

# Berkeley

The Episcopal Seminary at

YALE *going beyond >>*



NEWSLETTER OF BERKELEY DIVINITY SCHOOL

May 2014 Vol. 5, No. 3



## The Dean's Letter | *Soli Deo Gloria*

Dear Friends,

Let me begin my final newsletter message with a paraphrase of a comment from another sometime Connecticut resident: "The reports of my retirement are greatly exaggerated!" Although it is true that I am moving on this spring from Berkeley Divinity School, I look forward to many more years of full time ministry.

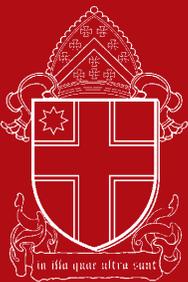
A first stop along the way is to serve for a time as the Interim Rector of Christ Church, New Haven. As you may know, it is a greatly gifted parish adjacent to Yale University with a strong catholic liturgical tradition, rich music program, active social outreach ministry, and a young adult service corps house. Historically, the parish has brought innumerable people to faith through this profound mix of worship and service, including many who went on to become priests and theologians of the Church. I feel richly blessed to be able to serve the people of this extraordinary parish as it prepares for an auspicious future.

Meanwhile, I look back over my time as a dean and teacher at the Divinity School with a profound sense of admiration for how our graduates have made advantage of their seminary education and formation to go on to such creative ministries. In that regard, I am humbled and deeply grateful for the appreciation so many have expressed in cards and letters about the education they received here – and especially for the collection of tributes presented by Michelle Boomgaard '11, and the farewell gift of an icon of St. Luke in St. Luke's Chapel, written by Kim Litsey '09!

As if to make the point that our graduates are engaged in all kinds of amazing work, we have just recently had an impressive stream of visiting alums. Christopher Martin '96, rector of St. Paul's Church, San Rafael, California, came by to discuss the innovative "Restoration Project" he has founded as a tool for fostering real spiritual depth in congregations. Jesse Zink '12 has just published *Backpacking through the Anglican Communion*, and accompanied the touring Emmanuel College Choir from Cambridge, England, where he is pursuing doctoral studies in missiology, focusing on the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Stephen Blackmer '12 from the Diocese of New Hampshire came back to lead a wilderness retreat for YDS students with Professor Janet Ruffing. Spencer Reece '12 gave a poetry reading in Marquand Chapel from his newly published book of poems, *The Road to Emmaus*, having just returned from working on a documentary about Our Little Roses orphanage in Honduras. Beth Magill '09 was here for the final Eucharist of the term, and full of exciting stories about her work as chaplain at the University of Texas, Austin, as was Blake Sawicky '11, chaplain at Brown. Likewise, Ryan

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Fleenor '10 and Stephen Holton '11 came for the occasion, and are obviously thriving as associates in prominent New York parishes. And Rainey Dankel '11, associate at Trinity Copley Square, told of an interfaith prayer service she helped organize on the anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombing. I could go on and on...there were so many.

Among our current students, there are equally rich accomplishments – Charles Graves '15 has just left on a trip to visit St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana; Sharon Betts '14 recently returned from her third medical mission trip to Haiti; Rachel Downs '14 is on her way after graduation to teach in Indonesia, sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee; and Win Bassett '16 is proving himself a prolific author, writing for such journals as *The Atlantic* and *Huffington Post*, as well as being interviewed on NPR and publishing numerous poems.

All these accomplishments, however, ultimately take their meaning from their role in building up in some way the kingdom of God. J. S. Bach himself dedicated his musical scores to God with the letters "S.D.G.," which stand for the Latin phrase *Soli Deo Gloria* (To the glory of God alone). I hope and pray that the same spirit could be said to have guided my service to Berkeley Divinity School at Yale these past eleven years. As the seminary now looks forward to new leadership, I wish you many blessings in your own ministry, whatever and wherever it may be – Godspeed!

Faithfully yours,



Joseph Britton  
President and Dean

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I look back over my time at the Divinity School with a profound sense of admiration for how our graduates have made advantage of their seminary education and formation...

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## Berkeley Bids Farewell to Joseph Britton and Greta Getlein

Top: Dean Joseph Britton and Director of Anglican Studies Greta Getlein with YDS Dean Gregory Sterling at the farewell eucharist.

Middle: Dean Britton greets Jenifer Chatfield '13 of the Diocese of Los Angeles.

Bottom: The honorees receive gifts of gratitude.





## An Interview with Our New Dean

**The Rev. Prof. Andrew B. McGowan**

**Warden and President, Trinity College, University of Melbourne**

*In early April the Trustees of the Berkeley Divinity School elected The Reverend Andrew Brian McGowan as Dean and President. An Australian with considerable experience of America, he is currently the Warden and President of Trinity College in the University of Melbourne. We thank him for agreeing to the following interview.*

**Tell us about yourself. What were the steps which led you to your present position?**

I'm a cradle Anglican and a child of the Rectory to boot. I was educated in both public and Church schools, studied Ancient History as an undergraduate, and was active in student politics and in the ecumenical movement at Asia-Pacific regional level while a student. My vocation to the priesthood was as old as I am (older?) and I went to seminary at Trinity College in Melbourne, then worked as a parish priest in Western Australia for six years. I had always thought I'd head back to grad school and teach in seminary, but during this time my focus shifted from contemporary theology to the ancient Church, as I sought to understand "how we got here" as Anglican Christians.

My first stint in the USA was at Notre Dame, where I had a great experience intellectually and otherwise—happily some who shared it with me are at Yale now! I returned to teach at a small Roman Catholic college in Australia briefly then headed for the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge Mass, which unusually had a dedicated faculty position in early Church history. I was also examining chaplain for the Diocese, so had a strong engagement with formation in TEC. I owe much to colleagues and friends there, including for our strong anti-racist work at EDS, and for the prayerful community of the Sisters of St Anne at Bethany, of whom I am a priest associate.

Having operated in two rather different dioceses in TEC was very valuable but not as hard as some imagined. My own Anglicanism, perhaps because inherited,

isn't aesthetically or politically confessional—I think "Church" has to be something that includes people unlike you in opinion as well as culture, or it's probably "sect" instead.

I returned to Trinity in Melbourne to head its seminary program in 2003, then became Warden (President) of the College in 2007. This has been a very rich experience—leading an institution with over 1000 students, a big budget and lots of demands.

***Why did you decide to accept Berkeley's invitation to be dean?***

I think it was time for me to step back more single-mindedly into theological education. Berkeley embodies many things that are central to my own vocation and my view of theological education. It's both an Episcopal seminary and does its work in an ecumenical divinity school. It's focused on Christian ministry and practice as well as set in a world-class University with academic rigour and intellectual openness.

My own previous experiences and commitments have many comparable elements, and on paper it wasn't hard to see how it could work. I felt as the search process took its course that my own gifts and commitments actually could make a contribution—and it also became clearer how much I would learn from a talented and diverse community of students and scholars.

***What are your hopes about the future?***

I hope we will all work to strengthen the things that are universally celebrated about Berkeley—its community life, academic strength, spirituality and more. I am very grateful for what Joe Britton and others have been able to achieve—it's so encouraging to come to a community that is already strong!

The changing Church and society around us however seem to me to offer

two challenges in particular.

The model of high quality residential seminary education found at Berkeley at Yale will, I suspect, become rarer around the Church, but not less important for that. For me that means it is important we find the means to support a diverse group of outstanding students who will be not just clergy or lay “staff” but leaders, even entrepreneurs of the spirit, and to offer them a transformative experience of theological education.

The second is that we do need to engage with and support a Church in which many clergy and other leaders will not come to a traditional seminary program. The precise ways we do that are not yet clear; I don’t envisage going largely online or similar, but we need to work with YDS as a whole to explore new possibilities that reflect but don’t dilute our own remarkable tradition and strengths.

***How can the Berkeley community help you as you settle in?***

The reactions to my appointment have already amounted to a very warm welcome, a lot of it via social media interestingly—reading some of the buzz there has also helped me get a sense for some of the conversations that characterise seminary life! So I have had lots of blog “hits,” and a set of new Facebook friends and Twitter followers. I hope to hear from even more current students and others before arriving.

I will of course need colleagues and students to assist me get into the rhythms of Berkeley’s life, and am looking forward to that. There will be a lot of micro-learnings and doubtless some major ones I can’t even envisage yet. Having been at YDS on sabbatical in 2012 helps—we have many friends already, and are looking forward to making more.

When I arrive I am looking forward to hearing more directly what excites students about Berkeley and where they perceive we need to keep working for progress. I’m hoping there’ll be plenty of both those things to think about.

***Tell us about your family.***

Felicity Harley McGowan my spouse is an art historian who works on ancient and medieval western art, much of it Christian of course; she will also be teaching at YDS but this year her focus will be on research and completion of her MS on the origins of depicting the crucifixion (so yes, she’s the really interesting one!).

Madeleine, who is 21, is a senior at the University of Melbourne and will be completing her degree in 2014, so won’t come with us but we hope that she and other family members will visit us before long.



The Berkeley senior class with Dean Britton in the crypt of St. Augustine’s Abbey on the annual Canterbury Pilgrimage.

# Rowan Greer, Priest and Scholar

*A Reminiscence by Christopher A. Beeley*

Last month marked the passing of a great scholar-priest of the Church. On March 17, 2014, the Rev. Prof. Rowan A. Greer III of the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale died after several years of on-and-off illness. He was 79. A native of Dayton, Ohio, Greer studied at Yale College, General Theological Seminary, and Yale Graduate School, from which he earned his PhD in 1965. He then taught at Yale Divinity School and Berkeley Divinity School at Yale for nearly 35 years, first as a professor of New Testament and eventually as the Walter H. Gray Professor of Anglican Studies.

Generations of Berkeley and Yale graduates remember Greer for his devotion to his students, his deep erudition, and his great sense of humor. Following his ordination as a priest in 1960, he served St. Paul's Church, Fairfield, Connecticut, Christ Church and St. Thomas' Church, New Haven, and St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, as well as the chaplaincy of Edinburgh Theological College and many years in St. Luke's Chapel at Berkeley.

Greer is widely known among his former students as a devoted teacher and a model of the Anglican scholarpriest. He taught staple courses in patristic theology, the history of biblical interpretation, Church history, the British Anglican tradition, the history of pastoral ministry and spirituality, and patristic Greek. His courses were popular, and he often taught more of them than was required. As a teacher Greer was exceedingly generous. He lectured effortlessly on a broad range of subjects and typically returned student papers with several pages of written comments. Unsurprisingly for someone with his faith and erudition, his preaching was always thoughtful, inspiring, and deeply biblical.

For most of his adulthood Greer pursued the semi-monastic life of a scholar within the seminary community, faithfully keeping to the daily routine of chapel, study, and classroom, with regular walks in East Rock Park, and always conducting himself with a noble reserve. Whether in the classroom, the office, or the park, Rowan could usually be found in the company of one of his golden



retrievers, MacGregor, Montgomery, or Macintosh. In chapel, when he was not celebrating the Eucharist, he faithfully prayed with the community, sitting in the back row and following the readings in his Syriac, Hebrew, or Greek Bible.

Greer helped to train hundreds of Episcopal and other Christian clergy and lay leaders, and a number of doctoral students, many of whom are now teaching the next generation and some of whom have already retired. Stanley Hauerwas spoke for many when he identified Greer as the faculty member who had had the greatest influence on his general outlook, in his essay "Enduring, or, How Rowan Greer Taught Me to Read" written for Greer's Festschrift, *Reading in Christian Communities: Essays on Interpretation in the Early Church* (Notre Dame, 2002), edited by David Brakke and Charles Bobertz. Although Greer abhorred praise and recognition, many others followed suit. Hans Urs von Balthasar, for example, lauded Greer's volume on Origen of Alexandria.

Despite his cloistered lifestyle, Greer had a formative influence on the study of patristics in the United States, and his scholarship garnered an international reputation. He began as a specialist in Antiochene Christology. His first book, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, Exegete and Theologian* (Faith Press, 1961), which appeared four years prior to his PhD dissertation, "The Antiochene Exegesis of Hebrews," and his 1966 article "The Antiochene Christology of Diodore of Tarsus" remain classic works on the subject.

Yet Greer's scholarship had its greatest influence in two related areas: patristic biblical interpretation and the spiritual and pastoral theology of the early Church. Greer adeptly showed the way in which early Christian biblical interpretation constantly involves theological, ecclesial, and social commitments, and that those commitments are in turn informed by the community's reading of Scripture. Greer's work in patristic exegesis was pioneering. For many years his treatment in *Early Biblical Interpretation* (Westminster, 1986), written with James Kugel of Harvard, was the most reliable account of early Christian hermeneutics. His insight into patristic exegetical methods was in many ways ahead of its time. In the 1960s and '70s, while others were championing the supposedly objective potential of historical-critical scholarship, Greer was already signaling the sort of community-based and integrative hermeneutics that many of us now take for granted after the "linguistic turn" and the ascendancy of various theoretical approaches.

The second major area of Greer's influence lies in the spiritual and pastoral dimension of early Christian theology. From his 1974 article on early Christian hospitality to his award-winning book *Christian Hope and Christian Life: Raids on the Inarticulate* (Crossroad, 2001: Association of Theological Booksellers' 2001 Book of the Year), Greer gave sustained attention to the deep continuities that exist between Christian theology and Christianity as a social phenomenon. The fullest expression of the theme came in Greer's monograph *Broken Lights and Mended Lives: Theology and Common Life in the Early Church* (Penn State, 1986), a work that ranges from classical soteriology to the practicalities of family, hospitality, and Christian politics. As Greer put it, "Theology in the early Church was always directly or indirectly concerned with the common life of Christians. ... And even more the

technical aspects of early Christian theology were designed to explain this Christ and his significance” (p. vii).

A few years earlier he had published a work that covers both subjects, his translation and introductory essay on Origen for the Classics of Western Spirituality series, a much-used book still treasured by many readers (Paulist, 1979). The theme of theological spirituality reappears again in *Christian Hope and Christian Life*, which covers Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, John Donne, and Jeremy Taylor and is one of the finest recent works on Christian eschatology. It is no accident that Greer was chosen to write the chapter on “Pastoral Care and Discipline” for the new Cambridge History of Christianity (2007, vol. 2).

Greer argued that early Christian theology prior to the fifth century was initially framed by the late-ancient quest for virtue, after which Augustine caused a shift of emphasis from human striving to the sovereignty of God. The Antiochenes’ emphasis on the full and independently existing humanity of Christ appealed to Greer’s interest in moral freedom. While this view of the period no longer holds sway — Augustine too was deeply influenced by late-ancient eudaimonism and the quest for personal virtue, and many earlier theologians held a strong doctrine of prevenient and persevering grace — Greer did an enormous service to both Church and academy by showing the communal and ecclesial dimension of early Christian biblical interpretation and the social, ethical, and pastoral significance of early Christian theology. Among his many other works are *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews* (Mohr/Siebeck, 1973), *The Sermon on the Mount, with an Introduction, Parallel Texts, Commentaries* (Oxford Limited Editions Club, 1977), *Fear of Freedom: A Study of Miracles in the Roman Imperial Church* (Penn State, 1989), and *Anglican Approaches to Scripture: From the Reformation to the Present* (Crossroad, 2006).

Perhaps his greatest scholarly gift was as a translator of patristic texts. Students were often surprised to notice that, when Rowan was fluidly reading a biblical text in a slightly recognizable translation, there was only a Greek or Hebrew Bible in his hand. His undergraduate degree was in Classics, and he remained a disciplined philologist until his dying day. After his retirement from teaching in 2001, he continued to publish excellent translations of early Christian texts, including

a set of commentaries, *The “Belly-Myther” of Endor: Interpretations of 1 Kingdoms 28 in the Early Church*, with Margaret Mitchell (Brill, 2007), and, returning to the subject of his first book published nearly 50 years prior, Theodore of Mopsuestia’s *Commentaries on the Minor Epistles of Paul* (Brill, 2010).

Together with Origen and the Antiochene theologians (and related to both in interesting ways), Greer had a special interest in Gregory of Nyssa. On entering his office, amidst clouds of pipe smoke and the dog curled up on the floor, one could often find a Greek volume of the *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* propped up on the writing table before a thick yellow tablet of notes. Gregory of Nyssa formed a major part of *Broken Lights and Christian Hope*, and, as I discovered almost accidentally over lunch two years ago, Greer had been preparing a new set of translations and a synoptic essay on Gregory’s understanding of Christian salvation. Thanks to the assistance of another former student, J. Warren Smith of Duke Divinity School, the book will appear later this year as *One Path for All: Gregory of Nyssa on the Christian Life and Human Destiny* (Cascade).

In the end, I am struck most of all by the encyclopedic breadth of his knowledge and his unflinching devotion to the craft of scholarly priesthood. Rowan had such an exemplary gift for making complicated matters seem clear that the effect was often deceptive. To the uninitiated it was rarely apparent just how much he had read and absorbed, when in fact he had mastered the fields of New Testament criticism, early Church theology and history, modern English church history, and much else besides, with a breadth of expertise that few academics today achieve. Rowan also loved English literature and drama. He read widely in the English canon, and in the summers he would drive to Canada with his brother and sister-in-law to attend the Stratford Shakespeare Festival.

Life at the Divinity School was not always easy for Rowan. He witnessed several periods of major transition and turmoil, from Berkeley’s initial affiliation with Yale in 1971 through the drive to save the Quad and the renovations and controversies of the 1990s. But Rowan proved to be steadier than they were. He persevered untiringly until his retirement, serving the school in the way he knew best, as a scholar of the early Church, a devoted teacher, and a bringer of constant mirth and the sober-

ing perspective of the centuries. Like many former students, I fondly recall being hosted for dinner in his home. The conversation, both witty and down-to-earth, earthy and urbane, was accompanied by succulent lamb and mint jelly, vegetables and potatoes, and a fine Scotch after dinner — all of which was of course “no trouble, no trouble at all.”

Rowan preferred to keep to New Haven. He rarely attended academic conferences or church meetings, and after two years of parish ministry in Charlotte following his initial retirement, he returned to New Haven permanently to be near the Yale libraries. For nearly half a century, he said his prayers, kept at his research, and encouraged all manner of students and colleagues. Many noted how willingly he attended to the least scholarly students as much as to the brightest lights. He had a gift for drawing out the genius in even the most ignorant question, teaching you so subtly and charitably as to almost hide the fact that you didn’t already know it. Rowan’s anti-elitist refinement reflected both his sense of good theology and his culture and politics. By all accounts, he rarely realized what a model he was of what it means to be a priest or a scholar in the Church, or both.

Like his Cappadocian exemplar, Gregory of Nyssa, Greer held fast to the promise of the Resurrection through all the struggles of life. A colleague at another seminary once told me that when her father died, the most moving note of condolence she received was from her former teacher Rowan Greer. He spoke of death with realism and candor, and he unsentimentally commended the hope of one day sharing in Christ’s resurrection from the dead. For all who knew him, Rowan Greer was inimitable and irreplaceable, a beloved teacher and a faithful priest of the Church. Yale Divinity School will host a memorial service for him in the fall.

*Into thy hands, O merciful Savior, we commend thy servant Rowan. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech thee, a sheep of thine own fold, a lamb of thine own flock, a sinner of thine own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of thy mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.*

*In 2003 the Rev. Christopher A. Beeley succeeded Rowan Greer as Walter H. Gray Associate Professor of Anglican Studies and Patristics at the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale.*



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## Your gift by June 30 will make all the difference

**P**lease help Berkeley to welcome next year's class of 24 MDiv's, 5 MARs, and 1 STM and our new Dean with a balanced budget. You can do so by making your Annual Appeal gift for 2014 by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

We need to raise \$205,343 more by then to balance our budget. You can make your gift online at [www.yale.edu/berkeleydivinity](http://www.yale.edu/berkeleydivinity).



### SAVE-THE-DATE EVENTS **TUESDAY, OCT 21**

Join us for the **installation of The Rev. Dr. Andrew B. McGowan as Dean and President** at the 5:00 pm Evensong and for the Berkeley Graduate Society Dinner that follows (invitations will be sent in the fall).

You are also cordially invited to attend the **Cheney Lecture by The Rt. Rev. Victor Atta-Baffoe**, STM '93, Bishop of Cape Coast, Ghana, earlier that day at 1:30. Both events will be held in Marquand Chapel.



Andrew Barnett '12 graced the farewell eucharist with the Theodicy jazz collective.



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