

Perspective *magazine*

A NEW CHAPTER AT PERKINS

*Incoming Dean Brian P. Stone
shares a vision for what's next
(see pg. 3)*

*"The future of theological
education must be more
expansive...And Perkins has an
incredible legacy and foundation
from which to rethink theological
education in our time."*

NEXT 
NEW LEADERSHIP

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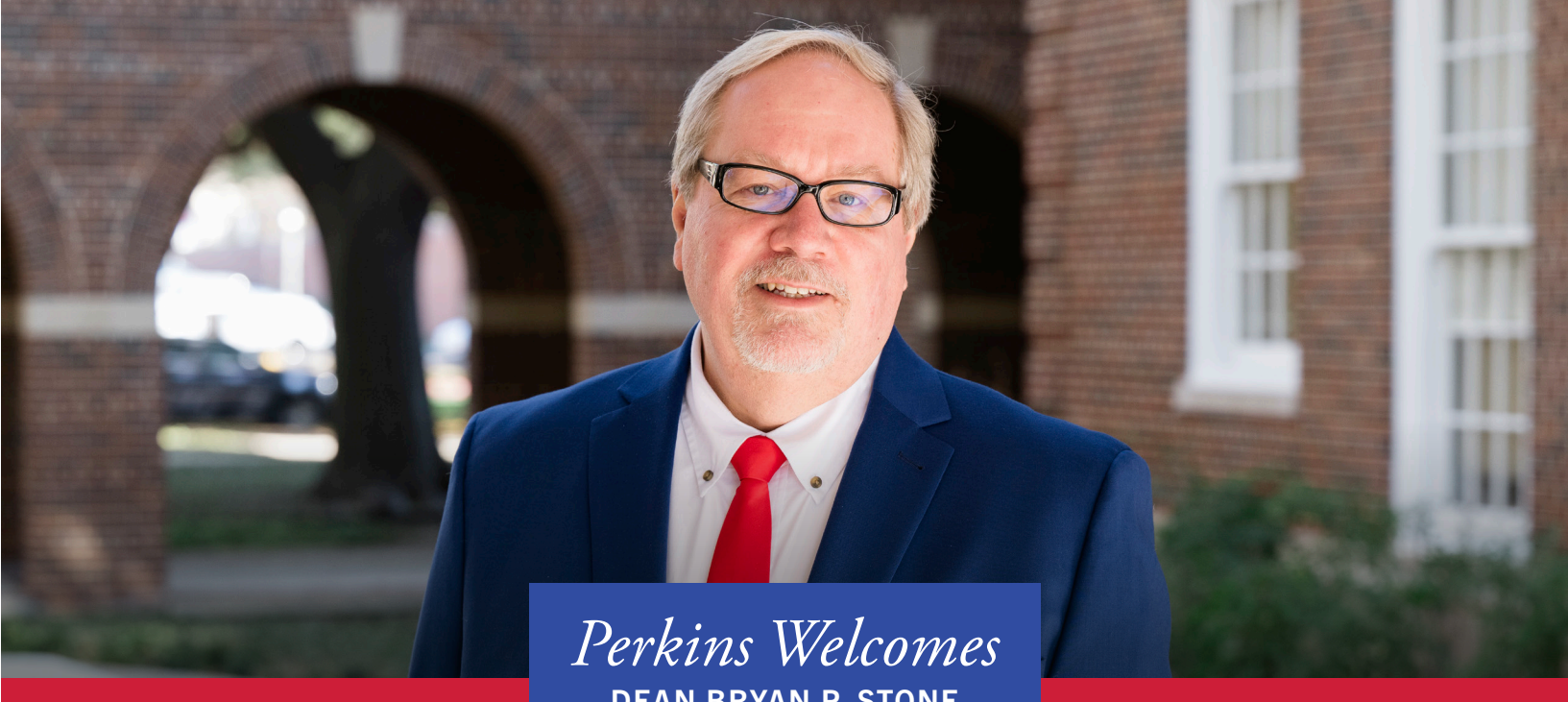
Design and Production: Madison Asher, Saddle Marketing

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Perkins Welcomes
DEAN BRYAN P. STONE

Bryan P. Stone, a distinguished theological educator, researcher and administrator, joins Perkins on June 1, 2025, as the new Leighton K. Farrell Dean of Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. An SMU Ph.D. graduate in Religious Studies (1992), Dr. Stone is excited to return to SMU.

“What I love most about returning to my alma mater is that Perkins is embedded as a progressive mainline Protestant seminary in a major research university, is an important center for Wesleyan studies and is deeply committed to serving the United Methodist Church,” he said. “The School is well-positioned to build on its historic strengths and legacy to address the immense challenges facing theological schools at this point in history.”

Dr. Stone comes to SMU from Boston University School of Theology, where he served as associate dean for academic affairs and held the E. Stanley Jones Professorship of Evangelism. At Boston University, he co-founded the Center for Practical Theology to help bridge theological education with the lived realities of faith communities. His tenure there included the development of online and hybrid degree programs.

Stone’s scholarly work has explored evangelism, Wesleyan theology and the intersection of theology and culture. Before launching his academic career, Stone led Liberation Community, Inc. in Fort Worth, Texas, a faith-based nonprofit providing adult education, employment assistance and youth programs. He later taught at Azusa Pacific University and served as director of the Bresee Institute for Urban Training in Los Angeles.

Throughout their academic journey, Dr. Stone and his wife, Cheryl, have demonstrated a passion for student life and mentorship. At Boston University, they served as faculty-in-residence for more than two decades at Warren Towers, home to 1,800 freshmen.

“Dr. Stone is a dynamic university leader who brings the skill set of an active researcher, passionate educator and collaborative administrator to SMU and Perkins at a time of strategic importance for the school and for our university,” said Elizabeth G. Lobo, SMU provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

Dr. Stone holds a B.A. in religion and philosophy from Southern Nazarene University and a Master of Divinity from Nazarene Theological Seminary.

In his new role, Stone’s key priorities include making theological education accessible to more students in a wider array of vocational paths, whether as clergy, chaplains, teachers or other religious and faith-based nonprofit leaders.

“I want to accent the rich Wesleyan heritage and resources of Perkins, its connection to the United Methodist Church, its ecumenical openness (what John Wesley called a ‘catholic spirit’) and its commitment to interfaith dialogue and hospitality,” he said. “The future of theological education must be more expansive. Clergy preparation is still central, but this is a time to recover the aim and purpose of theological education as much more fundamentally the practice of knowing and loving God and the things of God. And Perkins has an incredible legacy and foundation from which to rethink theological education in our time.”

Join us in welcoming Dean Bryan P. Stone as he leads Perkins School of Theology into its next chapter!



WATCH ON YOUTUBE
A message from the New
Dean of Perkins



A SEASON OF CHANGE:

New Curriculum, Hybrid Modality, M.Div. Spanish

The 2024-25 academic year saw many changes at Perkins School of Theology: the implementation of an updated curriculum, a new hybrid program and the first cohort of the Maestría en Divinidad (M.Div. in Spanish). Together, these new initiatives created a few challenges even as they positioned Perkins to address new realities in theological education.

“These changes provided many reasons to celebrate, including the opportunity to enroll students from many different states and extend Perkins’ reach,” said Hugo Magallanes, dean *ad interim* of Perkins. “I truly believe we’re moving in the right direction by making Perkins’ academic programs more accessible and appealing to a broader audience.”

NEW CURRICULUM

After a years-long review process, the new curriculum began this fall for Perkins’ M.Div., M.A.M., M.S.M. and M.T.S. degree programs.

“This was the biggest curriculum change implemented since 1970, and I’m excited about what I’ve seen so far,” said Rebekah Miles, who chaired the Curriculum Review Committee.

Key changes included streamlining the introductory courses, adding a pastoral care requirement and two new interdisciplinary courses. In addition, the credit-bearing course in spiritual formation was eliminated, with the goal of incorporating spiritual formation more organically into all coursework.

“For example, each week, in our new introductory class, students are asked to reflect on how the week’s lectures, readings and discussions have impacted their life of faith and ministry,” Miles said. “And I find that students are really embracing that.”

One goal of the new curriculum was to make it logistically possible to offer both the hybrid program and the residential program in Dallas. This fall, Perkins’ incoming class was about 50% in-person students and 50% hybrid students.

The revised curriculum includes a new course, Introduction to Theological Studies and Research, which Miles co-taught in the fall and spring semesters.

“That course had a lot of input from students and faculty, and I think it’s working well,” she said. “Students have a week on writing, a week on research, a week on reading and then two weeks on each of the major fields of study, which prepares them for the more advanced coursework.”

Miles added that the previous curriculum was designed around residential M. Div. students preparing for ordination in The United Methodist Church.

“Now, M.Div. enrollment at most theological schools is shrinking, but we’re seeing growth in other master’s degree programs, with students who plan to serve in nonprofits and other settings,” she said. “And while we still have a strong focus on The United Methodist Church, we also want to reach out to students in other denominations who may not require an M.Div. The new curriculum fits better for all these needs.”

HYBRID PROGRAM

David Profitt lives in the Chicago area, within driving distance of a United Methodist seminary. But Perkins proved the more workable option for pursuing an M.Div. toward becoming an ordained elder.

That’s because Perkins launched its new hybrid program last fall, which combines online coursework with twice-yearly in-person “immersions” in January and June, held at a variety of locations.

“The hybrid program gives students the flexibility to stay with their families, their local churches and their jobs while pursuing a theological education,” said Christina Rhodes, Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management at Perkins. “It broadened our reach and attracted students from more than 16 different states.”

Profitt is a licensed local pastor serving at Arlington Heights United Methodist. He and his wife, who works full-time, have two active teens. Had he attended the nearby seminary, he said, “I would’ve been driving a lot. This program was a lot easier to fit in with my family life.”

Over the course of their degree programs, M.Div. students will attend five weeklong immersions; M.A.M. students attend two. The location of each immersion will rotate. The next is planned for McAllen, Texas. Subsequent “mobile site” locations are still in development.

Two questions that arose when the program was proposed: Would it be academically rigorous? And would students develop a sense of community? Faculty and students believe both concerns were addressed.

“Residential and hybrid students take the same coursework, do the same readings, at the same pacing,” said Rhodes. “It’s the same material, just in a different format.”

“The learning objectives are the same for each course, regardless of the modality in which it’s taught,” said Magallanes.

The program has attracted many bright students – including a pediatric neurologist, an English literature professor and Michel Zwanenburg, who has a Ph.D. in physics.

“I think the quality of the coursework is top-notch,” he said. “There’s no sign of anything getting dumbed down for the hybrid students.”

Zwanenburg is pursuing an M.A.M., with plans to become ordained as a deacon in The United Methodist Church. Even though he lives in California, he feels connected to the Perkins community.

“We all met in-person at the beginning of the semester and had the chance to exchange phone numbers and build some rapport,” he said. “Now we talk on a regular basis.”

Profitt, who transferred from another distance-learning program, agrees. “I feel like I’m a lot more connected with the students in this program,” he said.



There have been logistical challenges. Faculty teaching online courses must prepare lectures, assignments and readings months in advance, to meet the requirements of SMU and its online delivery system. Some sections were added to accommodate transfer students' schedules.

Students in the new program do not join formal cohorts, but most will likely progress through the program with many of the same classmates.

MAESTRÍA EN DIVINIDAD

Andi Villar Arroyo lives in Bellevue, Wash., works at Honda and serves Redmond United Methodist Church as a preacher and youth leader. Now he's also pursuing an M.Div. in his first language without relocating. Villar Arroyo is one of 13 students in the first cohort of Perkins' new Maestría en Divinidad (M.Div. in Spanish) program, which began last fall.

Students in the hybrid program take two courses each term. In fall 2024, they took Introduction to Theological Studies and Research, taught by Dr. Denise DuPont, Professor of Spanish at SMU; and Interpretation of the Old Testament, taught by Dr. Julián Andrés González Holguín, a Ph.D. graduate of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at SMU. In the spring semester, most students took Christian Ethics in Social Context, taught by Magallanes and Interpretation of the New Testament with Julián González.

All courses in the M.Div. in Spanish program are taught in Spanish. A key benefit is that students participate in a cohort of Spanish speakers with all readings in Spanish and all writing exercises completed in Spanish.

"Spanish helps me express myself more clearly and deeply, especially when I talk about theology, faith and ministry," said Villar Arroyo. "Because Spanish is my first language, I can think and reflect more deeply, which also helps me in my ministry to Spanish-speaking people."

"Just speaking in two languages doesn't mean you can think theologically in two languages," said Dr. Marcell Silva Steuernagel, a lead advisor for the program along with Dr. Harold Recinos. "This program allows students to tap into deep roots, and reflect on their traditions and cultural legacies, in their own language."

Villar Arroyo plans to become ordained in The United Methodist Church and to serve second and third

generation young people who grew up in families with different languages and cultures. He considered residential seminary programs but chose Perkins because it allows him to remain in his community and church.

The M.Div. in Spanish students all live in the United States, but most were born outside of the U.S. Many serve Hispanic ministries in their local churches.

"It's great to see students from different countries of origin who are serving congregations in very different settings, all learning together and supporting one another," said Magallanes. "They have created a strong sense of community."

Students follow the same curriculum as M.Div. students in the English language program but have opportunities to reflect on what they've learned in context with their own ministerial settings and cultural backgrounds.

"The content is not about Hispanic ministry or culture, but the class discussions and the experiences that my classmates share from our Hispanic ministries make the learning very rich," said Villar Arroyo.

Program leaders expect to open another cohort in the next few years depending on interest and enrollment. Students also have opportunities to participate in one-week immersion courses and attend worship experiences in bilingual settings.

"I see this program opening up new lines of theological work and conversation," Steuernagel said. "Our M.Div. in Spanish students bring a unique perspective. They are working with populations that often are more vulnerable, which informs their theological perspectives."



NEXT: Program Highlights

Perkins Launches Fresh Expressions House of Studies

On June 1, 2025, Perkins School of Theology at SMU officially launches the Fresh Expressions House of Studies – an innovative new program aimed at preparing students to lead ministries beyond traditional church settings. Rooted in Perkins' Wesleyan tradition, this initiative reflects a growing movement toward reimagining how and where spiritual communities can flourish.

The program will be led by Dr. Michael Beck, a pioneer of the Fresh Expressions movement in North America. An ordained United Methodist clergy, Beck brings deep expertise in contextual church planting and has advised hundreds of churches and faith-based organizations.

Originating in 2003 through a partnership between the Methodist Church of Britain and the Church of England, the Fresh Expressions movement seeks to reach people who have been hurt, excluded or disconnected from traditional church experiences. Ministries have emerged in diverse locations such as dog parks, pubs, electric vehicle charging stations and assisted living centers.

"This represents a paradigm shift in theological education," said Beck. "Perkins will offer a traditional seminary experience while also creating a dynamic space to reimagine ministry and leadership for a new generation. Students will learn how to lead church plants that may never take place in church buildings but will reflect the diversity and realities of the communities they serve."

The Fresh Expressions House of Studies will foster a network of students, faculty, and community leaders dedicated to innovative ministry. Participants will engage in spiritual formation, mentorship, internships and real-world ministry practice in nontraditional settings. Plans are also underway to develop specialized coursework and a Master of Divinity concentration focused on Fresh Expressions.

This October, Perkins will also launch the Perkins Certificate in Fresh Expressions, a noncredit credential available to lay and clergy person alike, regardless of educational background or leadership experience. The certificate will be a hybrid, year-long cohort, utilizing webinars, in-person retreats, virtual coaching and Fresh Expressions site immersions. The first module of the Certificate in Fresh Expressions – an introductory webinar – is open to all. Program applications will be available to those who complete the webinar. The webinar is scheduled for October 16, 2025, from 5 to 8 p.m. CST.

Dean *ad interim* Hugo Magallanes underscored the program's alignment with Perkins' core values. "In a time of uncertainty about the future of the church, Fresh Expressions reclaims a distinctive Wesleyan emphasis," he said. "This initiative allows us to provide rigorous theological education while inspiring bold and creative ways of sharing the gospel."

Distinguished Alumni *and* Seals Awards

The four recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award and the Woodrow B. Seals Laity Award for 2024 and 2025 were honored at an awards banquet on the Perkins campus on April 7. The event marked the first year both the Distinguished Alumni and Seals Laity awards were presented on the same evening.

The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes Perkins graduates who have demonstrated effectiveness and integrity in service to the church, continuing support for the goals of Perkins and SMU, distinguished service to the community and exemplary character. This year’s recipients were the 2024 awardee, Rev. Dr. John C. Holbert (M.Th., 1971; Ph.D., 1975), a pastor, scholar and former Perkins professor, and the 2025 awardee, Rev. Denise Alice Sawyer (M.Div., 1999), a pastor, hospital chaplain and community leader.

The Seals Laity Award honors laypersons in the United States who exemplify an exceptional commitment to service to Christ through faith and action in the church, community and world. Denise Espinosa Lloyd (M.Div., 1985), an active member of First United Methodist Church in Missouri City, Texas, and a longtime community volunteer and advocate for the unhoused, received the 2024 award. Thomas C. Sellers, a banking executive, community volunteer and lay leader in First United Methodist Church of Sulphur Springs, Texas, was the 2025 recipient.

“It is our distinct honor to recognize these outstanding alumni and laypersons whose faithful leadership and Christian ministry have made a lasting impact in the churches and communities they serve,” said Hugo Magallanes, Perkins Dean *ad interim*. “Their witness has been transformative within and beyond the church.”

ABOUT THE RECIPIENTS

2024 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Rev. Dr. John C. Holbert

Holbert earned an M.Th. in 1971 from Perkins School of Theology and a Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible in 1975 from SMU. He joined the Perkins faculty in 1979, teaching there until retirement in 2012 as Lois Craddock Perkins Professor of Homiletics for the last 16 years of his faculty appointment.

Over the course of his career, Holbert has taught and preached in more than 1,000 churches in every state in the U.S. and 20 countries. He remains active in ministry, contributing weekly lectionary reflections on the Hebrew Bible and New Testament through the Perkins Center for Preaching Excellence’s Lively Lectionary blog.

Currently, he resides in Los Angeles with his wife, the Rev. Dr. Diana Brown Holbert (Master of Music 1971; M.Div. 1993; D.Min. 2005). He is an ordained elder and serves as head of Adult Education at Westwood United Methodist Church. A past president of the Academy of Homiletics and former co-editor of the journal Homiletic, Holbert has authored numerous works and preached and lectured globally.

2025 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Rev. Denise Sawyer

The Rev. Denise Sawyer (M.Div., 1999) grew up in the Methodist Church of the Bahamas before attending Perkins School of Theology. While at Perkins, she excelled as a student, co-chaired the Black Seminarians Association and advocated for increased faculty diversity. After graduating, she served five churches in the Bahamas, then returned to the U.S. to serve as an ordained United Methodist elder in what is now the Great Plains Conference.

After 10 years in parish ministry, Sawyer transitioned to the chaplaincy, relocating to Dallas to serve in Methodist Health System’s Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program. She was endorsed by the United Methodist Endorsing Agency of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and certified as a chaplain by the Association of Professional Chaplains.

In 2011, Sawyer joined Lee Health in Fort Myers, Florida, where she currently serves as director of spiritual services. Sawyer also continues to preach regularly in a seasonal community church in Naples, Florida, and is an active member of Hope United Methodist Church in Fort Myers. She remains connected to her home church, Ebenezer Methodist Church, in the Bahamas.

2024 SEALS LAITY AWARD

Denise Espinosa Lloyd

Denise Espinosa Lloyd graduated from Perkins School of Theology in 1985 and was ordained in what is now the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. She was the only Hispanic clergywoman in the conference at the time. After leaving ordained ministry, she remained an active layperson of First United Methodist Church in Missouri City, Texas. She served as a choir member, missions committee leader, Disciple Bible Study leader, education committee chair, Sunday school teacher and for 20 years, a lay member of the Texas Annual Conference.

Lloyd currently serves as board president of Fort Bend Family Promise, a nonprofit that meets the immediate needs of families experiencing temporary housing insecurity while empowering them to regain self-sufficiency.

2025 SEALS LAITY AWARD

Thomas C. Sellers

Thomas C. Sellers is a longtime member of First United Methodist Church in Sulphur Springs, Texas, as well as an Eagle Scout, school board member and community volunteer. Over the years, he has taught Sunday school and chaired multiple church committees. Most recently, he began hosting “Toddler Time with Tom,” a weekly playdate in the church gym that welcomes local families with young children.

Sellers graduated from SMU’s Southwestern Graduate School of Banking and joined Alliance Bank in 1988, rising to chief executive officer in 2004. In 2021, he was named chairman and CEO of Alliance Bank. Among those recommending Sellers for the award was Craig Roberts, a competitor at Guaranty Bank & Trust and a member of the Sunday school class Sellers taught for 20 years.

SEALS LAITY AWARD



THOMAS C. SELLERS and DENISE ESPINOSA LLOYD

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD



REV. DENISE SAWYER and REV. DR. JOHN C. HOLBERT

PROGRAM UPDATE:

Black/Africana Church Studies

When Dr. Michael “Mike” Greene stepped into his new role as director of the Black/Africana Church Studies (BACS) Program at Perkins School of Theology in September, he brought with him a rich blend of experience as a religious ethicist, economist, and United Methodist pastor. He also arrived with a clear vision.

Greene quickly identified two top priorities: building a strong consultative team to help shape the program’s direction and forging deep, ecumenical relationships with local communities and congregations.

That vision came to life in January with the program’s first major event under Greene’s leadership. Held at Salem Institutional Baptist Church in South Dallas, the gathering – *Toward the Beloved Community: Resisting Domination* – honored the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. while examining the evolution of the Black church in the post-Civil Rights era. Dr. Jason E. Shelton, professor of sociology and director of the Center for African American Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington, served as the keynote speaker. The Rev. Todd Atkins, senior pastor of Salem and a Perkins alum, hosted the event.

“We’re seeing substantial losses in mainline Black churches, including Baptist and United Methodist congregations,” Greene said. “Many churchgoers are moving toward large, nondenominational churches that place less emphasis on social activism and lean into a more individualistic theology. Others are leaving church altogether, identifying as “spiritual but not religious.” This was an opportunity to explore what that shift means for the Black church – and for broader issues like public policy and social justice.”

The conversation continues this spring with another timely event. On May 27, BACS hosts a virtual program focusing on the Black maternal health crisis and the church’s role in addressing it. The keynote speaker, Dr. Wyland D. Wilson, is associate professor of theological ethics at Duke Divinity School. Wilson’s work sits at the intersection of spirituality, social justice and Black women’s health. The event is presented in partnership with the Texas Association of Black Female

Physicians and The Afiya Center, a reproductive justice organization based in North Texas.

“This issue is deeply personal for me,” Greene said. “The data is clear: Black women in the U.S. are far more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women. If you’ve spent any time in a Black church, you know it’s mostly women filling the pews. We talk about loving and valuing Black women – so stepping up and confronting the Black maternal health crisis is one way to truly live that out.”

Looking ahead to the 2025–26 academic year, Greene plans to expand on the program’s focus on spirituality, health and racial disparities. He’s also organizing an event for faith leaders that will explore the moral dimensions of church budgeting. Another gathering will take on the complex topic of forgiveness, inviting perspectives from theologians and religious ethicists.

“When something tragic happens – like the police shooting of a Black child – the question often becomes, ‘Can you forgive the perpetrator?’” Greene said. “I think we’ve developed a really narrow, oversimplified understanding of forgiveness. I’d like to broaden that conversation and invite people to wrestle with it more deeply.”



CASA LAUNCH: Perkins Program Focuses on Hispanic Ministries

In 2022, Hispanics made up nearly one in five people in the United States, up from 16% in 2010 and just 5% in 1970, with a population of more than 63 million.

Despite these fast-growing numbers, many of the educational needs of leaders and volunteers in Hispanic churches have gone unmet.

To help address the need, the Centro de Acompañamiento, Solidaridad y Adiestramiento (CASA) program represents a reimagined commitment to Hispanic ministry initiatives at Perkins School of Theology. The new program is a merger of the school’s previous Center for the Study of Latino/a Christianity and Religions and the Hispanic/Latin@ Ministries Program.

“The Hispanic community often faces challenges not always present in Anglo churches,” said Melissa Hernandez Probus, Associate Director for CASA, as well as the Course of Study (COSS) program. “CASA is an effort to reach those who are thirsting for theological knowledge and who may not otherwise have access to resources or programming.”

A key component is CASA’s Pathways to Ministry (Caminos para el Ministerio), which was launched in 2024 in collaboration with Wesley Theological Seminary and thanks to a \$5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. This certificate program is offered in Spanish for pastors with no formal training, as well as for lay pastors and others with pastoral responsibilities. The program includes specific courses in preaching, pastoral care, Old Testament, New Testament and leadership.

“These courses serve to bridge the gap for people who are faithfully serving their churches but may not have formal theological education or training and may not be ready to pursue a master’s degree,” said Hernandez Probus. “The goal is to equip them with accessible and practical education for their ministry.”

The Pathways to Ministry Certificate began in 2024 in Dallas, with in-person classes taught at the Perkins campus. The next course in Dallas, Pastoral Counseling: Couples and Youth in Spanish, begins June 12, 2025.

A Houston location was added in 2025 in response to a need identified by the Rev. Cesar Martinez (M.Div., 2017), Southeast District Superintendent and Hispanic Ministries Coordinator for the Texas Annual Conference. That program will offer another course, Approaches to Leadership in Spanish, beginning Sept. 12, 2025.

A virtual component will be added beginning in August 2025 through Wesley Theological Seminary.

“This program will offer the same classes as the Dallas and Houston programs, but virtually, and we hope that will allow us to capture even wider audiences,” said Hernandez Probus. “The online course content was developed by Perkins but will be housed at Wesley. Instructors were tasked with not only teaching each course in person but also developing it online.” They have done a tremendous job, and we appreciate all the instructors who were part of this initiative.”

In addition to Pathways to Ministry, CASA oversees three other programs:

- The Barton Lectures – an annual lectureship with topics pertinent to Latino ministries and issues. In the fall of 2025, the lecture will be offered as part of Perkins Fall Convocation.
- Apuntes – an ecumenical, bilingual journal that supports the Hispanic/Latin@ Church by providing theological, biblical and historical reflection to enrich pastoral ministry and understanding of the church.
- L@S Seminaristas – an interest group representing the Latino student body at Perkins.

“CASA provides an opportunity for Perkins to continue building on its relationship and engagement with the Hispanic community that began with the formation of the school’s Mexican American Program in the 1970s,” said Hugo Magallanes, Director of CASA.

“Perkins remains committed to recruiting, preparing and providing continuing education for people in ministry with Hispanics and Latinos/as.”

NEW FACES 2024-2025

New Staff



April Johnson Bristow
Associate Director of the Intern Program



Danica Calvert
Perkins Chapel Coordinator



Charlotte Fields
Digital Marketing Analyst



Alicia Greene
Assistant Director of Academic Affairs



Michelle Killian
Coordinator, Office of External Programs
and Church Relations



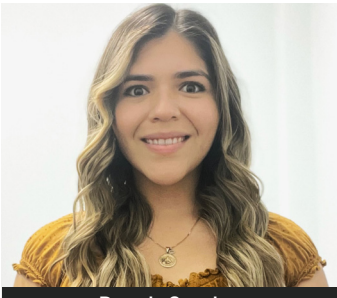
Nakoya Loucks
Assistant Dean of Marketing & Communications



Sammie Moles
Admissions Recruiter



Roxanne Paulson
Instructional Learning Technologist



Pamela Sanchez
Program Coordinator, Office of External
Programs and Church Relations

New Faculty



Pamela White
Director of the Intern Program



Emily Nelms Chastain
Instructor in the History of Christianity

New Staff at Bridwell

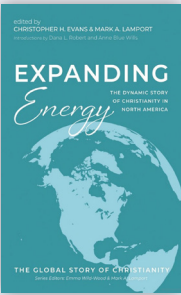


Josey Jones
Exhibits Designer & Collections Manager

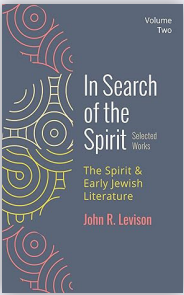
Faculty Publications



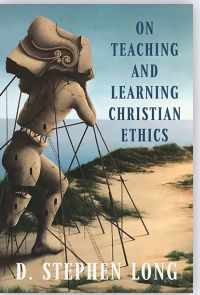
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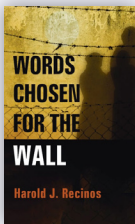
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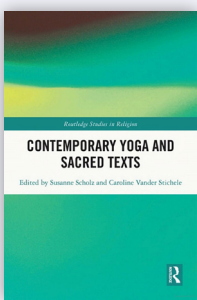
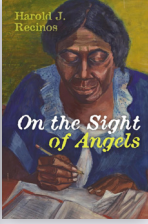
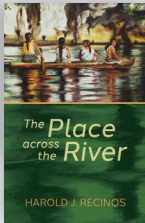
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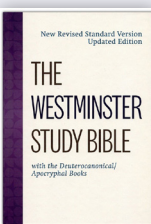
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On the Sight of Angels.
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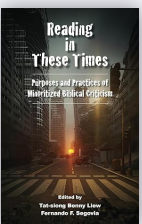
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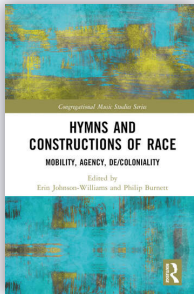
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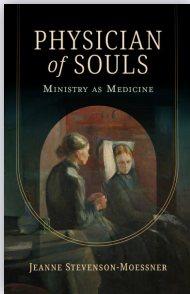
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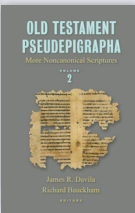
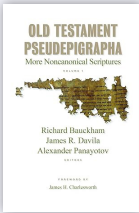
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*Physician of Souls: Ministry as
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RETIREEES WE WILL MISS

This spring marks the close of an era at Perkins, as we bid farewell to four dedicated and beloved members of our faculty and staff who retired at the end of the Spring 2025 semester. Collectively, they have devoted 123 years of exceptional service to the Perkins community, shaping generations of students, advancing our mission and leaving an indelible legacy of excellence and compassion. We celebrate their contributions and wish them joy and fulfillment in this new chapter of life.



Ted A. Campbell
Albert C. Outler Professor of Wesley Studies



Ruben L.F. Habito
Professor of World Religions and Spirituality



Susanne Johnson
Associate Professor of Christian Education



Mark W. Stamm
Professor of Christian Worship

FRIENDS WE WILL MISS

“The best of all is, God is with us.” – JOHN WESLEY

We remember all those who have gone before us since January 1, 2024 and pray they dwell forever with the Lord.

- The Rev. Robert Edward Allen (Th.M. 1966)

Mr. Boyd Vincent Baker (Th.M. 1961)

The Rev. John Richard Barfield (Th.M. 1965)

The Rev. Aaron F. Barling (Th.M. 1959)

The Rev. Anne White Beall (M.Div. 1992)

The Rev. Herbert Glenn Brown (Th.M. 1965)

The Rev. Dr. Guston Hassell Browning (Th.M. 1953)

The Rev. Paul Marcus Buchanan (Th.M. 1983)

The Rev. Dr. Stone Walker Caraway (Th.M. 1957)

Dr. Kenneth Eugene Carter, Jr. (Th.M. 1965)

The Rev. Curtis Norman Carter (Th.M. 1964)

The Rev. Morris Carl Cartwright, Jr. (Th.M. 1956)

The Rev. Robert Otis Cooper (Th.M. 1952)

The Rev. Hugh B. Daniel (Th.M. 1954)

The Rev. Jeanne Webb Davis (M.Div. 1994; M.S.M. 1980)

The Rev. Julie A. Davis (M.Div. 2000)

Dr. Mary Jane Ramsey Dickson (M.R.E. 1967)

Mr. Ralph Buenger Dickson (Th.M. 1966)

Dr. Mary Murrell Faulkner (M.S.M. 1967)

Mr. LeBron Free (Th.M. 1966)

The Rev. Robert Ingram Galatas (Th.M. 1955)

The Rev. Connell Roger Ghormley (Th.M. 1961)

Chaplain Herbert Lee Griffin, Jr. (M.Div. 1990)

Mr. Charles Edward Hall (Th.M. 1960)

Mr. Robert Benjamin Holladay (Th.M. 1958)

Mr. Henry Meyer Holloway (Th.M. 1956)

Dr. William Arthur Holmes (Th.M. 1954)

The Rev. David Alan Hutchins (Th.M. 1961)

Dr. William Charles Jones (Th.M. 1956)

Mr. Richard Stanley Jones (M.T.S. 1987)

The Rev. Kenneth Wood Kinard (Th.M. 1969)

Dr. Luster Marion Lockett (Th.M. 1972)

The Rev. Raymond Charles Lott, Jr. (Th.M. 1954)

Dr. Neal Malicky (Th.M. 1959)

Ms. Teresa Ann Mallott (M.Div. 1988)

Dr. Jimmy Harold Martin (Th.M. 1968; D.Min. 1984)

The Rev. Virgil Maurice Matthews (Th.M. 1954; M.A.M. 1956)

Dr. James O’Leary Maxwell (D. Min. 1979)

The Rev. Dr. Carl Marshall McGee (D.Min. 1981)
- Dr. Jerard Roneal Mosley (M.T.S. 2002)

The Rev. Michael Loy Nichols (Th.M. 1973)

Mr. Marvin Andrew Northcutt (Th.M. 1965)

The Rev. Laura Elaine Nusbaum (M.Div. 2015)

The Rev. Kwang Bae Park (M.Div. 1996)

The Rev. Robert Earl Parrott (Th.M. 1952)

Dr. Elizabeth Anne Payne (Th.M. 1967)

Mr. Charles Ray Peters (Th.M. 1959)

The Rev. Harold Lee Price (Th.M. 1963)

Dr. Elizabeth Box Price (M.R.E. 1965)

Dr. Robert J. Riley (Th.M. 1961)

The Rev. Lawrence O. Robbins (Th.M. 1979)

The Rev. Bryce Clark Robertson (Th.M. 1965)

The Rev. Dr. Wayne A. Robinson (Th.M. 1967)

The Rev. Dr. Roy Hugh Ryan (S.T.M. 1967)

The Rev. Joel Perez Salas (Th.M. 1980)

Dr. David Lee Severe (Th.M. 1959)

The Rev. Joe D. Shafer (Th.M. 1963)

Mr. David William Simmons (M.T.S. 1993)

Mr. Jeffrey Lee Springborg (M.S.M. 1979)

Dr. Wesley MacClelland Stevens (Th.M. 1955)

The Rev. Richard Owens Teeter (M.Div. 1989)

Dr. Charles Sydnor Thompson, III (D.Min. 1988)

The Rev. James Albert Till (M.S.M. 1973)

Mr. William George Trudeau (Th.M. 1968)

Mr. Ronald Lee Underwood (Th.M. 1973)

The Rev. Dr. Linda Margaret Watkins (M.S.T. 1982; D.Min. 1982)

The Rev. Marcus Freelin West, Jr. (Th.M. 1959)

Mrs. Nancy Carol Willet (M.Div. 2005)

The Rev. Loy A. Williams (Th.M. 1966)

The Rev. A. Cecil Williams (Th.M. 1955)

The Rev. Conrad W. Winborn, Jr. (Th.M. 1957)

The Rev. Dr. Keith Wiseman (Th.M. 1960)

The Rev. Norma Farris Withrow (Th.M. 1973)

Mr. Quentin E. Woomer (Th.M. 1966)

Dr. Frank W. Wright, Ed.D. (Th.M. 1961)

The Rev. Patricia Lee Zaiontz-Newcomer (M.Div. 1995)

For a comprehensive list of all Perkins alumni/ae who have died during the past 12 months, please visit smu.edu/perkins/memoriams.
Note: All information regarding deceased Perkins alumni/ae is provided by Southern Methodist University’s official database.

Theology & The Book

The Past & Future of Publishing, Paper and Printing Come to Bridwell

By Anthony J. Elia, Director of Bridwell Library
and J.S. Bridwell Foundation Endowed Librarian

Seven years ago, when I arrived at Bridwell Library in May 2018, I encountered a richly multifaceted cultural space. I discovered an institutional dedication to the craft of book arts, a deep commitment to the history of printing and an ethos of excellence in everything from fine binding to typography. Even with these preeminent standards, there was room to grow and excel.

Already in 2019, I had been considering ways to enter the realm of publishing. It wasn't long after coming to SMU that I began hearing the lamentations of faculty and staff decrying the closure of the once vibrant SMU Press, closed permanently around 2010. It had the distinction of being the oldest academic press in the state of Texas, first publishing works around 1937. But for a number of reasons, its tenure ended unceremoniously. The timing, adaptability to nascent technologies, new digital interfaces, evolving reading habits, an uncertain future in publishing, rising costs and other issues contributed to its closure.

Nonetheless, in my first few years, the opportunity to fill this gap seemed within reach. Little did I know what direction it would go, or if it would be successful. By 2022, after a fair amount of strategic leg work, dozens of meetings and conversations with administrators and academic publishers around the country, and a decision to commit to a somewhat unorthodox model of publishing, I set forth a new academic press at SMU, based out of Bridwell Library: Bridwell Press. And in our first year, we published two books.

The second and third year saw the growth of partnerships, authors external to SMU and five new books. Each step forward provided more confidence in our work and greater visibility and leverage as an increasingly distinguished press. In mid-2024, a handful of collaborations both at SMU and elsewhere (including *Project Poëtica* and the *Initiative on Global Italian Religious Networks*) created the opportunity for the Press to coalesce into a robust publishing enterprise. These relationships stand at the core of our publishing model, which situates highly specialized academics as networkers, evaluators and decision makers around scholarly production, peer review and editorial oversight – not to mention, our books are published for free online as e-books, and then hard copies are sold at-cost only, making the cultural production free or affordable in print.

Bridwell Press has emerged as an unexpected academic juggernaut, jumping from three titles in its third year to nearly a dozen titles in its fourth year. The current proposed title list for 2026 may have the Press publishing nearly 25 titles. This means that our present publishing schedule has surpassed the former SMU Press's peak annual publishing output of ten titles per year, and will likely exceed TCU Press, which publishes approximately 15 books a year, in 2026. A reasonable aim for longer term production may be to have a balanced publishing regimen across the dozen or so series we have established, with an annual output of between 40 and 50 titles, which would bring us to middle-tier university publishing in North America.

These successes have come from the new structural design that Bridwell Press has implemented. This affords decentralized editorial boards run by specialist scholars to oversee distinct academic fields and collaborate with our staff and bring projects to fruition. The first few series that we have established include areas of poetry, church music, East and Central Asian studies, Eastern Christianity and Methodist Studies, for example. A collaboration with NYU in peer reviewed Italian studies monographs cemented our reputation as a major player in academic publishing. And subsequent projects and partnerships now have Bridwell Press engaged with more than fifty scholars, represented at more than two dozen universities around the world, including scholars at Yale, Duke, NYU, Baylor, Harvard, University of Toronto (Canada), University of Regensburg (Germany), University of Rome (Italy) and Oxford University (England).

At the very same time in 2024, another dream was taking shape, which would come true by the end of the year: receiving money for the construction of state-of-the-art historical paper and printing press labs. In early December, we received a \$2.5M grant from the Lilly Endowment to build these areas in Bridwell, along with a brand-new antiquities museum and enhanced exhibition spaces.

The new paper making and printing press labs will serve the greater North Texas community, and contain some of the best tools, resources and staffing around original paper and printing arts in North America. Specialists in book and paper arts will be engaged to lead courses, workshops, internships and residency programs, hopefully by Fall 2026. Bridwell will produce handmade specialty paper through both western and eastern methods of production and support projects across humanities, the arts and even the sciences.

With these improvements in hand, both in terms of publishing and the paper and printing arts, Bridwell Library has the potential to dominate specific areas of the creative and intellectual arts on an international level, attracting high quality people to participate in the great variety of projects that we do here. And if you're interested, don't hesitate to come and see us and find out what might be here for you!



LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

Gift of Giving

I am pleased to share the remarkable blessings we have experienced through the goodness of God and the generosity of our dedicated donors during *SMU Ignited*, the University's \$1.5 billion, multiyear capital campaign launched in 2021. As we eagerly await the arrival of Dean Bryan Stone, and as the campaign draws to a close, we are pleased with the significant strides made in fundraising and development at Perkins.



- The Baptist House of Studies was created and sustained by grants totaling more than \$4 million from the John and Eula Mae Baugh Foundation.
- An anonymous donor pledged \$3 million to endow the Leighton K. Farrell Endowed Dean position.
- The Lilly Endowment supported Perkins in a number of projects to the tune of \$5 million, culminating in a \$2.5 million grant to enhance the exhibition spaces in Bridwell Library.
- Perkins Chapel has been restored after a devastating 2019 steam leak and is now in pristine condition including the installation of the Caren and Vin Prothro Organ and the Gail and Gerald Turner Piano given to the glory of God.
- Our most pressing need is money for scholarships. We want our graduates to go out into service with minimal educational debt. I am pleased that more than \$2.4 million was given (primarily by members of the Executive Board) to the Perkins Scholars Program, which enhances the financial aid package for outstanding M.Div. students.



- An anonymous donor gave more than \$1.7 million for various endowed and operational scholarships.
- Eight new endowed scholarships were created.
- The long-overdue update to Kirby Parlor has been completely funded; work is ongoing and will be finished by the beginning of the fall semester.
- We are grateful for the ongoing support of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, which has supported Perkins with over \$9 million during the *SMU Ignited* campaign.



We look forward to the leadership of Dean Bryan Stone. His direction will bring new energy and renew the vigor of the school as it continues its mission of transforming students to become the servant-leaders in our communities. Theological education is changing but it is as important today as it has always been. Life-changing work takes place at Perkins. As always, we need friends to partner with us in educating women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry. Please join us in this endeavor. Consider making a recurring gift or contact me personally at johnma@smu.edu to discuss ways you can honor a pastor, mentor or spiritual influence in your life with a gift to Perkins.

The need is the same from generation to generation. I invite you to join our new Dean in this endeavor.

John A. Martin,
Director of Development

THE BAUGH FOUNDATION GRANTS

\$1.8 MILLION TO

Perkins Baptist House of Studies

The Baptist House of Studies at SMU's Perkins School of Theology is entering an exciting new chapter, thanks to another major grant from the Eula Mae and John Baugh Foundation.

This spring, the Eula Mae and John Baugh Foundation awarded its fourth grant, a \$1.8 million, three-year commitment. The latest contribution will fund a scholarship endowment for select students and operational funding for the Baptist House during years 2025-27.

Founded in 2019, the Perkins Baptist House of Studies fosters a community of ministerial students, faculty and staff who identify with the Baptist and Free Church Traditions. A program as well as a physical space, the Perkins Baptist House is a spiritual haven that supports and encourages students as they pursue their academic and ecclesial training in an ecumenical and university-based seminary.

"The Baptist House's perspective on the world resonates deeply with the commitment Eula Mae and John Baugh had and the Baugh Foundation has continued to support academically rigorous theological institutions that are actively shaping a more inclusive and just future," said Jackie Baugh Moore, president of the Baugh Foundation, a Texas-based philanthropy committed to supporting the work of faith-based, nonprofit organizations. "Perkins' diverse and talented student body, its renowned and outstanding faculty and the commitment to community partnerships all create powerful synergy for positive change."

The new three-year grant will allow the Baptist House to continue to attract talented students in the Baptist and Free Church traditions by offering them the opportunity to become Baugh Scholars. Full-tuition scholarships for these students support increasing Baptist student enrollment and ensure that the Baptist House continues permanently as part of Perkins School of Theology.

"The generosity of the Baugh Foundation to the Baptist House of Studies has allowed Perkins to be a welcoming place for Baptists in ministerial formation," said the Rev. Dr. Jaime Clark-Soles, director of the Baptist House of Studies and professor of New Testament at SMU Perkins. "Our Baptist students represent the kind of diversity that gives us hope for the church. The dynamic of learning together across gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and age has made Perkins a rich spiritual community."

With the new grant, the Perkins Baptist House of Studies will continue to serve an important and otherwise unfilled niche in theological education for moderate and progressive Baptist students in the region.

"The program offers students a welcoming environment for ecumenical education, ministerial training and spiritual formation as they prepare to become the next generation of Baptist leaders in our region and beyond," said the Rev. Dr. George Mason, lead advisor to the Baptist House of Studies.

"We can't wait to see who else God will send our way because of gifts like these," said Clark-Soles.



ANSWERING THE CALL

From Forensic Accountant to Faith-Fueled Advocate for Women and Children

**Perkins Alum Janet Collinsworth
Leads with Vision, Breaks Ground on Jericho
Village in Wylie, Texas**

When Janet Collinsworth walked into her first class at SMU's Perkins School of Theology in 2005, she had no plans to enter ministry. A seasoned forensic accountant and founder of a successful boutique accounting firm, Collinsworth was simply looking for answers to help teach her 13-year-old daughter's Methodist confirmation class.

"I told Dr. Rebekah Miles, 'I'm here for the knowledge. I'm not going into ministry,'" she recall.

Her professor smiled and said, "You might want to rethink that."

Two decades later, Collinsworth's journey is a testament to how God reshapes lives in unexpected and transformative ways. She now leads a vibrant ministry serving women and children emerging from crisis and homelessness through Agape Resource & Assistance Center, the nonprofit she founded in 2013. Most recently, Agape broke ground on Jericho Village, a 38-unit affordable housing community in Wylie, Texas. It will be the first development in Collin County to combine sliding-scale rent with wraparound services for families working to rebuild their lives.

FROM THE COURTROOM TO THE CLASSROOM

Before her call to ministry, Collinsworth was nationally respected in her field, specializing in litigation support and fraud investigations. But teaching church doctrine to teens raised more questions than answers, leading her to enroll at Perkins part-time.

"I felt like I was walking into a whole new world," she said. "I knew the Bible stories, but I didn't know the theology. I began to learn about God all over again."

In 2006, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land became a turning point. Standing at the Jordan River, Collinsworth felt an overwhelming sense of purpose.

"I knew God had something else for me to do," she said. "In time, I realized that I was called to connect people in the church to the needs of the outside world."

By 2009, at age 52, she had earned her Master of Theology degree from Perkins and began closing her business. She stepped into ministry as a missions coordinator at a United Methodist Church in Plano, where she launched a food pantry that now serves more than 5,300 families each month.

SEEING THE UNSEEN

Though she had raised her family in Plano, one of the wealthiest communities in Texas, Collinsworth was stunned by the level of need.

"I had been blind to the poverty in my own backyard," she said. "Hunger was just a symptom. The deeper issues were housing, transportation, jobs, childcare."

Her efforts to address those barriers led to the creation of Project Hope, a church-based mentoring program, and later to the founding of Agape Resource & Assistance Center. Agape's mission is to help women and their children move from crisis to self-sufficiency, addressing the practical challenges that prevent stability.



Over the past decade, more than 300 women and children – 90 percent of them survivors of abuse – have participated in Agape's programs. Seventy-five percent have gone on to become self-sufficient.

A VISION FOR JERICHO VILLAGE

The vision for Jericho Village is the next chapter in Agape's evolution. With 38 multi-family units and on-site services – including child care, transportation assistance, financial coaching and workforce development – Jericho Village is designed to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness for families who graduate from Agape's transitional program.

"Too many families are one missed paycheck away from eviction," Collinsworth said. "We're creating a place where women can build a future."

The name "Jericho Village" was inspired by the biblical story of Rahab – a woman whose courage helped the Israelites overcome Jericho's impenetrable walls. Collinsworth sees a powerful parallel with the women she serves.

"Like Rahab, our women are strong, resilient and determined," she said. "They step out in faith despite enormous obstacles. And like the Israelites, we're called to come alongside them and help bring those walls down."


Jeremiah 29:11 serves as a guiding verse for Agape: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.'"


Through Agape and Jericho Village, Janet Collinsworth is living out that promise – not just for herself, but for hundreds of women and children whose futures are forever changed.



Who We Are

2025 AT A GLANCE

 **51%**
UNITED METHODIST,
with more than 20 other
denominations represented


STUDENT BODY
OF MORE THAN
300 STUDENTS

 **42%**
OF STUDENTS REPRESENT
**MINORITY
ETHNIC GROUPS**

 **ALUMNI NETWORK**
Across the globe, from AUSTRALIA to ZIMBABWE

 **48% MALE 52% FEMALE**

LOCATED IN DALLAS, TEXAS
with a Hybrid-Online program

DALLAS ENROLLMENT = 221
HYBRID-ONLINE ENROLLMENT = 80

FACULTY BREADTH AT PERKINS

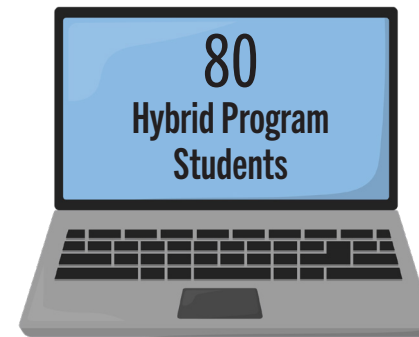
Our diverse faculty bring expertise across key areas of theological education:

6 faculty teaching
BIBLE & SCRIPTURE

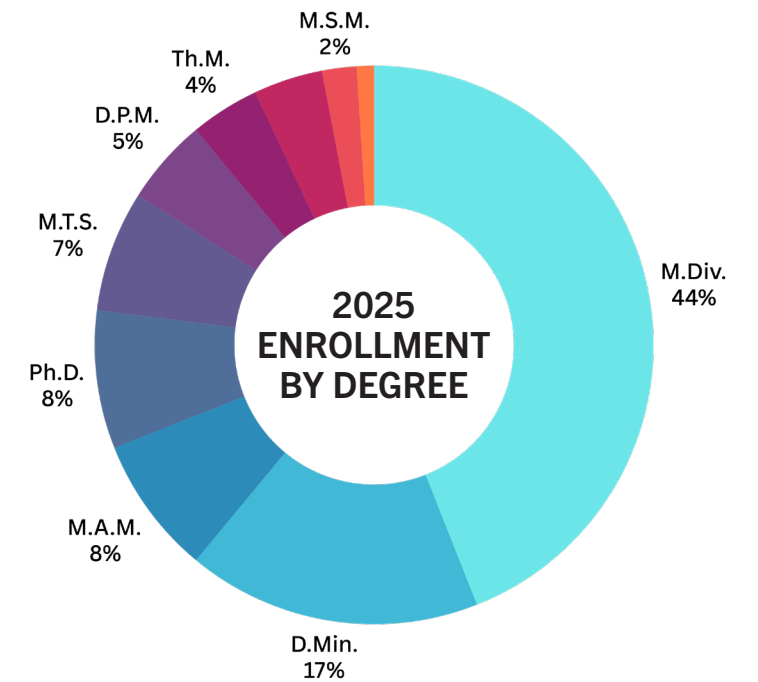
5 faculty teaching
CHURCH HISTORY & CULTURE

8 faculty teaching
THEOLOGY & ETHICS

7 faculty teaching
PRACTICAL THEOLOGY



The hybrid M.Div. and M.A.M. degree programs attract students from across the U.S., combining online coursework with occasional intensives.



A GLOBAL COMMUNITY: *Geographic Origin*

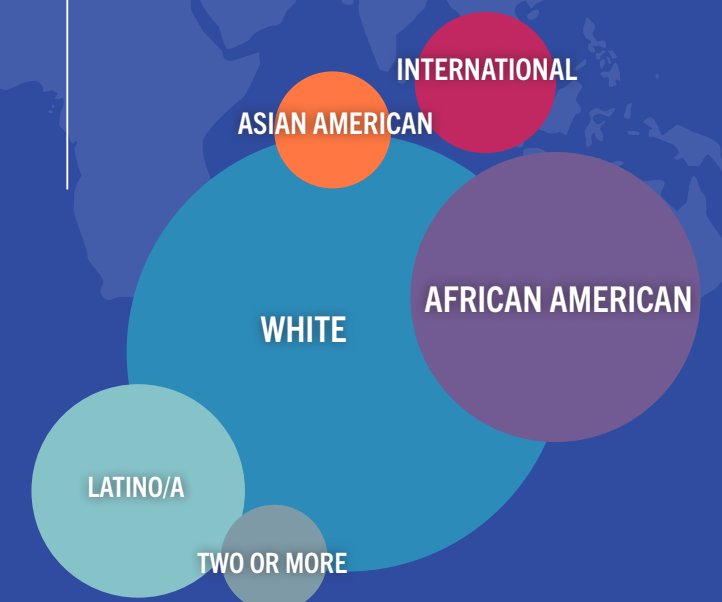
**17 students come from
11 countries outside of the U.S.**

Brazil	Indonesia
Congo	Mexico
England	Nigeria
Hong Kong	Singapore
India	South Korea

29
STATES
REPRESENTED

44
AVERAGE
STUDENT AGE

WHITE | 156 students, 52%
AFRICAN AMERICAN | 69 students, 23%
LATINO/A | 37 students, 12%
INTERNATIONAL | 17 students, 6%
ASIAN AMERICAN | 11 students, 4%
TWO OR MORE | 11 students, 3%



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Save the dates for these exciting Perkins continuing education opportunities

2025

AUGUST
15

Registration Deadline:
Certificate in Spiritual Direction
2025 Arkansas Cohort

SEPTEMBER
09

"Preaching the Parables," a CPX
workshop with Dr. Thomas G. Long

OCTOBER
16

Introductory Webinar for the Certificate in
Fresh Expressions with Dr. Michael Beck

OCTOBER
21

"Preaching and Trauma," a CPX workshop
with Dr. Joni S. Sancken

NOVEMBER
10-11

Perkins 2025 Fall Convocation

2026

JANUARY
12-14

Perkins School for Youth and
Children's Ministry

MARCH
20-21

Perkins Summit for
Faith and Learning in
Norman, Oklahoma



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SMU Perkins School
of Theology

