

## TAKING A PLACE AT THE TABLE



### Rev. Dr. Nelson Rivera

Nelson joined the faculty in Fall 2017 as Associate Professor of Theology. An ordained ELCA pastor, he most recently served on the faculty of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He resides in the Widow's House during in the week and commutes back to Philadelphia on the weekend to be with his wife, Sara, who works for Esperanza, Inc., a

non-profit services organization in the city. We asked Dr. Rivera to share his thoughts about his first two months at MTS.

God calls us to places we are not thinking of and on journeys where we do not see the end. This is by definition the gist of the vocation of a Christian: to venture into new territory, mindful that only God knows the end of it and trusting that it may be revealed to us in due time.

Through the mutual discernment process that brought me to Moravian, I can say that I feel called to this place. Within a short period of time, I found Moravian Theological Seminary to be a good working environment and a welcoming place for my vocation as a teacher in the Christian Church. Teaching theology, which is an extension of my call to ministry, is a great passion of mine, and doing it here is an honor bestowed on me and a matter of trust, which I find humbling.

This Seminary is a gift of Moravians to the Christian Church and beyond. In my first semester, I have learned of this institution's strong commitment to the faith as well

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## CALLED TO MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

### Andrew Craver

Andrew will complete his Master of Divinity at the end of the Fall 2017 semester. His ministry is deeply rooted in a call to serve as a military chaplain. As the presenter at the October Second Tuesday Moravian Lunch program, Andrew shared his experience of training to become a chaplain in the Army, his call, and how he believes these will intersect with ministry in the Moravian church.



#### What inspired you to become a chaplain in the military?

I was always interested in the military growing up. My interest eventually led me to JROTC in high school and an Army ROTC scholarship in college. I was a religion major at Hampden-Sydney College, and a professor encouraged me to think about chaplaincy. Father Mulcahy played a pretty important role, too, as M\*A\*S\*H was a near-nightly tradition in my family.

#### What does a military chaplain do?

Legally speaking, chaplains actually ensure that military service members are able to participate in the free-exercise clause of our first amendment. Chaplains are available as confidential counselors, we provide religious services according to our own traditions, and make sure that service members of every religion receive whatever religious provisions they require. Chaplains also serve in a staff capacity to unit commanders from the battalion level up in order to help commanders keep informed of religious needs in their units, religious considerations for mission planning, and general morale concerns.

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### Rivera Cont.

as to the life of the mind. I am impressed by its egalitarian practices, where faculty and staff share a common vision and responsibilities, and its gracious community. When I was first told of how important sharing meals was for students, staff, and faculty alike, I did not quite understand how significant such gatherings around the table and sharing food actually are for everyone involved. The table shapes our communal outlook; everybody has a place at the table.

No journey would be worth pursuing and no change would be meaningful without challenges along the way. As the reader may guess, the first semester has been a period of transition: new courses to teach, adapting to local customs and traditions, and interacting with new colleagues and students. There were previous projects to complete and a learning curve on day-to-day institutional operations. We got into the rhythm of weekly traveling between Bethlehem and Philadelphia where my wife, daughters, and grandson live. In the midst of this all, our extended family in Puerto Rico struggled with the impact and effects of Hurricane Maria in their lives. The expressed concern, prayers, and support of this Moravian community made a difference.

Chapel attendance has always been meaningful in my experience, from the time that I was a seminarian to the many years as a seminary professor. There are some differences at MTS. I was used to a weekly, full-fledged service and liturgical experience. At MTS I have quickly come to appreciate the emphasis on meditation and prayer, creative liturgies, and intimate communion practices. The richness of liturgical emphasis from the Moravian Book of Worship on unity, education, peace and justice, etc., is truly uplifting. The liturgical language is beautiful.

The reception given to me has been affirming. From the very beginning, starting with the job interviews, everybody has seemed content to be part of MTS. This seminary is truly ecumenical at heart, and I am thankful I have been presented with “a place at the table.” Δ



### Craver Cont.

**Have you been serving in the capacity of chaplain while you've been in training? Do you feel you already have a military congregation?**

The Army has a Chaplain Candidate program that allows prospective chaplains to serve in Reserve units under a full chaplain supervisor. I have served in three units so far, under two different supervisors, and am currently serving as the chaplain for a unit near Syracuse, NY. I do think of my soldiers as a congregation. I provide religious services and perform counseling in a capacity quite similar to many parish ministry positions.

**Will you serve in the field or at a command post?**

**Will you carry a gun?**

Chaplains are not allowed to carry any kind of weapon system (guns of any size, large knives, grenades, etc.). Chaplains are classified as non-combatants and have assistants called Religious Affairs Specialists/NCOs that—among many other things—serve as well-armed guards for chaplains in combat situations.

**Will you begin serving as a military chaplain right out of Seminary?**

I have a contractual obligation to serve in the active duty because of ROTC but need to serve in a church for a few years before I am qualified to do so. I am also not currently deployable as a Chaplain Candidate, but will be as when I am assessed for full chaplaincy. There is an accessions process for becoming a full chaplain. A board reviews Chaplain Candidate files to ensure that they are qualified. I should meet all of the qualifications and be ready for accessions as early as February.

**What do you look forward to most about serving as a chaplain?**

Working with soldiers, especially in training situations, is particularly engaging for me. Soldiers develop relationships despite the realities of the violence related to our duties, and the strength of those relationships shows through in their achievements. It is exciting for me to get to help soldiers find peace through their relationships with one another and by ensuring that soldiers of every faith background receive the religious care appropriate to them. Δ



## ALUMNI ARE OUR BEST RECRUITERS

The numbers are in! People are better than signs, mailings, and banner ads in recruiting new students! You, alumni, are our best recruiters because you are living examples of the MTS experience. So please share your MTS stories with your friends, family, and colleagues.

## LISTENING TO THE HURTING

### Alumni Focus: Beth Songer '13

On every news outlet, almost every day, is a story about how Americans are struggling with addictions, particularly addiction to painkillers, like never before. A Joint Reports from the Drug Enforcement Agency and the University of Pittsburg states that in 2016, “over 4600 Pennsylvanians died as a result of drug abuse.” Every other day there is a death from overdose right here in the Lehigh Valley. While many focus on the drugs themselves, Beth Songer, an ordained Buddhist priest and graduate from Moravian Seminary with a Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling in 2013, examines the situation differently. Instead of drug use, she sees humanity’s pain and humanity at it’s most vulnerable and powerful.

In 2007, Beth moved to the Lehigh Valley from New York. New to the neighborhood, she was invited to a Christmas cookie party where she met Lori Young '07. Lori shared her own spiritual path with Beth as well as her experiences earning an MAPC degree at Moravian, and, as Beth states, “that helped me know getting a degree at Moravian was for me.” Ten years after her conversation with Lori, Beth says that “enrolling at the Seminary is the best thing that I did for myself . . . [the counseling program] moved me out of my comfort zone, while also moving me more deeply into my comfort zone.”

Beth began working at Mid-Atlantic Rehabilitation Services in 2013 to help those struggling with addictions toward physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Early on, Beth began facilitating an Intensive Outpatient (IOP) Group. IOP groups are designed to support those deemed stable enough not to be in inpatient therapy but who need regular, sustained contact to gain and maintain a healthy lifestyle. They are true to their name—intensive—in both time (meeting for 9 hours each week) and emotional energy. Many join Beth’s IOP group anxious to be done but soon find it such a warm and supportive environment that they look forward to the sessions. Beth’s ability to move members from feeling like they are being punished or shamed toward a desire to share, heal, and grow their inner selves is remarkable.

Beth uses a 12-step model as a basis for her groups, as well as mindfulness practice, non-judgemental listening, and the strength of the group process. Addictions very often drive disconnection, keeping people separated from those they truly love. Beth’s groups turn that around and foster connection. Beth models awareness, acceptance, and a sense of peace within herself that encourages clients to share vulnerable and wounded parts of themselves. The strength and hope cultivated through understanding and identifying with each other leads to healing and connection. So just as the Seminary moved Beth both beyond and more deeply into her comfort zone, Beth helps her clients form an environment in which they can do the same. Not only does this support healing, it supports new growth.

In addition to working at MARS, Beth has a private practice. She is also a Certified Sex Addiction Therapist and works for Dr. Jennifer Weeks at Sexual Addiction Treatment Services (SATS) in Bethlehem. Δ



In addition to her counseling work, Beth leads a meditation group that is open to the community, on Monday nights in the Saal.

# DEVELOPING OUR INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

In November 2013, MTS faculty and staff began an important five-year journey examining assumptions and perceptions about cultures, with the Krista Foundation for Global Citizenship as a guide. As Prof. Craig Atwood put it, “We are somewhat naive about intercultural education and tend to minimize the importance of cultural differences.” Over the past four years, The Krista Foundation has been conducting workshops on campus to help our community identify and address our cultural filters and blind spots and open up to exploring differences.

First, The Krista Foundation invited faculty and staff to complete an online questionnaire, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a tool designed to assess “the capability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonalities.” Individualized and group results of the IDI helped the Seminary faculty and staff see where it is as a community on a continuum of cross-cultural competence and how to more effectively engage diversity in all its many forms (faith, generational, cultural, regional, dietary, learning styles, communication styles, etc.)

Then in workshops, The Krista Foundation introduced the Seminary community to several resources including the Respectful Communication Guidelines that are posted in every classroom, the practice of Mutual Invitation that provides a way for a group to ensure all voices are heard, and the image of an Iceberg to remind individuals that “what you see” is not all there is.

Prof. Timothy Luckritz Marquis believes that the training has had a tremendous impact on his course development and in-class teaching: “Particularly helpful for me was their advice about sometimes pairing difficult material, such as topics dealing with race, with less difficult pedagogical methods, such as lecturing. The skills and activities they shared . . . and their guidance through the Intercultural Development Inventory gave me a framework for understanding where I am and where I need to go when it comes to intercultural competency. The whole experience has been invaluable.”

The last step in this partnership with The Krista Foundation took place this fall with students and community partners. Elizabeth Hayworth (MDiv-MSW) shared, “The training gave us an opportunity to learn about cultural competency in a group environment that allowed for openness and helped me build bonds with other new students. I was able to learn new language to talk about other cultures and the group exercises helped us put our learning into practice.”

Ultimately, the journey along the path of awareness, understanding, and cultural competency takes a lifetime. We are grateful to have had The Krista Foundation shine light on areas of strength and growth for these past five years and are thankful for the support from the Carpenter Foundation that made our work with them possible. Δ



The Fall 2017 workshop engaged new students, as well as supervisors for students in clinical placements, ministry internships, and spiritual direction. Students pictured are (top) Laura Pride, non-degree and Burjanelle Budier, MACC; (bottom) Alex Nifong, MDiv and Alexandria Scirrotta, MACC.

# HELPING HURRICANE VICTIMS

## Student Focus: SEC's Creative Fundraising

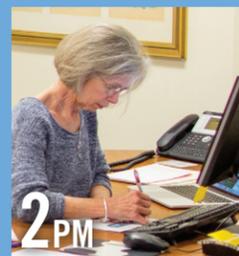
This fall saw a devastating hurricane season. Recent alum, Melody Moore '17, alerted MTS friends that her son's school in Houston, Texas, had sustained heavy damage from Hurricane Harvey. On the heels of Harvey, Prof. Rivera and MACC student, Ilia Morales, both shared stories of family losses in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria.

The Student Elder's Council was moved to contribute \$300 to the relief efforts of the Chinquapin Prep School in Houston. They also sent \$300 with Ilia Morales' husband who flew to their hometown of Maunabo, Puerto Rico, shortly after Maria hit. In a thank you note to the SEC, Ilia's mother shared that the donation was used to purchase food for a family who lost everything and cooking gas for a family that served as the “community kitchen.” What was left went to support the outreach efforts of the local Catholic church that provides education, shelter, and mental health services to the community.

To support their hurricane relief efforts, the SEC held a fundraiser on September 28 with Serendipity Glass Studios for a make-your-own-etched glass event. The event caught the attention of MTS students, faculty, and staff as well as students and staff from across campus. More community fundraisers are planned as the SEC seeks to support those in need. Δ



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE ANNUAL FUND



The Annual Fund works hard from sun-up to sun-down. It keeps the coffee flowing, paper in the copier machine, the lights on, and the bathrooms stocked with toilet paper. It provides the tables we sit at in the kitchen for lunch, snack, dinner, studying, and sharing. It makes sure there are great professors in our classrooms, gives them a stipend for books, and supports journeys to conferences where they gain information and experiences they can share with students. The Annual Fund heats the Seminary in the winter and cools it in the summer (unless you're in the Herrnhut classroom, which seems to run on its own seasonal pattern!).

In short, the Annual Fund supports the Seminary in all the day-to-day ways that can be easy to miss until they aren't there: lights, heating and cooling, professors and staff, office supplies, janitorial services, tables, chairs, and more.

Thank you for your continued support of the Annual Fund!



# SCENES FROM THE SEMESTER



In conjunction with the **United Nations International Day of Peace**, the Seminary joined the worldwide community to strengthen the ideals of peace and non-violence, and recognized that peace begins within each of one of us. Barbara Martell and other members of the Formative Spirituality program led the worship services on September 12 and 13.



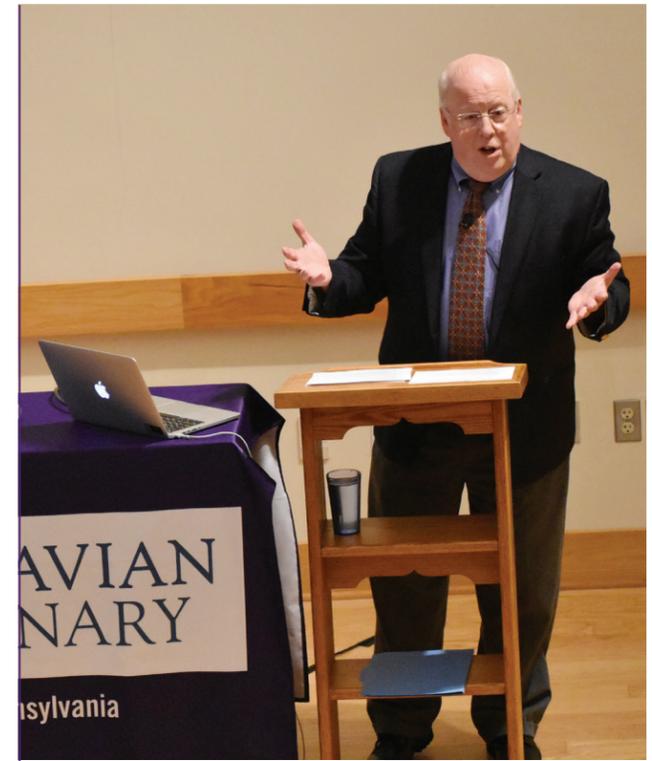
Students have led worship experiences at Moravian Seminary for over 200 years. Mia White '14 MDiv, prepares to lead a weekly Eucharist service. Mia returned to MTS to complete her second degree, the MATS, and the Spiritual Direction Certificate.

During the Moravian College and Theological Seminary **2nd annual Heritage Day** on September 20, students, faculty, and staff across campus came together in service to celebrate Moravian history and tradition. These folks volunteered at the New Bethany Ministries in downtown Bethlehem:

(back row LtoR) Terry Fitzpatrick, campus electrician; Dr. Nelson Rivera; Charlie Gardner, MACC; Sarah Moussa, MACC; Robin Hannig, MATS; Heidi Hochstetler, MACC; Elrica Adams-Finney, MACH; (front row LtoR) Burjanelle Budier, MACC; under-grad; Dr. Michelle Santiago.



Thank you to all who gave to the Technology Campaign! Craig Underwood, Director of Media Services, introduced faculty and staff to the **new technology in the Kunwald classroom**, which included ceiling-mounted parabolic microphones, wall-mounted cameras, and a portable system controller that allows the instructor to adjust cameras and microphones.

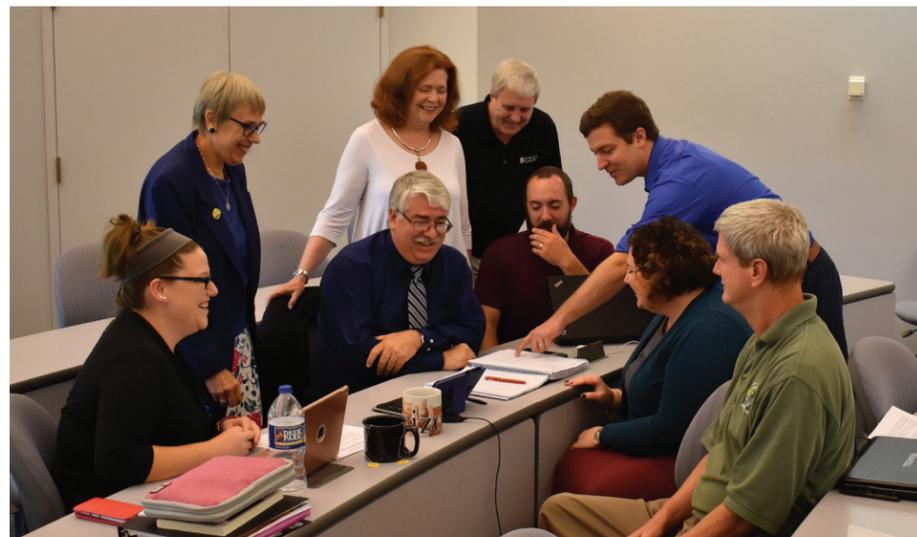


Dean Frank Crouch presented the **2017 Moses Lectures in Moravian Studies**. He critically examined 18th century Moravian perspectives and practices regarding slavery and how those changed over time, with implications for issues facing the church today.

On September 19, the new **MTS Alumni Committee** met for the first time under the leadership of Laura Gordon '13, '16. Together they developed a vision encompassing cause, actions, and impact:

- **Our Cause:** the alumni, Seminary, student body, and the greater world
- **Our Actions:** gatherings, connectedness, retention, promotion, financial support, and recruitment
- **Our Impact:** building community, support, transition, re-imagining, new directions

Meeting in Bethlehem were (LtoR) Colleen Smith (Student Rep.), Dr. Chris Nelson (Staff Rep.), Duane Ullrich '83, Elizabeth Buss '14 '17, Terry Folk '78, Kyle Borowski '08, Daniel Miller '16, Laura Gordon '13 '16 (Alumni Committee President), Bruce Weaknecht '81. Also on the committee: Russell Blair '15, Ken Kline '13, James Lavoy '14, Rhonda Robinson '12, Fran Saylor '15, Dr. Riddick Weber (Faculty Rep.)



Dr. Robert Alter, biblical scholar and professor at the University of California at Berkeley, spoke on "The Literary Medium of the Bible" for the Marold Lectures on October 12. Following, he was presented an **Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from MTS** for his decades of influential scholarship and new interpretative approaches. LtoR: Dean Frank Crouch, Dr. Alter, President Bryon Grigsby.



November 10 was our annual **MACC Professional Day**. After a full day including internship fair and lecture by Regina Bogle, MD, we were excited to reconnect with so many alumni at the **MAPC/CC Wine and Cheese Gathering**. (LtoR) Kelly Brooks '05, Patty Hoyt '12, and Jeremy Campbell '14.

# MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Sending Christmas blessings to our extended family of alumni and friends from the students, faculty, and staff of MTS.

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## SAVE THE DATE

Additional information and registration details can be found at [moravianseminary.edu/continuing-ed](http://moravianseminary.edu/continuing-ed)

- **CROSSROADS**
- **INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**
- **FORMATIVE SPIRITUALITY**
- **ALUMNI GATHERING**
- **LECTURES**

### **JAN. 4 - FEB. 22 COMPASS**

Instructor: Dr. Jill Peters & Linda Wisser, Thursdays, 6:00-9:00pm, \$240

### **JAN. 8-FEB. 26 MINISTRY JOURNEYS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Joanne Marchetto, Mondays, 6:00-9:00pm, \$240

### **FEB. 16, MAR. 23, APR. 19 WISDOM WAY OF KNOWING GATHERINGS**

Leader: Marcella Kraybill-Greggo, 3:00-5:30pm, \$20 per session

### **FEB. 23 PSYCHOLOGY & SPIRITUALITY LECTURES**

Dr. Robert A. Neimeyer, Grief and the Quest for Meaning, 9:00am-4:30pm, \$90 (additional \$15 for APA CEU)

### **MAR. 8 - MAY 10 TRADITIONS**

Instructor: Guest Instructors, Thursdays, 6:00-9:00pm, \$240

### **MAR. 9 WEBER MEMORIAL LECTURES**

Rev. Dr. Thomas White Wolf Fassett, The Politics of Religion: Native Spirituality and Christian Practice, 9:00am-Noon, FREE

### **MAR. 9 ALUMNI REUNION LUNCHEON**

12:15pm Reception, 12:30pm Luncheon, \$20

### **MAR. 12 - MAY 7 MAPPING THE ROUTE (THEOLOGY)**

Instructor: Rev. Dr. William Falla, Mondays, 6:00-9:00pm, \$240

### **APR. 11-MAY 2 CHRISTIAN & MUSLIMS TALKING TOGETHER**

Topic: Sexuality, Faith, & Respect, Wednesdays, 7:15-9:30pm, \$15 Series

### **MAY 12 COMMENCEMENT**

### **NOTICE OF ACCREDITATION VISIT**

In February 2018 evaluators from the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools will visit MTS for the purpose of evaluation and continuance of accreditation. Alumni and other constituencies will be invited to meet with the evaluators. All constituencies are invited to comment in writing concerning the school's qualifications for accreditation. Comments can be sent to the Self-Study Co-Chairs, Dr. Deborah Appler ([applerd@moravian.edu](mailto:applerd@moravian.edu)) and Dr. Craig Atwood ([atwoodc@moravian.edu](mailto:atwoodc@moravian.edu)) or to Dr. Barbara Mutch, ATS Commission Liaison ([mutch@ats.edu](mailto:mutch@ats.edu)) 10 Summit Park Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1110.



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