***Come Celebrate With Our Graduates
At Our Next Graduation Ceremony***



On July 23, 2021, GCS will hold its
3rd graduation ceremony as part of our Denominational
Celebration in Charlotte, NC.