



# THE TRINITY CONNECTION

Summer 2021, Issue 2, Volume 1



*Sacred stories, faithful friends, and Trinity's new prayer labyrinth.*

## *Prayer Labyrinth Installed On Campus*

**Dedication will take place during Trinity Days, Sept. 23-24**

The Fred Meuser Courtyard, located in the outdoor green space along College Avenue between Gloria Dei and Schenk Chapel, has a new permanent fixture. The grey-stoned prayer labyrinth invites pilgrims to reflect, meditate, and commune with the Divine as they move through the patterned pathway. Unlike a maze, one cannot get lost in a labyrinth; there are no dead ends. Instead, pilgrims are invited to walk the bending pathway, representing the twists and turns of life's journeys, knowing they will eventually be led to the center gathering space. And from there, the center, the path will lead them just as certainly back into the world.

Trinity's labyrinth was years in the making. As our community grieved the 2006 death of Pastor Aaron Blankenhorn (Trinity '03, Capital '99), leaders rallied around the possibility of installing a labyrinth in Aaron's honor, but the 2007 financial crisis delayed those plans. Numerous gifts over the last decade, including those from the Stellhorn and Anderson families, breathed new life into the labyrinth dream.

At 11:30am on Friday, September 24th, as the final event at Trinity Days 2021, our community will gather to dedicate the labyrinth. Please plan on joining us for this very special occasion.

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Trinity Receives \$50K Grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Student Spotlight: Serena Travis (MTS '24)

"Hush No More" Womanist Theology Lecture Series

Participate in Fall Classes Remotely

Eco-Theology, Racial Justice, and More at **TRINITY DAYS**, Sept 23-24

[capital.edu/trinity/](http://capital.edu/trinity/)

# *New \$50K Grant Advances Access to Seminary*

## **Trinity Receives \$50K Grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc.**

Living out Trinity's mission to "form leaders for Christ's Church at work in the world" compels us to become more fully present in our Central Ohio community. This is because "the world" we are called to includes our neighborhood, Columbus, and the surrounding regions.

A new \$50K grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., as part of their Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative, is assisting the seminary in opening the doors to theological education for local students. The grant is supporting several key pilot and emerging projects including community-based, certificate programming; MTS and M.Div. pathways for students who completed undergraduate degrees as so-called "non-traditional" students; and assessment of institutional barriers for minoritized student groups.

## *Hope in Unexpected Places: Returning to Seminary during a Pandemic*

### **Student Spotlight: Serena Travis (MTS '24)**

In late 2020, when the world was shut down, Serena Travis took a phone call that changed her life.

The entrepreneur owns and operates a popular soul food restaurant on the East Side of Columbus. She started The Good Kitchen 614 with her husband in the fall of 2018, at around the same time she started her Master of Theological Studies degree at Trinity.

The couple's food truck, Rolling Kitchen, had cultivated a rich fan-base, and they felt called to open a brick-and-mortar operation. For Serena, the timing was, on the one hand perfect, and on the other, confusing.

They had the perfect location, and all the logistics were falling into place. At the same time, Serena, a longtime member of Union Grove Baptist Church in the King-Lincoln Bronzeville neighborhood of Columbus, was coming to terms with an unmistakable, emerging call to pastoral ministry.

Knowing theological education was her next step, the Hampton University graduate was unsure where to go or how to get started. One day, a friend who was walking alongside Serena during her discernment process drove down East Main Street in Bexley, right past the seminary, and, as she was praying in her spirit, thought, "Why not start school right here in town?"

Serena applied and started at Trinity in fall of 2018. Her experience of seminary was overwhelmingly positive, especially in fall of 2018 when she had the privilege of hearing Trinity Days speaker, the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, Dean of Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary in New York City and leader in the field of womanist theology.

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Serena Travis is a business owner and entrepreneur who returned to Trinity in spring of 2021 to complete her MTS degree.



Photo of Serena's family and photo of Chef Kendall Howie with Serena's daughter, Sydnie, were taken prior to the start of the pandemic and are by Adam Cairns of The Columbus Dispatch. Photos used with permission.

However, the joint responsibilities of running a new restaurant and paying for school became too much. She could not grow a new business and pay for seminary. Serena put her pastoral call on hold and dropped out of seminary.

On a wintry day less than a year ago, Serena received an unexpected call from Trinity. She was informed that the seminary would be able to offer a scholarship equal to the full cost of her tuition. Serena burst into tears on the phone, as the dream and calling she once thought dead was resurrected.

Serena's scholarship was possible because of Trinity's growing financial health. In the 2020-2021 school year, every degree seeking Trinity student with demonstrated financial need received a generous scholarship from the seminary. Many students, like Serena, received full-tuition scholarships.

Serena's first semester back on campus was full of activity. A self-proclaimed "shower singer, but nothing else," Serena, under the tutelage of Church Music Professor, May Schwarz, led the community in worship as a soloist at the 2021 Trout Lectures and on Trinity Sunday.

She sat with her classmates in Liberation Theology, studying the classic work of scholars like James Cone while racial trauma and grief mounted in the city. The class watched, in real time, the Derek Chauvin trial verdict. Just minutes later, when Ma'Khia Bryant, a black teenager from Columbus was shot and killed by police, they cried out and lamented together.

Serena has experienced Trinity as a place of formation, education, growth, and change. As a business-owner, community leader, and mother to two teenage daughters, she is continuing her seminary studies part-time.

Soaking up everything she can from class, Serena is forever integrating seminary academics with ministry, business, and every other aspect of day-to-day life. It is a rigorous schedule, but one bearing life-giving, life-changing fruit.

*"...the dream  
and calling she  
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## ***Fall Semester Classes Available to Remote Students***

This fall, Trinity students will be back in physical classrooms, but remote students are still welcome. Clergy seeking continuing education, lay leaders seeking additional formation, and others looking to "test the waters" of seminary are invited to participate in fall classes as both auditors and enrolled students. Remote students will be able to video call into on-campus classes, which will be equipped with technology to support an integrative, healthy learning experience for students in the physical classroom and students joining classes in real-time from other locations.

Fall 2021 courses at Trinity include:

- HTS 1024 Church History I, The Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder
- BL 1021 Old Testament I, The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn
- MN 1031 Introduction to Worship, The Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder
- LA 1001 Using Biblical Greek, The Rev. Dr. Wray Bryant
- LA 1032 Hebrew I, The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn
- MN 2515 Death, Dying, and Grieving, The Rev. Dr. Brad Binau
- MN 2375 Music and Liturgy, Prof. May Schwarz
- HTS 2044 Systematic Theology, Dr. Sally Stamper
- MN 1050 Reading the Contexts, The Rev. Dr. Kevin Dudley
- HTS 2038 Multi-Religious America, The Rev. Dr. Paul Numrich

Classes start on August 25th. If interested in enrolling, please contact A.J. Minney ([aminney2@capital.edu](mailto:aminney2@capital.edu), 614-236-6131) right away!



## *Eco-Theology, Racial Justice and More at Trinity Days*

Join us as we welcome alumni and friends back to campus and host Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Professor of Theological and Social Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California. Dr. Moe-Lobeda's theme: "Being Church Now: The Call, the Perils, the Promise"

Never before has the world so needed the church to be the church. Our moment in time holds perils and potential like no other. These two lectures invite us to explore -- with the hope and courage born of faith -- what it means to trust and proclaim God's liberating, healing love for the world in the face of two harrowing perils: climate change that threatens the lives or livelihoods of billions, and the deadly distorting sin of racism. Our orienting touchpoint will be the promise that, while broken by sin, we are first and forever beloved creatures called to embody God's justice-seeking Earth-honoring love.

In addition to Dr. Moe-Lobeda's lectures, our community will celebrate the opportunity to gather together in person-- in accordance with local public health and safety recommendations. On Thursday, Dean Kleinhans will share a State of the Seminary address; we will worship together; and we are planning to have a special recognition of the class of 2020, who did not have the opportunity to participate in a commencement ceremony.

On Friday, Dr. Rachel Wrenn, Trinity's new Bible professor, will lead a workshop on this year's Advent texts. We will also, at long last, dedicate Trinity's new prayer Labyrinth.

Registration includes the cost of meals and is open at [capital.edu/trinity-days/](https://capital.edu/trinity-days/).

Registrations received by September 15th are \$75/person (\$50/person for retirees and persons in their first 5 years of ministry). After September 15th, registration is \$80/person.

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## *Trinity Days* *Sept. 23-24*

*"Being Church Now:  
The Call, the Perils,  
the Promise"*



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Professor of Theological and Social Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

### *Trinity Days Calendar*

#### **Thursday, Sept. 23**

- Keynote addresses from Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda
- State of the Seminary Address from Dean Kleinhans
- Worship in Gloria Dei

#### **Friday, September 24th**

- Workshop with Bible professor, Dr. Rachel Wrenn, on this year's Advent Texts
- Dedication of Trinity's New Prayer Labyrinth

Register today!  
[capital.edu/trinity-days/](https://capital.edu/trinity-days/)

**Womanist Theology** is an approach to understanding God and the world that centers the experiences and insights of Black women.

This hybrid event is free and open to the public, who may attend in-person or stream online. Lunch is offered to in-person participants. Hosted at Trinity Lutheran Seminary (2199 E Main St, Bexley, Ohio 43209)

Registration to attend in-person:  
<https://tinyurl.com/Womanist2021>

Registration to attend virtually:  
<https://tinyurl.com/HushNoMore2021>

# HUSH NO MORE

## PERSPECTIVES FROM WOMANIST THEOLOGIANS



**Thursday, September 9th - 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**Introduction to Womanist Theology**  
**Rev. Dr. A. Elaine Brown Crawford**

Rev. Dr. Brown Crawford holds a Ph.D. in Historical Theology from Union Theological Seminary and served as Adjunct Faculty at the Interdenominational Theological Center and Spelman College, department of religion



**Thursday, October 14th - 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**Womanist Interpretation of Scripture**  
**Dr. Angela N. Parker**

Dr. Parker is assistant professor of New Testament and Greek at McAfee. She received her B.A. in religion and philosophy from Shaw University, her M.T.S. from Duke Divinity School and her Ph.D. from Chicago Theological Seminary.



**Thursday, November 11th - 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**Pastoral Care from a Womanist Perspective**  
**The Rev. Dr. Beverly Wallace**

The Rev. Dr. Wallace serves as Associate Professor of Congregational and Community Care at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

This event made possible by the Seminaries of the ELCA's Womanist Theology Initiative, which is supported by the Richard Hay Barkalow Charitable Fund at Thrivent Charitable Impact & Investing™ and the ELCA Justice for Women program. Please contact Tori at [tmcgrawrowe@capital.edu](mailto:tmcgrawrowe@capital.edu) with questions.

## Womanist Theology Lecture Series

This fall, Trinity is honored to host "Hush No More: Perspectives from Womanist Theologians." This hybrid event is free and open to the public, who may attend in-person or stream online.

Womanist Theology is an approach to understanding God and the world that centers the experiences and insights of Black women.

This event is supported by the Seminaries of the ELCA's Womanist Theology Initiative and the ELCA Justice for Women Program.

**Registration to attend in-person:**  
[tinyurl.com/Womanist2021](https://tinyurl.com/Womanist2021)

**Registration to attend virtually:**  
[tinyurl.com/HushNoMore2021](https://tinyurl.com/HushNoMore2021)

## Community News

**Alumni and friends of the seminary are invited to share news updates with us to share with the wider community**

Rev. John William Pearch (**Hamma '63**) celebrated his 83rd birthday this past July.

Rev. David G. Burke (**ELTS '63**) and spouse, Peggy J. Burke have relocated to Hendersonville, North Carolina

Rev. Peter Zieg (**ELTS '69**) writes to share that fellow seminary alum, Rev. William Yesse (**ELTS '68**) of Orange City, Florida died on June 20, 2021. The Rev. Bob Berger (**ELTS '69**) preached at his classmate's funeral service. Alumni of both the seminary and college attended the service.

*Continued on page 6*

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# Community News (Continued)

**Alumni and friends of the seminary are invited to share news updates with us to share with the wider community**

Rev. Kirk Havel (**ELTS '70**) writes to share that he recently participated in the funeral for classmate Rev. Paul Gateman (**ELTS '70**). Pastor Gateman served Epiphany Lutheran Church in Toledo, and for 41 years, served Zion Lutheran Church in Ferndale, Michigan. In his final year of seminary, Pastor Gateman was named Best Preacher in the graduating class. Along with his youth groups, Pastor Gateman attended every national youth gathering from 1970 until the 2015 gathering in Detroit. Pastor Gateman is survived by his spouse, Eve, and adult children, Matthew and Lori.

This past February, David Kluttz (**Trinity '82**) was accepted to the Center for Action and Contemplation's Living School in the 2023 Cohort. He began his first Symposium in July of this year. Also, Mr. Kluttz has begun the Candidacy Process in the NC Synod ELCA to become a Rostered Leader of Word and Service. He asks for prayers for his candidacy process and Living School studies.

In January 2021, Rev. Douglas Hill (**Trinity '94**) published *Cultural Architecture: A Path to Creating Vitalized Congregations* with Fortress Press.

Rev. Cindy Hershberger (Striker) (**Trinity '16**) will begin a 12-month chaplain residency program at Morton Plant Hospital in Clearwater, Florida in August of this year.

Rev. Robert Eller (**Trinity '21**) was ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament on July 17, 2021 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Submit Community News for future issues of *The Trinity Connection* at [tinyurl.com/SemUpdate](https://tinyurl.com/SemUpdate)

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## Stay in Touch

### Reach out to us!

**web:** [capital.edu/trinity/](https://capital.edu/trinity/)

**email:** [TrinityDean@capital.edu](mailto:TrinityDean@capital.edu)

**phone:** 614-236-6131

**facebook:** [facebook.com/TrinityLutheranSeminary](https://facebook.com/TrinityLutheranSeminary)



Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University has adopted an affirmation of welcome to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and is recognized as Reconciling in Christ (RIC).

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## OTHER NEWS & NOTES

### Welcoming Trinity's New Assistant Director for Seminary Admissions!

The Rev. Dr. Monica Lowe holds a MA in Practical Theology and PhD in Education with an emphasis on the recruitment and retention of African Americans at predominantly white institutions. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Lowe! ([mloewe2@capital.edu](mailto:mloewe2@capital.edu))



### Seeking New Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement

Trinity is currently seeking a Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement. For more information, please go to [tinyurl.com/DirectorEngage](https://tinyurl.com/DirectorEngage)



[capital.edu/trinity/](https://capital.edu/trinity/)