



New Spaces, New Programs at The New Seminary

IT HAS BEEN AN EXCITING YEAR at The New Seminary. A lot of changes have taken place and there are more to come.

New Center Opens

In March of 2007, The New Seminary moved into its new facility at 2672 Broadway at 102nd Street. This new center has a large meeting room for classes, a reception area, a small kitchen area, and two smaller offices for massages, counseling sessions, or meetings. The Center is used for monthly class meetings and is also rented out for spiritually-related workshops and classes.



The new Center includes a meeting room and reception area.

Weekly Interfaith Services

The Interfaith Temple in New York City is expanding its vision and programming. Beginning September 21, 2008, the Interfaith Temple holds a weekly worship service on Sunday mornings at The New Seminary Center at 2672 Broadway. Services start at 10:30 am with healing energy work and meditation, followed by an interfaith service at 11am. Dr. Festa, Chairman of the Board of the Interfaith Temple is very excited about this development. "The time is right for this to happen," he says.

Ministers leading the services will be Father Giles Spoonhour, one of the founders of The New Seminary, Deans Rev. Dr. Joshua Volle (2007) and Rev. Veronica Owens (2006), and Rev. Carol O'Rourke (2006). Any one interested in supporting this new venture can volunteer to participate in the service.

New Electives Program

In fall 2008, The New Seminary is adding an electives program offering a wide variety of courses during the year. "The elective program is designed to open areas of interest not currently covered in The New Seminary programs," says Rev. Deborah Steen Ross, Associate Director of The New Seminary. "The programs are exciting, diverse and will add to the TNS experience."

All students are expected to take at least two electives during the year. Many of the courses are open to alumni and the general public. Classes will be taped for Corresponding students.

The classes offered in the fall include Meditation Skills, Reflective Writing, a History of TNS with Rabbi Joseph Gelberman, one of the founders of The New Seminary, Money and Spirituality, Metaphysics and the Bible, Perfection Practices: Buddhist Path, Diversity & Cultural Competence, and Ritual for Ministers. In addition to Rabbi Gelberman, and Rev. Alan Lokos, a former dean at TNS, the presenters include graduates of TNS.

Courses anticipated for the Spring include The Business of Ministry, How to Do an Interfaith Wedding: From the first phone call to the 'I Do,' Pre-Marital Counseling, Crisis of Faith, and Intuition in Your Ministry.



Interfaith rituals honor the Seasons

The New Seminary NGO at the UN



As a part of The New Seminary's commitment to bring an interfaith perspective into the world, The New Seminary has been granted Non-Governmental Status (NGO) to the UN. This allows TNS to act in a consultation capacity with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and to give opinions on social and economic matters with the intent of helping better relationships among people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs.

The New Seminary NGO is a member of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns at the UN. Working with the United Nations Church Center, the TNS NGO offers sacred circles, cosponsors worship services, and spreads the word about works that span multiple religious cultural perspectives. Rabbi

Roger Ross, Executive Director of The New Seminary, is Treasurer of the Committee.

TNS participated in the Week of Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns celebrated on 22–26 October, 2008 at UN headquarters, during the United Nations 62nd anniversary. The goal of the week was to inspire and generate collective engagement in an annual worldwide celebration. Many TNS graduates and current students participated as volunteers in this event.

Reconciling Interfaith

The Reverend Francesca Fortunato

ON APRIL 30TH, 2006, I was ordained as a priest in the Orthodox-Catholic Church of America (OCCA). This article grows out of an exploration of how I and others in my congregation, The Community of St. John: Orthodox Catholic Church of America, reconcile our training in interfaith ministry with our religious beliefs.

Among the things that make our congregation unique is the fact that five of our six co-pastors have connections with TNS, either as alumni, staff or both. To find out more about how we made these connections and continue to thrive on collaborating, I spoke with Father Giles Spoonhour, a



Fr. Giles Spoonhour, a founding member of TNS

founder member of TNS and Director of the Interfaith Temple, and the Rev. Mother Lynn Walker, who has been a frequent lecturer at TNS.

I also included my own answers to these questions.

1. What drew you to TNS?

Lynn: I had known Giles for several years. We met at a convention of the Federation of Christian Ministries, a professional organization to which we both belong. Every now and then I would visit his parish and worship with them. A few years ago a friend told me a bit about The New Seminary and invited me to visit and give a presentation. It seemed to be a good opportunity to talk about, I think it was Hildegard of Bingen, a medieval Christian Abbess, author, musician, artist and visionary.

Giles: I was approached by the founders at the very beginning. It grew out of the original Interfaith Temple.

Francesca: I was an actress and writer who had been getting nudged in the direction of ordained ministry for several years. One of the reasons I hadn't pursued it was because, although I was a Christian, I was also someone who felt that it was important to honor my Jewish heritage (I was the child of a Catholic-Jewish interfaith marriage) and really

just didn't identify strongly with any denomination. You can't just get ordained as a Christian; you have to be ordained Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist or whatever. I wasn't ready to limit myself that way, nor to renounce the Jewish part of my identity. Then, God kept sending me Interfaith Ministers who were TNS alumni. I met them at my day jobs, on my acting gigs, even at parties. It seemed like they were coming out of the woodwork! I investigated TNS and it seemed like the answer to my dilemmas about ordination. Finally, shortly after my 39th birthday, I freaked out and said, "It's now or never!" I called Rev. Deborah Steen Ross at TNS and the rest is history...

2. In what way does Interfaith Ministry enter into your work as Orthodox Catholic parish clergy?

Lynn: While I work in an ecumenical capacity as a Priest Associate in an Episcopal church, I don't really engage in Interfaith Ministry except for the occasional lecture at The New Seminary. Of course, it's likely to have an impact, simply because The New Seminary folk are likely to make reference to it in conversation or while preaching.

Giles: They're complementary. The seminary interfaith experiences complement the work I do in church. Bringing new aspects of theology and the OCCA theology of theosis enlightens my work at The New Seminary.

Francesca: People come to our church and our parish from all sorts of backgrounds and faith traditions. My New Seminary training and experience have helped me do a better job of welcoming

"My TNS training . . . taught me to be creative, inventive and resourceful."

and serving all who come through our doors, with a sense of openness to their individual needs, beliefs and priorities.

3. Which gifts, skills and talents from your work as a priest come into play when you're doing Interfaith work?

Giles: The historical sense of the church over centuries helps me to open up to other faiths. My experience and training in the priesthood has given me a historic sense of the development of various religions over the centuries.

Lynn: When serving in an Episcopal church, I bring the depth and richness of Orthodox tradition and history to my preaching and teaching. At the same time, my understanding and appreciation of Anglican/Episcopal liturgy, thought and tradition increases all the time. I find we share much, particularly in terms of liberal/progressive thought and theology.

Francesca: My training for the priesthood matured me spiritually and gave me a sense of confidence and authority which has carried over into my work as an Interfaith Minister. My TNS training has definitely helped my work as a priest in that it taught me to be creative, inventive and resourceful in a spiritual context. Before TNS, I had a lot of fear about doing something "wrong" in church or even in private prayer. Now I feel secure in my ability to be Spirit-led in my responses to the needs of others, and to know that, if it's loving and helpful, it can't ever be "wrong."

5. Have you discovered areas where your Interfaith ordination and your OCCA priesthood conflict? Do you feel called to do some things as an In-

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THE NEW SEMINARY

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Founded in 1981, by Rabbi Joseph H. Gelberman, a pioneer and teacher of the Interfaith approach, with Reverend Jon Mundy, a former Methodist minister, Father Giles Spoonhour, a leader in church reform, and The Reverend Sri Swami Satchidanandam a revered Yoga Master, The New Seminary is the world's first Interfaith seminary.

The New Seminary is committed to the integrity of the individual and the individual's own spiritual search. We honor all paths leading toward a deepening of one's relationship with the Eternal Spirit, Divine, God, Goddess, Higher Power, and other paths that lead to a positive rewarding spiritual life.

The New Seminary is an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of The United Nations.

The New Seminary News is published as an additional resource for students and alumni of the institution and the community at-large.

Contributors to this issue of
The New Seminary News

Editor: Naomi Orwin, Bus. Editor: Dawn Shedrick, Advisors: Rev. Annie Lawrence, Rev. Deborah Steen Ross, Contributors: Rev. Francesca Fortunato, Ellen Carni, Kerry Dwyer, Rev. Jennifer Hackenbruch, Carol Polcovar, Paul Darwish

News and Updates Student and Alumni

Rev. John Giunta (2004) writes that he lives with his family in Vienna, Virginia. "My ministry is a roving one consisting of spiritual coaching, 16 yoga classes per week, Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy, occasional wedding ceremonies, and my contemplative music services using singing bowls, tuning forks, classical guitar, flutes, hammered dulcimer, gongs and assorted folk instruments--and of course music students in my own home studio. I have performed 30 wedding ceremonies since being ordained, with several more under contract."

His website is <http://SpecialMind.com>, telephone (703) 281-5498."

John Love (2007) writes "I am a Meetup Organizer for "Experiential Spirituality" (<http://spirituality.meetup.com/142/>) I am on the Board of the Washington Mindfulness Community and also the InterFaith Council of Greater Washington. See my website for details: www.JVLove.com."

Alan Seale (1995) PCC, MSC, writes, "I'm a leadership and transformation coach, an inspirational speaker, a spiritual mentor, and an author. All of these roles are vehicles for living my soul mission: I liberate and empower. I've been busy in the years since ordination.



My first book, *Intuitive Living: A Sacred Path*, received the Coalition of Visionary

Resources Award for Best Book in Spirituality 2001. Other books include *Soul Mission Life Vision* (2003) and *The Manifestation Wheel: A Practical Process for Creating Miracles* (2008).

I support a full roster of coaching clients from around the world who are committed to bringing extraordinary gifts to the world. I currently serve on the faculties of the International Coach Academy, the Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership program of The Graduate Institute in Connecticut, and the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health. I have also

been a presenter at Chautauqua Institution, the New York Open Center, Wainwright House, New York City's Learning Annex, and the Boston Learning Society. I've been a guest teacher at Coachutbildning Sverige (Coach Training Sweden).

Earlier in my career I was a singer and voice teacher in New York. My students include Broadway stars Marc Kudisch, James Barbour, and Graham Rowat.

www.alanseale.com

Ann & Bill Corbett (2007) recently returned from a 10 day cruise and trip to Alaska. They visited an excellent Russian Orthodox Museum in Anchorage. Their village, Floral Park, NY, is having a 100th anniversary Gala in October which they are running with over 600 reservations already. Ann is former Mayor and Bill is former Village Justice. They keep busy with Bill's Elder Law practice and helping in the family Public Relations business (CorbettPR.com). The day after Christmas they are going to Punta Cana, Dominican Republic for two weeks. If we have any alumni down there they hope they will contact them at billcorbett@att.net. so they can get together and compare notes.

Rev. Jerra Juliano (2004) writes that she graduated with her Bachelors in Social Work, with high honors, from York College in June 2008. She is currently pursuing her Masters in Social Work at NYU, where she was awarded a scholarship for academic achievement and community involvement. She aspires to become a psychotherapist specializing in the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth. In addition to her studies, Rev. Jerra also serves as a wedding officiant on Long Island and throughout the Tri-State area.



Rev. Barbara McDowall (2003) writes in to say she is a spiritual teacher, mentor, guide, wedding officiant and doula to the dying now living and working in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. "In

1999, I founded Authentic Lives, a company offering spiritual coaching to individuals and couples who are seeking their own answers to some of life's most challenging questions. Authentic Lives hosts and conducts a variety of circle workshops and retreats focused on empowerment, change, conscious, authentic living, death and dying. With a background in body and energy work I bring an added dimension to my work."

<http://www.authenticlives.com>

Reverend Dr. Angela Heil (2003) is a chaplain, spiritual counselor, and Dao and Reiki master. "I've utilized these skills in every aspect of my working



with those in need and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I'm named by some 'The Reluctant Prophet,' because of my accuracy.. Through Angela Heil Ministries I

offer a variety of services including Spiritual Coaching, Weddings, Baby blessings, Pet, House and Office blessings, Vow Renewals, Union, Memorials and Funerals at affordable rates. I also offer bereavement and grief counseling. I Honor All Path to God and celebrate the oneness of all faiths... after all-we are all Children of Abraham!"

<http://www.angelaheilministries.com>,
www.angelaheil.com

Please send us your news!

This alumni section is about you and for you. We can't do this without you.

Please send us your latest news, contact info, and anything else you'd like to share with your fellow graduates.

We'd also love to have you contribute articles for the newsletter. Send info and ideas to: naomi.orwin@gmail.com

The Faith Club

by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver and Priscilla Warner

reviewed by Ellen Carni

Without benefit of interfaith seminary training, three courageous mothers, Ranya, an American Muslim of Palestinian descent, Suzanne, a Christian raised Catholic, now Episcopalian, and Priscilla, a Reform Jew, grapple with their interfaith dialogue of 2002-2004. Still smol-

dering from the psychic embers left by 9/11, they don't know what to tell their children, whom they want to grow up in a world of peaceful coexistence.

The women discover that they cannot begin their project, to write a children's book on the three Abrahamic religions, until they have explored their own religions and faith paths and come to an appreciation of the others'.

Written in three voices, the Faith Club members invite us into their living rooms to "eavesdrop on our life-altering experiences." No topic is taboo and honesty being the rule, the women confront each other and themselves on issues such as the Crucifixion, the Israeli-Lebanese crises, their prejudices and stereotyping, and how far they can stretch the traditions of their religions and still be called a 'Muslim,' a 'Christian,' and a 'Jew,' respectively.

Although they read books in attempt to get the facts straight and consult an imam, a priest and a rabbi, this book is anything but cerebral. Much of its appeal is in how emotional the three women become, and the bond of safety and trust they build that is the rock of their discourse. Together they achieve what each alone could not: (1) the conclusion that there is one God. In Suzanne's words, "Faith is living a life of love inside my house and out in the world... A good Jew, a good Christian and a good Muslim are just as pleasing to God." (2) the ownership of their spiritual identities, and (3) learning by ex-

perience that inter-faith is inter-person. Equally impressive is what they have done with their 'lay ministry.' They offer advice on starting faith clubs; they have a web site with an up-to-date blog (www.thefaithclub.com); they are on the lecture circuit spreading the importance of peace. "Love thy neighbor as thyself," they all agree. They are finally writing their children's book.

The Faith Club raises the question of our role as interfaith ministers in civic life within a pluralistic society that, at least in theory, intends to separate church from state. In today's world, this is a serious question. We have our own interfaith dialoguing to do. To contribute to this dialogue, TNS graduates have recently founded the World Alliance of Interfaith Clergy, WAIC. For its first retreat in October, 2008, we are grateful to have had Ranya Idliby as our keynote speaker. *Ellen Carni, Ph.D., (2009) is a clinical psy-*



Photo: Matthew Sussman

chologist.

Reconciling Interfaith (cont.)

terfaith Minister that you wouldn't/ shouldn't do as a priest, or vice-versa?

Giles: I do not see any conflict.

Francesca: I wouldn't call it "conflict" either. It's all about loving, spiritual service. The two ministries take different outward forms sometimes, but ordained ministry is...ordained ministry. We are anointed to Divine service, with love, at all times and places, for all eternity.

6. If you could offer one piece of advice to someone seeking this dual Interfaith/OCCA ordination, what would it be?

Lynn: It's important to remember to distinguish the two ministries, for they serve different people and they have different purposes. It's good - and more than good, it's essential - for Interfaith Ministers to learn as much as possible about the various faith traditions that enrich our culture. At the same time, it's essential, for oneself, to find a place that

Daisy Khan

2008 Honorary Interfaith Minister



The New Seminary honored Daisy Khan, Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA), with its 2008 Honorary Interfaith Minister Award during the graduation and ordination ceremonies of the Class of 2008 on Sunday, June 18, 2008.

ASMA is a New York based non-profit dedicated to strengthening an expression of Islam based on cultural and religious harmony and building bridges between Muslims and the general public.

At ASMA, Khan has created several groundbreaking *intra* and *inter*-faith programs. She mentors American Muslims on issues of assimilation, balancing faith and modernity, the challenges of living as a minority, and intergenerational questions.

Khan launched the *Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT)* program to cultivate and strengthen a global network of young Muslim leaders committed to improving their communities, and the *Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equity (WISE)*, representing a global network of Muslim women leaders dedicated to effecting positive and sustainable change in their communities.

Khan regularly lectures in the US and abroad and has appeared on CNN, Al Jazeera, and BBC World's *Doha Debates*. She is a weekly contributor to the *Washington Post's* "On Faith" blog.

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Student Experience

YEAR ONE

Interfaith Retreat June 2008

Kerry Dwyer (2009)

The whole of the first year as a student of The New Seminary, I was running to catch up; with myself, with the other students, with my homework, and most of all with my Self. A friend emailed me in late September with information about The New Seminary. I had no idea what Interfaith Ministry was, and for a week I resisted. Then like a bolt out of the blue, I knew on a number of levels simultaneously that this was my path. It somehow tied together many threads in my life; my work in theatre as performer and director, work as a teacher, a celebrant and spiritual healer, all fuelled by an incessant spiritual search. How I was going to finance it I had no idea, but I took a leap and applied.

By the time the books and the first stack of CDs arrived, the year was well under way. There are five of us in Australia doing the course, three in Sydney, but we have never been physically in the same place, although we shared a few rituals with phone conferencing. Before I knew it, the end of year retreat was looming, but right up to a couple of weeks before, I still was not clear that I could make it in 2008, because Australia is a long way from New York.

The spiritual lessons came almost as soon as I entered the retreat building. We were all to wear name tags. A great idea, but where was mine? No-where to be seen. Was I indeed meant to be there? Just for fun, I put Dean Annie's name tag onto my dress, and took the key for the room that was allocated to me. The door was open when I got there, so I went in. Oh, how lovely, someone has laid out some clothes for me. Wrong! They were someone else's clothes! So, no name and no room. What was going on?

The singing bowl rang out, and we came together in silence. After the welcome and introduction of all the Deans, we moved around the room to greet each other. Not as our every day selves, but as Love Itself. One by one we acknowledged this great dimension of who we really are. Silently, subtly, my heart melted in this frequency of

Love, and when we searched for two words each to encapsulate how we felt at the beginning of the retreat, I could only say "surprised and happy".

We spent a couple of days examining our responses to the questions both big and small, and then began the preparation for the Initiation.

I cannot say exactly what took place during that ceremony, but I do know that I felt changed on a cellular level as a result. Love suffused my veins, my bones, and all the myriad channels of my being - both physical and subtle. I could feel that we as a community, shared each in our own ways, the same explosion into the Truth of who we are.

That night the heavens opened; the wind howled, rain bucketed down and we squeezed, trembling, into the stairwells of the center as a tornado passed up the Hudson River. A powerful cosmic response to our Initiation. Huge trees were uprooted, roads closed, and power lines flung to the ground in some places. It passed quickly, but we knew it was significant.

I wrote just after the retreat:

I am still In Love, feeling the tendrils connecting me to each of you. I never thought it possible to be so In Love and still be available to the everyday world.

While my mind was saying, "maybe this will be a good thing to do, be an Interfaith Minister", my heart was already working with Spirit to open me up to dimensions of Love and dedication to Humanity with a force and a conviction that have shredded any doubt I might have had before.

YEAR TWO

Ready Or Not, I Am Ordained

Rev. Jennifer Hackenbruch (2008)

In February 2008, during my second year at TNS, I was ready to be ordained. There was no doubt in my mind that I was ready to be Reverend Jennifer Hackenbruch. In March and April I felt the same. In May the idea of this being my last class hadn't sunk in, I was just ready to be ordained and have the rest follow.

The retreat was beautiful. I connected. I opened. I blossomed. Then before I knew it, Rabbi Roger was blessing me and ordaining me Reverend Jennifer Hackenbruch. It was amazing. I was



vibrating light from each of my cells that whole day.

Then, it was over and official. My classmates were gone, my family and friends were gone. I was left Reverend Jennifer Hacken-

bruch. I had no idea what it meant. I felt stranded. I crashed hard, peeling pieces of myself up from the pavement and not knowing where to fit the pieces. I wasn't ready. I don't care what I had felt months prior, I was not ready to be Reverend. And yet, there I was. I felt like everything I had just experienced was a dream. I was a childless mother. I had gone through the birthing process of ordination and seminary without producing a baby. I felt alone and abandoned and had no idea what to do next.

The weeks following ordination I began to swear more than I had in the previous two years. I felt the pressure of other people's expectations of what a minister was, along with my own expectations. I slipped back into old comfortable patterns I thought I had given up and worked through. My behavior, as a minister, surprised me. I didn't know what to do or how to behave. I had no idea who this reverend person was.

I walked through it breathing and grieving. I processed with my favorite Reverend of 2008. I performed my first wedding as a minister. It was beautiful and in that moment I saw myself as spirit intended. It felt right. I had come home. It also felt scary and alone. Where was everybody?! With everything I was experiencing I knew it was finally real. Ready or not, I am Reverend Jennifer Hackenbruch.

Months later I am still processing, which is to be expected, I think. It will take years to fully walk into what a minister means. I am walking forward and very excited about the journey.

My advice to the classes that follow: Walk through your process one step at a time, with compassion and without judgment. Make sure you receive the closure you need from your classmates during the retreat. I promise you, there will be no time for closure during ordination. Whether you think you are ready or not, you will be Reverend before you know it.

Poetry Corner: Reflections on the Divine

The Class of 2009 is filled with poets and poetry. Here is just a sampling of their work.

Haikus

Paul Darwish

Interfaith's Great Gift:
learning to see differently
while seeking the One

First, we are human,
then Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Jew--
thus, ALL fallible!

Whether on Retreat
or in retreat, in nature or out -
seeing only God!

Enlightenment

Carol Polcovar

The chills, the thrills, the spills ,the rides
How beautiful, how perfect---
Laugh into fun house mirrors-
While calliopes sing,
And cotton candy swirls
Bring on the merry-go-rounds--
The Mermaid Parades—
Firework nights
The sea whipping winds against colored
lights--
O Enlightenment!
© 2008

In the Chapel of Love and Mercy

Rev. Francesca Fortunato

Solitary soul sits, sighing,
"Soul for sale. Good deal! Who's buy-
ing?"
Slightly tarnished, yes, but sturdy.
Lightly dented; not too dirty.
Malcontented, just a little,
like a Sphinx *who's* lost her riddle.

Dancing, drunk, through the Agora,
just some poor-man's Isadora.
"Love and lust and life - who's selling?
Trade a tawdry tale? Worth telling!"
Thoughts for quite a pretty penny.
One Decameron? Or many?

Soul for sale, or soul for stealing?
Rapt and running, raving; reeling.
Angels come as demons go.
As in heaven, so below?
Teacher tells us, "There's no failing.
Learn of love - and Love prevailing!"
Lessons end but truth remains.

Vision

Naomi Orwin

If I am a way God sees the world
Why do I need glasses
To see the sharp edges,
The distinctions between this and that,
When God, like the impressionists,
Sees only points of light.

Letter from The Board of Directors

In this time of uncertainty and turmoil, the role of Interfaith Ministers is more important than ever. It is clear that our Interfaith program serves a vital need as our ministers fulfill the needs for safety and tranquility amidst the seeming chaos.

The Board of Trustees of The New Seminary are truly proud of the commitment of the students, graduates and staff who do such an important job of transmitting our message of love and respect for all the peoples of the world.
Rev. Dr. Michael Festa PhD,ThD, CEO
For the Board

After the Retreat

Kerry Dwyer

Suspecting nothing
My heart took me to New York
And found Love ItSelf.
To be seen and met
By Love in so many forms,
I died and was born.
Torn from ground and flung
Headlong into Love's Abyss
Alight in the dark.

Interfaith Flourishing in Sydney

Rev. Stephanie Dowrick (2005)

Alongside writing my books, I have been giving retreats, days of reflection and spiritual renewal for many years now, but following my ordination from TNS in 2005 I was offered the chance to lead interfaith (spiritually inclusive) services at a beautiful, "downtown" church in my home town of Sydney, Australia. Part of the Uniting Church (a broad Protestant grouping), Pitt Street Uniting Church has a proud history of tolerance and in-



clusivity. Congregations for the monthly interfaith services vary from 150-300. We run on a shoe string, of course, but the services are enhanced by exceptional musicians, deepening the sense of the embracing sacred which is at the heart of what we offer.

I write the services each time which takes a lot of thought and time, and lead them, with a variety of people giving readings, leading prayers and providing hospitality. Some who come are members of faith groups - including Catholic and Buddhist nuns and monks; some have been wounded by their earlier religious experiences; others simply feel more at home in a post-denominational setting where labels can be left at the door. I am also often asked to speak on

interfaith or from an interfaith perspective - especially when people recognize that interfaith can go beyond respectful dialogue to offer genuinely inclusive and often deeply healing spiritual experiences. Study groups and after-work mid-week meditations are next on the agenda, but like all interfaith enterprises, steps have to be modest without institutional support.

I would love to welcome any TNS students, graduates or friends to our services - or to the public retreats. Siobhan Christian and Kerry Dwyer (2009) are now valued members of this community.

Details are at my website: <http://www.stephaniedowrick.com>
Blessings!

TNS Update: Our Deans

Roster of Deans for 2008-9

Rev. Annie Lawrence (TNS 2002) - Sr. Dean

First year:

Rev. Sandra Bargman (TNS 2007)

Deans in Training:

Rev. Christine Agnellini (TNS 2008)

Rev. Phil Waldrop (TNS 2007)

Second Year:

Rev. Francesca Fortunato (TNS 2003)

Rev. Joshua Volle (TNS 2007)

Dean in Training:

Rev. Veronica Owens (TNS 2006)

Accelerated:

Rev. Annie Lawrence (TNS 2002)

Dean in Training:

Rev. Paula Boccia (TNS 2007)

Rev. Annie Lawrence

Senior and Accelerated Dean/Interfaith Minister

Annie is an Interfaith Minister and Wedding Officiant. She comes from a theatre background, and words, language, and presentation are her passion. Since her ordination in 2002, she has performed weddings on NYC cruise ships, in Central Park, hotel suites, chapels, private homes, rooftops, reception halls, and restaurants.

Annie says, "I work with couples to create a personal, unique ceremony that represents who they are individually and as a couple, and what they believe in. My goal is to honor their path, the cultural, creative, or traditional rituals they might choose to include, and to provide them with a ceremony that honors their relationship, as well as their invited guests."

www.revannielawrence.blogspot.com



Rev. Joshua Volle

2nd Year Dean/Interfaith Minister

Joshua was ordained in June of 2007. Since that time he has been an Affiliate Minister in two communities: Sacred Center New York and The Sacred Light Fellowship in Manhattan, as well as working as a Dean for 2nd year students at TNS. He says, "My ministry has been focused on finding and expressing the Source of All Love that lies within. My foundational teachers are Lao Tzu, Jesus of Nazareth, and the metaphysics of the Science of Mind and Sufism." This coming year, he will also be a worship leader at the Interfaith Temple. In addition to his ordination. Joshua holds a Doctorate in Public Health, a Masters degree in Counseling and a Masters degree in a specialized form of special education dealing with incarcerated youth and adults. "I earn my living as an international epidemiologist and program evaluation specialist working with agencies and governments to monitor and evaluate their HIV prevention efforts. "



Rev. Francesca Fortunato

Second Year Dean/Interfaith Minister

The Rev. Francesca Fortunato is a 2003 graduate of The New Seminary, and a licensed wedding officiant. Since her graduation/ordination, Rev. Francesca has performed marriages, preached and officiated at worship services, done spiritual counseling and has spent fourteen years working in Children's Ministry.



On April 30th, 2006, Reverend Francesca was ordained as a priest in the Orthodox-Catholic Church of America (OCCA) - an independent Western Orthodox Catholic jurisdiction. Her new full, title is: The Rev. Mother Francesca Chiara Fortunato (a name taken in honor of Clare of Assisi; "Chiara" is Clare in Italian). In addition to her Interfaith Ministry, Mother Francesca is now also an Associate Pastor of St. John's Independent Catholic Community, currently holding services at The Spark Center in New York City (161 W. 22nd St.), and has the authority to celebrate valid Catholic Sacraments.

<http://www.revfrancesca.com/>

Rev. Sandra Bargman

1st Year Dean/Interfaith Minister

Sandra was ordained in 2007. A spiritual counselor, she is on the staff as spiritual and life perspective counselor of ORIENS Healing Sanctuary in New York City and is a member of Spiritual Directors International.

Sandra began her professional life as an actress and singer and has had a successful career in the theatre and voice over world. She holds a BFA from Carnegie-Mellon University in theatre and music. She continues her performing and is now creating Sacred Stages, an organization that combines her love of theatre, music, story telling and Spirit. Sacred Stages is both a venue - creating new kinds of worship using ritual theatre - and a process - using actor techniques to assist in personal insight and self transformation.

For more information please visit www.sandrabargman.com



Reconciling Interfaith (cont.)

is "home." A tradition that is meaningful and provides fire and passion; nourishment, comfort and challenge; love, laughter and community.

Giles: From the Christian view, just follow Jesus' teachings. Love God and love one another. And stay away from judgementalism.

Francesca: I agree with Lynn about the importance of having a spiritual home and tradition. We need to live, love and worship both globally and locally. Dual ordination is a great joy, but it's demanding. Find your feet and your wings as an Interfaith Minister before taking on the challenge and discipline of a whole other seminary program!

Anyone who would like to visit our parish will be welcomed and encouraged to participate as much or as little as they wish. There is a Sunday liturgy a 10:30 AM every Sunday at The Spark Center, 161 West 22nd Street (between 6th and 7th Avenue), New York, NY. More information can be found at: www.saintjohnofkronstadt.faithweb.com

The New Seminary
2576 Broadway, #344
New York, NY 10025
212-222-3711

A World Alliance of Interfaith Clergy

A World Alliance of Interfaith Clergy is an international interfaith professional organization whose goal is to promote world peace and a sense of community through exchange of ideas among clergy of different faiths as well as to provide ministerial and counseling services to the public.

WAIC held its first annual retreat and conference in Ocean Grove, NJ, on October 10-12, 2008. The keynote speaker was Ranya Idliby, co-author of *The Faith Club*.

To learn more about the WAIC and for membership information, go to: www.worldinterfaithclergy.org

Rent Space at The New Seminary

Want to offer a spirituality related workshop in the city?

Space is available for rent at The New Seminary Center.

Main Room

\$65 per hour or part/\$260 for four hours

Holds approximately 75 people

Office 1 and 2

\$25 per hour/ \$100 for four hours

Holds 10-14 people

Chairs and some equipment available

For information, call 212-932-9433 or email info@newseminary.org

The Interfaith Temple **The New Seminary Center** **2672 Broadway (at 102nd St.)**

Weekly Worship Service

(beginning September 21, 2008)

10:30 am Healing Energy Work and Meditation

11:00 am Interfaith Service

Ordained Interfaith Ministers

Father Giles Spoonhour

Reverend Dr. Joshua Volle (TNS 2007),

Reverend Carol O'Rourke (TNS 2006) and

Reverend Veronica Owens (TNS 2006)

Anyone interested in volunteering to act as Greeters and Ushers, conduct the healing and meditation prior to service, do sacred readings, and lead meditations during service, please contact Rev. Dr. Joshua Volle at The New Seminary, email: co_cre8@yahoo.com