

BUILDING  
BELOVED  
COMMUNITIES



THE FUND FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION 2012 ANNUAL REPORT



# What if we build beloved communities together?

Dear Friends,

Where can young adults make a lasting difference in the lives of individuals and communities? Who will help them change the world? And where do people turn, in communities everywhere, to find life-giving support in hard times and in times of great promise?

The Fund for Theological Education (FTE) believes the answer to those questions is *the church*. Even on a changing cultural landscape, the church is at the center of building, serving and sustaining communities. This vital church—one that is capable of extending its reach into the community and to future generations—depends on strong leadership that we must cultivate today.

That is why FTE supports talented young leaders who build up “beloved communities” as an expression of Christian faith.

The concept of the beloved community originated in the inspiring words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King’s vision painted a powerful portrait of what community can be: a place where people are united by love, work toward God’s justice and are reconciled in a spirit of mutual respect.

This vision of community resonates with the next generation of Christian leaders. They believe that “building beloved communities” is central to their calling. Our program partners embrace this community building as an opportunity for young people to try on the mantle of Christian leadership and to experiment with new models of ministry.

Young adults ask us good questions: “How does the world work? How can Christian ministry and scholarship address the world’s most pressing problems? How can we mobilize our faith to build and serve sustainable communities?”



The vocational questions posed by these rising leaders prompted us to ask some questions of our own here at FTE: “If the church represents God’s presence and mission in the world, what is its role today? What do young Christian leaders need to explore vocations in ministry and teaching? How can FTE leverage its history and experience to cultivate a new generation of diverse community leaders, pastors and theological educators?”

In response to these questions, FTE has developed a new vision: *to be an innovator in cultivating leaders who foster thriving Christian communities that join God’s work in the world.* We have also reaffirmed our mission *to cultivate diverse young people to be faithful, wise and courageous leaders for the church and the academy.*

Now we are discerning a new strategic plan for FTE. It will inform our future work and fellowship strategies. With the resources entrusted to us, we will focus on supporting the types of leaders who effectively cultivate thriving Christian communities. They are the ones who will build, renew and transform faith communities across North America to participate in God’s work in the world.

Will you join them—and us—in building beloved communities together?

The world has changed. It demands that we find new ways to collaborate—and I invite you to connect, or reconnect, with us now. Your continued investment of resources, knowledge and skills are needed more than ever. Together, we can advance God’s enduring movement to call young leaders, renew the church and change the world.

The Reverend Stephen Lewis  
FTE President

# What if building beloved communities begins with courageous leadership?

A changing landscape calls for different ways of leading the church. Creative and courageous young leaders are stepping up to transform the communities they love. They are bold and innovative risk-takers. To a world in need, they bring the promise of hope, healing and compassion. These innovative Christian leaders ask big questions—and inspire people to join together to do God’s work in the world.



2012 FTE Leaders in Ministry Conference



## Ministry Program

### A PASSION FOR JUSTICE

Maggie Chandler

FTE Ministry Fellow ('12), FTE Congregational Fellow ('11)

Ask Maggie Chandler what really matters to her. She'll share her vision of a church that works for justice and includes everyone.



For Maggie, a Master of Divinity student at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, that means building bridges and healing relationships between people of all backgrounds. “If our institutions were more equitable, it would have a powerful effect on

the church and the world, for God and for the sake of love,” declares Maggie. “For me, ‘beloved community’ is a space where people can be their full and authentic selves, grow into that and allow others to do the same.”

*Claiming Justice* is a campus group Maggie leads to help students prepare for ministry in a local context. Its focus on faith and justice empowers future pastors and civic leaders to engage social issues in communities with distinct multicultural identities. Maggie is emphatic about the impact that her own ministries with youth from diverse backgrounds have had in her life and call to ministry. “The love of God is for all and we can embody that in authentic ways,” says Maggie. “That includes a commitment to equity and acting on behalf of one another in community.”

### 2012 MINISTRY PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS



70 students from 18 denominations were awarded \$380,000 in fellowships & attended the FTE Leaders in Ministry Conference.

20 FTE Ministry Fellows explored pastoral identity in 12 countries & 17 states.



### OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT



1,560 young leaders have received mentoring and financial support as FTE Ministry Program Fellows since 1999.



## Doctoral Program



2012 FTE Leaders in the Academy Conference

### CARE FOR COMMUNITY

The Reverend Christopher Carter  
FTE North American Doctoral Fellow ('12)

A commitment to care for others is central to a vital Christian faith. It's a commitment Christopher Carter takes seriously. As a pastor and as a doctoral student at the Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, CA, Christopher's response to God's calling in his life places him at the cutting-edge of community ministry.

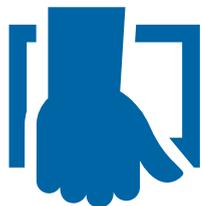


Working with African American, Latino and Asian Pacific Islander communities in Compton, a city

south of Los Angeles, Christopher created an initiative last summer with First United Methodist Church of Compton to provide 20,000 nutritious meals to neighborhood children in need. His lifelong work in the church has greatly informed his research and calling as a theological educator.

Christopher's Ph.D. studies in food, religion and the black church explore the injustices in global food production systems. His research informs how communities can eat healthier, exercise more and embrace wellness in the context of faith. "When I think of 'beloved community,' I think of liberating people from systemic poverty," he says. "What we learn as students in the classroom should inspire us to greater awareness of community needs and to take action in our congregations. We're supposed to bring good news to the poor."

### 2012 DOCTORAL PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS



# \$437,000

43 doctoral students were awarded \$437,000 in fellowships & attended the FTE Leaders in the Academy Conference.

10 Doctoral Fellows completed their Ph.D. programs this year.



### OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT

Over 500 FTE Doctoral Program Fellowships have been awarded to students of color over the past 13 years. Supported by faculty mentors and a peer network, FTE Fellows have a retention rate of more than 90 percent compared to a national average Ph.D. attrition rate of 50 percent.



## Volunteers Exploring Vocation

2012 VEV National Volunteers Event

### SOLIDARITY IN SERVICE

Roger Briceno

Volunteers Exploring Vocation (VEV), Site Director  
Notre Dame Mission Volunteers

Roger Briceno knows that his experience as a young man growing up in South Central Los Angeles is a gift he brings to his work with Notre Dame Mission Volunteers.



“Some of our volunteers are right out of school and come from backgrounds where they never needed much,” observes Roger. “Now they come as

volunteers to homes where violence and poverty are prevalent and drugs are everywhere. It’s a culture shock for many of them.”

With Roger’s guidance, about a dozen young volunteers are exploring their vocational callings, inner motivations and gifts for ministry. They serve others in solidarity through food banks, immigration centers, schools and community centers. Some of the sites would be unable to keep their doors open without the students’ help. The experience shapes volunteers’ vocational journeys in powerful ways.

“I have volunteers come back to me after their first year and say they didn’t realize how much service needs to be done,” Roger says. “They’re glad to be in a place where they can fulfill their calling. They are forever changed.”

### 2012 VOLUNTEERS EXPLORING VOCATION BY THE NUMBERS

201 young people from volunteer service projects in 22 states attended 7 VEV events.



61 cities received FTE staff visits to help nurture local volunteer communities.

### OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT



18 faith-based service programs have joined the VEV Network since 2005.



# Transition into Ministry



2012 TiM Participants Gathering

## PARTNERS IN A CHANGING WORLD

The Reverend Ronell Howard

Transition into Ministry (TiM) Pastoral Resident ('10 - '12)

From her vantage point as a TiM pastoral resident at Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, NY, Ronell Howard had a close-up view of rapid change in an urban setting. Changes in society. Changes in neighborhoods. Changes in church members' lives.



TiM residency programs provide young ministers with opportunities to explore pastoral ministry up close. During Ronell's two-year program, she experienced what it means to be a pastoral leader who is deeply embedded in an urban community.

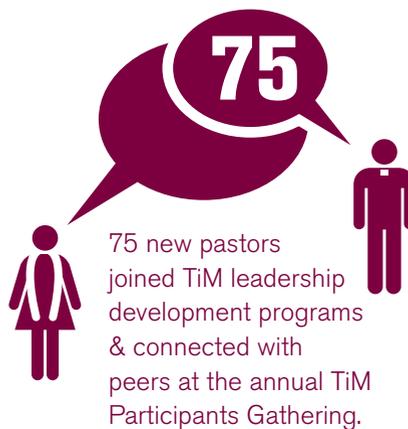
Ronell launched *GriefShare*, a support group for church members facing the loss of loved ones, and she provided pastoral guidance to a new women's ministry at Concord that serves community needs. Each week she helped open the church's doors to neighborhood youth who endure hunger, educational disparities and gang violence.

She finds that ministry is deeply satisfying, but highly demanding work—and her network of TiM peers offers a needed community of support. "TiM has given me a group of colleagues I can go to and process things with," Ronell notes. "They support me in ministry."

"In a changing world, partnering with others through the church can help achieve the 'beloved community,'" adds Ronell. "This insight is helpful to me as I enter into the next phase of ministry and begin to pastor my own church."

## 2012 TRANSITION INTO MINISTRY BY THE NUMBERS

29 congregational & 11 institutional programs in 19 states were served by TiM participants.



## OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT



750 young pastoral leaders have benefited from TiM support since 1999.

# What if we nurture young leaders to build beloved communities?

Thriving Christian communities ignite sparks of leadership in the hearts of their members. They ask self-awakening questions to help future leaders explore their calling. New networks of congregations and church-related groups are embracing vocational practices that bring life and leadership to God's beloved community.



## Calling Congregations



### VITALITY IN VOCATIONCARE

One of the greatest challenges for Christian communities everywhere is finding effective ways to nurture young leaders in their midst.

When the United Methodist Church (UMC) signed up conferences nationwide for training in FTE's VocationCARE practices, the experience empowered entire congregations to cultivate vocational discernment—and develop gifts for leadership in young adults throughout the whole UMC community.



The Reverend Juan Huertas  
FTE Ministry Fellow ('02)

"If we are trying to form young leaders of a community, it makes sense to do that in a communal process," notes Juan Huertas, senior pastor at St. John's United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, LA. "The training I received as a VocationCARE facilitator helps young people share their stories—and there is nothing like the practice of sharing our stories to build community."

Jessie Squires agrees. She signed up for VocationCARE training and then brought the practices to life within her congregation, Warwick Memorial UMC in Newport News, VA, where she serves as associate pastor. "Mentors in our church are learning how to have vocational conversations with young people as they explore ministry," Jessie says.

When the UMC Virginia Conference received a VocationCARE grant from FTE, Jessie served as a leader in training her colleagues. "The storytelling we did in VocationCARE connected us together again as a church," adds Jessie. "The practices are communal *and* personal. We want to use them to help people figure out what God is calling them to do."



The Reverend Jessie Squires  
FTE VocationCARE Grant Recipient ('11)

### 2012 CALLING CONGREGATIONS BY THE NUMBERS



2,000 young adults from 10 denominations engaged in vocational exploration through VocationCARE.

2,000



4.3 million

33 annual conferences representing 4.3 million United Methodist Church members received training in VocationCARE for candidacy mentoring teams.

### OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT

3,500 young adults in 74 congregations, 19 denominations & 17 states have participated in vocational discernment opportunities supported by FTE grants over the past 5 years.



# What if building beloved communities begins with you?

You can see the human impact of church-related ministries close to home, in *your* community. Action inspired by faith is often the critical difference in meeting growing social needs—transforming hunger into vitality, homelessness into opportunity, and despair into hope. The young Christian leaders who will serve your beloved community in ministry tomorrow depend on your gift of support today.



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**“There are many Christian communities and we all depend on one another to fully achieve our ministry with Christ in the world. FTE opens a window of opportunity for young people... it helps identify ways to build bridges between Christian organizations, to increase learning and to advance the mission of the church.”**

The Reverend Troy Mendez  
Donor and FTE Congregational Fellow ('06)  
Associate Rector, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church  
Palm Desert, CA



# Financial Highlights

## 2011-2010 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2011	2010
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 611,586	\$ 375,684
Investments	16,059,605	20,920,995
Prepaid expenses	10,223	9,215
Fixed assets, net	22,941	42,581
	<b>\$16,704,355</b>	<b>\$21,348,475</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts and grants payable	\$ 534,339	\$ 606,349
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	4,502,619	4,640,370
Temporarily restricted	10,859,220	15,293,579
Permanently restricted	808,177	808,177
Total net assets	<b>16,170,016</b>	<b>20,742,126</b>
	<b>\$16,704,355</b>	<b>\$21,348,475</b>

### FRIEND US. FOLLOW US. JOIN US. AN ONLINE NETWORK OF COMMUNITY BUILDERS

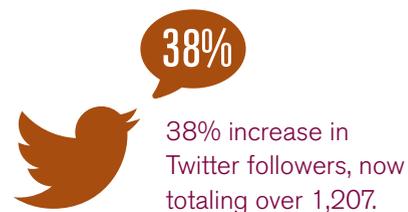
As young Christian leaders and ministries help to build God's beloved community, we stay connected to their stories and their work through FTE's online networks.

By staying connected, we're able to listen to the voices of leaders across North America, offer them resources and provide spaces for conversations that build an online community of people who do God's work in the world.

730 new people have joined the FTE Facebook community.



203 new people have joined FTE Facebook Groups for FTE Alumni and program participants.



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