An APC Convocation: "A Responsible Dialectic Between the Prophetic Word and Free Speech." Responding to the concerns and insights from our weekly Roundtable Conversations, the APC is moving forward in developing an opportunity for constructive dialogue. A two-part series began on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Main Lounge of the Mackay Center with 62 individuals from the Seminary community.

Roundtable Conversations & Its Impact!

Since February 6th the Action Plan Committee has been facilitating a safe space for seminary-wide conversations. The following are the issues and concerns raised from these invaluable conversations:

- Need for Student Newsletter with an editorial board that will consist of students with a faculty and/or administrative advisor.
- Need for dedicated time in Student Government meetings for students to share concerns.
- Identify and clarify parameters in regards to freedom of speech and the role of satire in public communications and/or venues.
- Clarify policies regarding the use of Seminary-owned computer networks.
- Develop intentional curricular and co-curricular forums that will intentionally discuss issues of racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc.
- Concern was raised for those students, faculty and administrators that were hurt and anguished in the Foreskin publication.
- Concern was also lifted for the manner by which the Seminary reacted toward the publication and its authors. (pg.2)

Our invited guest speakers were Dr. Peter Paris, Professor of Christian Social Ethics Emeritus, Dr. Mark L. Taylor, Professor of Theology and Culture, and the Rev. Jose Gonzalez-Colon, pastor of The First Spanish Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, a bilingual and multicultural congregation. The goal of this two-part convocation is to gather pertinent information on the ethical, spiritual, cultural, and theological parameters of free speech and the use of media in relation to our responsibility as agents of reconciliation. As we have witnessed in recent weeks where the publishing of many derogatory illustrations in prominent periodicals have elicited numerous reactions, society as a whole is confronting the challenges of managing and transforming a twofold antithetical dialectic of simultaneous differentiation and interdependence into solidarity of others, or the mutual solidarity of those who are different and who should be valued by their unique (continue pg. 3)

Special points of interest:

- A Publication entitled “Journeying Together: Walking in Someone Else’s Shoes” will be developed during this Lenten season. Invitations will be made to the Seminary community for contributions toward this constructive venture. More information will be forthcoming!
- The Action Plan Committee has been meeting weekly since the beginning of the long term. Added members since our last Checkpoint publication are: Patricia Korsak, Cherri Green, Rachel Landers and Dr. Bo Karen Lee. Our next meeting will be Friday, March 6th at 12:00 p.m.

Inside this issue:

- Roundtable Conversations & Its Impact (continued) 2
- Bridge-Makers Retreat: Renewal & Relationship 2
- “Crossing the Racial Divide” A Conference on 2
- APC Convocation: continued from page 1 3
- APC Agenda: What’s Next! 3
Roundtable Conversations & Its Impact (continued)

- Conversations regarding process for acquiring information and understanding the experiences of all parties were insightful.
- An affirmation regarding the ability of the community to be sensitive to human experiences was shared.
- Due to offensive publications individuals in the community are now cautious in their relationships within the community.
- There seems to be a lot of talk regarding justice that is not wholistic in nature.

A Conference on Racial Reconciliation: “Crossing the Racial Divide”

Most discrimination in the world is caused by stereotypes, prejudice, bigotry, bias, denigration, and hatred. These syndromes can be found in thoughts, communication and behavior of individuals. The Intercultural Dialogue Forum and the Action Plan Committee is organizing an event entitled: “Crossing the Racial Divide” on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m in Scheide Hall’s Gambrell Room. Our invited speaker will be the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Lewis, Senior Minister of the Middle Collegiate Church in New York City. Jacqui earned her Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1992, focusing on preaching and education. She earned prizes in Urban Ministry, Music, Pastoral Theology, and Care. After graduation, Jacqui worked in two congregations in Trenton. One was a new church development and community center called the Imani Community Church. Jacqui’s ministry in Trenton led her to ponder how spirituality shapes people’s lives. She earned both a Master of Philosophy and a Ph.D. in Religion (2002) and Society: Psychology and Religion (2004) from Drew University. Jacqui is the author of The Power of Story: A Guide for Leaders in Multiracial/Multicultural Congregations. For more information please see Ms. Tamara Davis and/or Rev. Aloyo.

Bridge-Makers Retreat: Renewal & Relationship

A long, deep wounding history of sexism, racism, and classism haunt the American landscape, including Princeton Seminary. The Reading Circle, which is a student-led initiative through the Office of Multicultural Relations, is organizing a retreat at the Kirkridge Retreat Center. This retreat will primarily serve to gather students from Princeton Theological Seminary who believe honest dialogue is essential to the healing process. For more information on this retreat please contact Edwin Estevez or Sarah Henkel.
An APC Convocation (continued from pg.1)

stories enriched by culture, language, color, norms and heritage.

This two-part series will explore satire and its implications particularly in a society and church that are rich with varying stories and perspectives. In the presentations made by Dr. Paris, Dr. Taylor and Rev. Gonzalez, the challenge for the Seminary as an educational branch of the Church is that all are called to live as a prophetic sign of the new creation and servants of the reconciliation of God. We should be a community characterized in our life, mission and worship by life-giving inclusiveness and responsible advocacy for the rights of others, thereby underlining the reconciling work of Christ, who has broken down barriers of ethnicity and race, creating a new people in whom we value and embrace the diversity in our midst in the unity of the Creator. We need to be actively engaged in developing cross-cultural relationships, honoring the stories in our midst and not exploiting difference with anonymous publications. The objective is to “build-up” by seeking responsible means to contribute positively when we as a community need to rectify the manner by which we relate to each other. At heart the seminary is to be welcoming and open community and challenged to break down the walls of hostility among groups and to unmask means of communication that have misguided intentions.

Please mark your calendars for the second installment of this convocation on Monday, April 13, 2009 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Main Lounge at the Mackay Center. For more information please click here.

APC Agenda—What’s Next!

The Action Plan Committee has been faithfully meeting to explore opportunities for short and long range opportunities for community growth and development as we continue to embrace diversity in our midst. The nation’s deepening ethnic texture, interracial tension and conflict, and the increasing percentage of students who speak a first language other than English make multicultural initiatives and education imperative in the 21st century. The U.S. Census (2006) estimates that people of color made up 28% of the nation’s population in 2000 and predicts that they will make up 38% in 2025 and 50% in 2050. This reality among others provide challenges to the Church and indeed our beloved seminary. Real diversity is an element of the climate at an institution:

- an openness, acceptance and enthusiasm for peoples’ differences. Numbers alone do not make for a healthy diverse educational environment. Instead, we need to explore different educational and co-curricular options available to all levels of the institution. We are exploring the following:
  - Initiating a dialogue to cultivate a series of statements or affirmations regarding diversity and inclusion.
  - Supporting the efforts of developing an entity within the institution that will provide expertise and guidance to promote the pursuit and dissemination of essential knowledge and skills that foster effective participation in a diverse, multicultural and inclusive Seminary community.
  - Providing forums for further discussion on key issues facing our seminary community.
  - Supporting existing endeavors organized by faculty, administration and Student Government and student organizations that raise consciousness of civility and mutual respect.

- Encouraging faculty and administration forums to discuss issues of how we can further appreciate other points of view and embrace the richness of experiences that creates and sustains an environment that is inclusive and respectful.

-An Augustine

For any comment, suggestion or idea please contact actionplancommittee@ptsem.edu

Inside Miller Chapel

“We stand in awe of the ocean, the thunderstorm, the sunset, the mountains; but we pass by a human being without notice even though the person is God’s most magnificent creation.”

-Augustine