



GRACE COMMUNION SEMINARY

SUMMER 2020

GCS NEWS

A Newsletter for Students and Alumni of Grace Communion Seminary

GCS STAFF

PRESIDENT

Dr. Gary W. Deddo
gary.deddo@gcs.edu

DEAN OF FACULTY

Dr. Michael Morrison
dean@gcs.edu

REGISTRAR

Georgia McKinnon
registrar@gcs.edu

LIAISON OFFICER

Dr. Russell Duke
russell.duke@gcs.edu

ASST. LIAISON OFFICER

Lance M. McKinnon
lance.mckinnon@gcs.edu

INSTRUCTORS

Randy Bloom

Jeff Broadnax

Dr. Gary W. Deddo

Dr. Russell Duke

Neil Earle

Dr. Timothy Finlay

Dr. Larry Hinkle

Ted Johnston

Dr. Kerry Magruder

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Dr. Greg Williams

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Dr. Gary W. Deddo

Becky Deuel

Ted Johnston

Dr. Michael Morrison

Dr. Dan Rogers

CONTACT INFO:

3120 Whitehall Park Drive,
Charlotte, NC 28273
1-800-851-2611
or 1-980-495-3978
Fax: 1-844-350-3419

President's Letter



Dear Students, Alumni and Donors,

About a year ago in our GCS Summer Newsletter these are the last words I wrote to you: "My prayer for you all is that no matter

what challenges we may face in the coming days, that the truth and reality of what God accomplished for us in the life, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ that we celebrate on Easter Sunday does not fade away. But we'd find the Risen Lord by his Spirit accompanying us every day of the year, shedding light and renewing life each step of our way—in hope of his final renewal of all things."

Little did we know then what we, and even the whole world, would be facing now. Given world history, our circumstances are not entirely unprecedented but still unexpected and seriously disruptive. And for some, when the Covid-19 virus contributed to the death of a loved one, it has been particularly grievous. In the midst of upheaval and uncertainty perhaps you, like I, felt a deeper appreciation for our hope in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and our one day sharing in it.

The "death of death in the death of Jesus Christ" (as one theologian has put it) and the inbreaking into our time and space of regenerated life through the resurrection of Jesus means there is real, actual hope. Jesus Christ, Lord of the universe, is not stymied by our pandemic and knows how to weave into his good purposes all of what the world is going through (Rom. 8:26-33). As the Scottish pastor and author, George MacDonald put it, "The Son of God suffered unto death, not that

men might not suffer but that their sufferings might be like his." That is, even our sufferings are being redeemed.

Our gracious Triune God has not allowed anything to happen that he cannot completely redeem in the end. And those who love him and his purposes will recognize and find great joy in that fact. That is our hope in Jesus Christ, the one who endured the cross "for the joy set before him" (Heb. 12:2).

Christian hope directs us to the future, but it is also to infuse how we live every day. We live in fellowship and communion with the Lord of that future, who accompanies us every day. In that way, our current situation is not all that different from any day, every day. We live as those who have real hope, even in times of trials. It turns out that having a true hope in Jesus Christ for all that he has done, is doing and will do enables us to contribute some "earthly good" here and now. Hope in Christ enables us to have and share the peace of Christ with those tempted to panic and become anxious. I know many of you have had special opportunities to share that hope and offer practical help with others in the last few weeks.

So, in communion with our risen Lord, we seek guidance and grace for each day. It's his grace that "normalizes" every day, providing us the North Star by which we can navigate through times of calm and storm.

And all this is no less true of us serving in GCS. So, let me share with you some of the more mundane news of the seminary. The daily operations of GCS have continued fairly smoothly over these past few months.

Cont.

Cont. Our November and December was punctuated by the demands of producing hundreds of pages of reports and documentation required from us to apply for the renewal of our accreditation from the Distance Education Accreditation Commission for the next five years. A team of five traveled to our Charlotte offices to spend the day interviewing us. (They were impressed with the facility!) The visit went well thanks to the competent and diligent preparatory work and professional presentations of the GCS staff, Mike Morrison, Georgia McKinnon, Lance McKinnon and Russell Duke. We are now making a reply to follow-up questions from the team. The final word will come to us from the Commission sometime in early July.

We have also made application to offer a third degree, the Master's of Divinity. This is a three-year degree in comparison to the two others we offer, which are two-year degrees. It

more extensively integrates pastoral training with the foundational biblical, historical, theological and pastoral studies offered in our current programs. The accreditors are now evaluating the design of the program and the courses involved in it. We hope to hear on this matter in the next month or two. We'll let you know if and when we can begin to offer this advanced degree.

More up to the moment, we have wrapped up the Spring term and are gearing up for the Summer term. Be sure to take a look at the courses we are offering. We have a good, strong line-up. Our ever ready, able, and now experienced Registrar, Georgia McKinnon, will be awaiting your application and any questions you may have.

One of the things I'm particularly grateful for is that our faculty are already experienced to teach online courses which have been designed

from scratch to be offered in just that format. So the pandemic has not been nearly as disruptive for us as for others of our colleagues and schools who serve in the traditional classroom context.

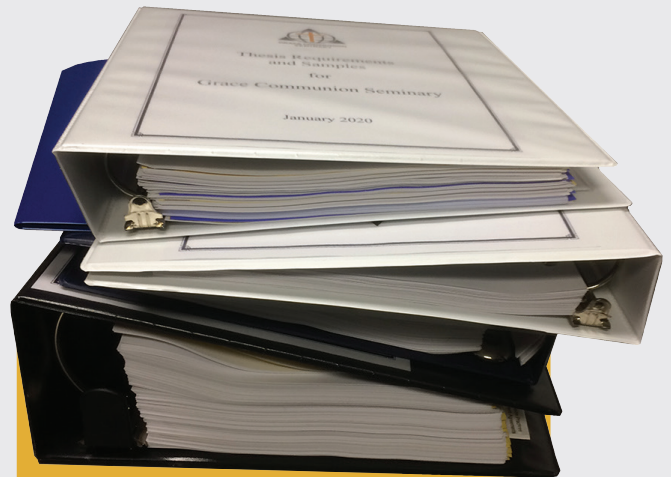
Finally, let me confirm that since the GCI international conference has been cancelled, that means we will not be having our triannual GCS graduation. That's the disappointing news. The positive side is that it along with the conference has been postponed until 2021 at about the same time of year and by that time we will have even more graduates to celebrate! So, we can all look forward to that.

Thank you for your participation, support and prayers for the Seminary as we endeavor to "equipping the saints for pastoral ministry."

Grace and Peace in Christ Jesus,
Dr. Gary Deddo
President



After many months and countless hours of meticulous documentation, GCS was ready to receive the DEAC visiting evaluators. It was a long and busy day full of interviews and interaction between GCS staff and the visiting accreditation team. The DEAC team was professional, gracious and well suited for the visit. The many prayers offered for a smooth visit were answered. We appreciate all those who have been praying for the visit and we are thankful for God's grace through it all.



Sample of the documentation produced for the visit.



Update by Liaison Officer



GCS staff hosted the visiting team from the Distance Education Accrediting Commission on January 31st. This was the standard visit by

DEAC colleagues that comes every five years to evaluate how well each institution meets the twelve DEAC Standards. After several months of preparing our document, we submitted our Self Evaluation Report early in December. We also responded to the external DEAC review of our

academic programs for the visit.

The visit went well. The evaluators interviewed President Gary Deddo, Chair Joseph Tkach and board members, Dean Michael Morrison, Registrar Georgia McKinnon and Assistant Liaison Officer Lance McKinnon, CFO Mat Morgan, Robert Meade, Bret Miller, and GCI President Greg Williams, and several students, board members and faculty in a telephone hookup. It was a long but successful day.

The Chair's report from the DEAC visit came back to us at the end of February, and it held no big surprises. We have responded to required actions and await the Commission decision in their June meeting which will be communicated in early July. We pray that we are granted another five-year term of accredited status. Please pray with us that we will not have any undue financial or academic issues to address further.

*Dr. Russell Duke
Liaison Officer*

Update by Dean of Faculty



Where are we in the re-accreditation process? We are now waiting. A committee from our accrediting agency visited us on January

31. We received their report in late March. They said that we need to make a few changes in our strategic plan, our faculty policies, and the enrollment agreement. We made these changes and submitted supporting documentation to the agency in mid

April. The accrediting commission meets in June, and will announce their decision in early July.

Our application to be able to offer a Master of Divinity degree is also being considered. We submitted a description of the program; following normal procedures, they asked for more details about four courses in the program, and they are now considering whether our program meets generally accepted standards for this degree.

As reported in the spring issue of *GCS News*, we were given permission to offer courses in a hybrid format, with part of the course being online and part with face-to-face meetings. Due to travel and meeting restrictions, we will not be offering hybrid courses this year, but we hope to be able to offer them next year.

*Dr. Michael Morrison
Dean of Faculty*

READERS WANTED

A few of our courses have an audio version, and we'd like to make this option available for additional courses. We are asking for GCS students or alumni who would like to make an audio version of CH501 Church History: The First Millennium. You can use the Voice Recorder that comes with Microsoft Windows, a free audio program such as Audacity, or any other program. If you are interested, please contact m.morrison@gcs.edu.



A WARNING ABOUT AMAZON



Amazon is currently giving priority to the delivery of "essential" items. Books are deemed nonessential and are sometimes delayed and may not come before the semester begins. There should be no problem with third-party sellers who list on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), nor with online sellers who specialize in books. As usual, we recommend that you use [bookfinder.com](https://www.bookfinder.com) not only for lower prices but also availability. Although we prefer printed books, you might need to consider an e-book in this case.

GCS Welcomes Jeff Broadnax



GCS welcomes Jeff Broadnax to our faculty lineup this semester. Jeff will be assisting Greg Williams teaching Trinitarian Youth

Ministry. Jeff has a long history of ministering to youth, which makes him a great addition to this class. Jeff has served in many capacities in the 33 years he has worked at GCI. He

is currently the Regional Director of the Northeast US and the National Coordinator of Generations Ministry. Welcome, Jeff!

Course description

This course examines the relationship of theology and youth ministry practice as it has developed in North America. The course explores the centrality of Jesus in all ministry in the relationship that Jesus already has

FEATURED CLASS
CM506
Trinitarian Youth Ministry

with young people. That relationship is explored in its post-Christian, post-modern cultural context, with an emphasis on the importance of mentoring as a relational/incarnational tool in youth ministry.



CONGRATULATIONS to our newest Graduates

**Completion of
Master of Theological Studies
(MTS):**

Dan Krupp

**Completion of
Master of Pastoral Studies
(MPS):**

Mike Urmie

CTS & ADCM Earned

Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS):

Ebenezer Maninang

Advanced Diploma of Christian Ministry (ADCM):

**Anthony Gachanja
Heber Ticas**

**Tim Wakeley
Ian Woodley**

Spring 2020 – From the Registrar



Summer Registration opens on Monday, April 27, and runs through Thursday, May 7. We will be offering the following classes:

The Gospels, Pastoral Leadership, Trinitarian Youth Ministry, Church

Planting & Development, Homiletics, Nature of God and Jesus Christ and Field Education. Registration details have been sent to all current students and alumni who may be interested in taking a class.

We have two new graduates to celebrate: Mike Urmie earned an

MPS and Dan Krupp earned an MTS. Congratulations to Mike and Dan on this accomplishment.

Please feel free to reach out at any time with questions or feedback.

— Georgia McKinnon, Registrar

Schedule of Courses 2020

All schedules are tentative

Summer 2020: Registration begins April 27; lectures posted Mondays, May 11 to July 20. June 29 - July 5 will be a study week. All work is to be completed by August 10.

BI522	The Gospels	Mike Morrison
CM501	Pastoral Leadership	Russell Duke
CM506	Trinitarian Youth Ministry	G. Williams & J. Broadnax
CM508	Church Planting & Development	Randy Bloom
CM511	Homiletics	Dan Rogers
TH501	Nature of God and Jesus Christ	Russell Duke
FE501	Field Education I	Randy Bloom

Fall 2020: Registration begins August 27; lectures posted Mondays, Sept. 7 to Nov. 9. All work is to be completed by Dec. 7.

BI501	Hermeneutics	Mike Morrison
CH501	Church History: The First Millennium	Neil Earle
CM504	Practice of Ministry	Ted Johnston
CM507	Experiencing the Trinity	Larry Hinkle
TH502	Nature of Humans and Salvation	Russell Duke
TH515	Seminar in Theological Ethics	Gary Deddo
FE501	Field Education I	Randy Bloom

If fewer than five students register for a course, it may be cancelled, at the discretion of the instructor. TH519 and TM501 (capstone courses for the master's degrees) are offered in all semesters.



PARTNERS WITH GCS

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

If you have a passion for the provision of seminary training informed by an Incarnational Trinitarian faith, GCS is grateful for your partnership through prayer and financial support.

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