

THE **CHANGING**  
**SHAPE** OF  
**FAITHFUL**  
**LEADERSHIP**

**THE FUND FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION 2011 ANNUAL REPORT**

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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

THE CHANGING SHAPE OF FAITHFUL LEADERSHIP

**FRIENDS,**

As the new president of The Fund for Theological Education (FTE), I am excited to share with you highlights from this transitional year that reflect the changing shape of faithful leadership in the church and academy.

Quality leadership is critically important to the vitality of various institutions in our country and to thriving communities of faith. We all are looking for the kind of leadership that can help us navigate through the treacherous waters of unprecedented change in our economic, political, academic, denominational and church systems.

Having shaped five decades of church leaders and scholars, FTE is aware that diverse, courageous leadership is essential in times of uncertainty. We understand that faithfully addressing uncertainty demands that leaders change the way they see, think and act together. We have begun to see this change in the young leaders we work with.

Among God-loving, justice-seeking and truth-telling young adults wanting to change the world, FTE and its partners have encountered a critical mass of young leaders exploring diverse ways of serving and leading the church.

These young leaders are exploring provocative questions concerning their role in the church and the academy. Their commitment to both of these institutions—and their deep longing to transform the world in meaningful ways through these institutions—have inspired us and deepened our hope for the church and its future.

During the past year, we have reexamined our own work and assumptions about young adults who participate in FTE programs. As a result, we discovered five emerging leadership practices that describe these young leaders and the changing shape of emerging church leaders:

**Discerning Vocation.** The questions of identity and purpose lie at the heart of one's sense of call. Young leaders we encounter are exploring the intersections between faith, service and their role in God's work in the world. They are establishing intentional communities and practices for exploring vocational questions. Faith communities are creating spaces of hospitality for young adults who are discerning their vocation and call to ministry.

**Social Justice.** Young leaders are interested in playing a role in healing a wounded world. The leaders we work with are interested in addressing issues

of justice through the church and academy. They are engaging social justice practices to address systemic injustices that thwart the abundant life that Jesus promises to everyone.

**Centering.** More young leaders are aware of their need to lead from a centered place to address the multiple demands of ministry and to avoid potential burnout. They are discovering spiritual practices for how to ground themselves, act from a centered place and respond faithfully to the stresses and concerns in their lives and ministries.

**Shared Leadership.** While ministry can be lonely and isolating, young leaders recognize that ministry done well is the result of shared work. They are exploring different practices of shared leadership, team building and collaboration.

**Engaging Differences.** In an increasingly diverse world, young adults are interacting with people from different racial, cultural, religious and theological backgrounds. Young leaders are learning how to become more aware of their own commitments of faith and how to build coalitions with diverse partners working on behalf of God's peace in the world.

We observe that young adults exploring vocations in pastoral ministry and religious scholarship engage these leadership practices in a variety of ways. We also notice these practices in young Christian leaders integrating faith with their leadership and service in the world.

It does not yet appear how these young leaders and their practices will shape the church's future and the world. However, we have learned that they are looking for diverse communities of peer support; strong mentoring communities; and opportunities to explore and create different models of pastoral ministry and teaching in the academy.

As FTE begins a new era of shaping the next generation of faithful leaders for the church and academy, we want to continue supporting these diverse, young leaders. We recognize we cannot do this important work without committed partners like you.

I hope you will join us in God's renewing movement to call young leaders, renew the church and change the world!

The Reverend Stephen Lewis  
FTE President



# VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers Exploring Vocation (VEV) makes vocational discernment an essential component in partner volunteer programs and seeks leadership for the church among young adult volunteers.

In May, VEV hosted its 13th annual event, with lively and engaged volunteers; authentic, visionary and passionate speakers; and a new cadre of VEV “graduates” who are emerging as mentors, guides and leaders in our work. To support our graduates, we also held four regional events for former volunteers, and we will hold four regional events for current volunteers during first-quarter 2012.

Each year, we focus on expanding the number of organizations with which we work and intensifying our relationship with these partners. Three new partners—L’Arche USA, Christian Appalachian Project and Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest—have joined us, bringing our total number of partner programs to 17. Also, Mennonite Mission Network seeks to implement the goals of VEV in all of its service programs. As a result, our relationship with Mennonite volunteer programs has expanded our connection to more service programs within its network.

**“TO LOVE THE CHURCH, WE  
CANNOT BE SATISFIED  
WITH WHAT/WHERE IT IS,**

**but instead we must reimagine it for what it should be:  
a light in the darkness; a hope and movement toward  
reconciliation, peace, unity and justice.”**

—Hassan Chaudhry,  
*FTE Volunteers Exploring Vocation Fellow ('11)*

Congregational Grants help churches and church-related organizations identify and shape the next generation of leaders.

During 2011, FTE funded 12 congregations and church-related organizations to experiment with VocationCARE practices, a vocational discernment approach for identifying future church leaders. Recipients included the ministry candidacy mentoring program of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church and the revived form of Wesleyan discipleship meetings of St. Mark's AME Zion Church in Dallas, TX, along with others.

We funded six additional congregations and ministry contexts in a new category, Grants for Pastoral Internships. These grants foster pastoral imagination in young adults actively discerning their call to ministry and further awaken congregations to their role in the formation of young leaders.

Congregational Learning develops the capacity of churches and church-related organizations to become places where young people explore Christian vocation and the call to ministry.

The shape of faithful leadership is becoming more intergenerational, relational and grounded in practices that help Christians thrive in their vocations. Over the past year, FTE trained nearly 800 church leaders in VocationCARE practices. Through these communal practices, congregations and church-related organizations learn to be faithful communities that support and shape the next generation of Christian leadership. They make it the church's vocation to be a place where young leaders explore their call to ministry and flourish in their vocation.



# CALLING CONGREGATIONS

Both Grants for Pastoral Internships and VocationCARE Practice Grants offer congregations and church related organizations a chance to experiment with new models for nurturing the call to pastoral leadership.

**“VOCALIZING MY CALL  
UNLEASHED  
SOMETHING IN ME**

**that I couldn't contain. The day I finally said it out loud  
to someone was the day I decided to go to seminary.”**

*—Jennifer Dahle, FTE Congregational Fellow ('11)*

At the 2011 Calling Congregations Conference, *Awaken the Courage to C.A.R.E.*, FTE convened an ecumenical learning community committed to supporting the call of emerging church leaders. The conference began with the inauguration of FTE's President, Rev. Stephen Lewis. Featured speakers included innovative leaders, well-known scholars and theologians: FTE Fellow Rev. Dr. Walter Fluker, Ms. Staci Haines, FTE Fellow Rev. Eustacia Moffett Marshall, Dr. Parker J. Palmer, Rev. Jessica Vazquez Torres and Rev. Dr. Frank Yamada.

# MINISTRY



## Ministry Program Fellowships encourage gifted young leaders from diverse backgrounds to hear and respond to God's call.

In 2011, FTE awarded 108 Ministry Program Fellowships: 20 Ministry Fellowships to second-year Master of Divinity students; 38 Congregational Fellowships to entering Master of Divinity students; 10 Volunteers Exploring Vocation Fellowships to entering seminary students participating in faith-based, year-of-service programs; and 40 Undergraduate Fellowships to college juniors and seniors.

In June, these Fellows—representing 21 denominations, 34 seminaries and 34 colleges and universities—explored pastoral ministry and engaged in service learning projects at the FTE Leaders in Ministry Conference, *Renewing the Church in Service to the Common Good*, at Dillard University in New Orleans, LA. Twenty Ministry Fellows participated in a three-day leadership retreat to explore their pastoral identity and ministry. Then in August, FTE sponsored a five-day preaching camp in collaboration with the Academy for Young Preachers for 10 FTE Ministry Program Fellows at Simpsonwood Conference Center in Atlanta, GA.

This year, FTE honored and celebrated Ms. Melissa Wiginton, former Vice President of Ministry Programs and Planning, for her 12 years of service and legacy of supporting more than 1,200 Ministry Program Fellows as they explored a call to pastoral ministry.

## “ADAPTING TO CHANGE AND TODAY'S PROBLEMS

**cannot be a docket item of faith leaders but the inherent fabric of our vocation.”**

—Tyler Sit, FTE Undergraduate Fellow ('09),  
FTE Congregational Fellow ('11)



## Doctoral Program Fellowships support future scholars who shape the next generation of leaders for the church, academy and society.

In 2011, FTE awarded nearly 40 fellowships to African American, Latin@, American Indian and Asian-American students pursuing the Ph.D. and Th.D. in religion, bible and theology. These future scholars are seeking to advance approaches to religious, theological and biblical studies that will enable leaders to creatively engage the challenges faith communities face. In June, we hosted the annual FTE Leaders in the Academy Conference for awarded Fellows and a team of faculty mentors. The conference theme, *Reflecting Globally, Leading Locally: Theological Scholarship in Dialogue with Diaspora*, invited participants to explore a global context of theological education as they develop as teachers.

We held two celebrations this year in honor of the living legacy of Dr. Sharon Watson Fluker, FTE's former Vice President of Doctoral Programs and Administration. In her 12 years of tireless service, Dr. Fluker contributed significantly to changing the shape of theological education, enabling nearly 300 doctoral students of color to begin and successfully complete Ph.D.s and Th.D.s in religion, theology and biblical studies. In January 2011, Matthew Wesley Williams assumed the role of Director of Doctoral Fellowships.



**“MY  
SACRED SPACES  
HAVE INCREASINGLY BECOME**

**classrooms, seminar and workshop spaces wherein I have  
been met by God.”**

—Neichelle R. Guidry Jones,  
FTE Undergraduate Fellow ('06), FTE Doctoral Fellow ('11)



*Class of 2011 FTE Doctoral Fellows*

# HIGHER EDUCATION

# ALUMNI

Alumni Relations and Development advances FTE's mission through strengthened relationships and networks between FTE and Transition Into Ministry (TiM) Alumni.

**“SERVICE,  
JUSTICE  
AND COMMUNITY**

have always been at the heart of faith and ministry for me.”  
—Christina Repoley, FTE Ministry Fellow ('09)



The annual TiM Participants Gathering and the biennial TiM Leadership Summit saw new pastors and program participants engage in creative dialogue about the vital role of a congregation as a place of formation for pastoral leadership. Our Alumni—from local church pastors and teachers to bishops and seminary deans—are thoughtful, faithful leaders who have significantly impacted their religious communities and institutions of higher education.

These Alumni are committed, as the generations before them, to cultivating the next generation of church leaders and religious scholars. FTE monitors the efforts of our Alumni through focus groups, surveys and Alumni meetings across the country. Moving forward, FTE will engage these Alumni in mentoring efforts with young people.

**“FTE HELPS TO  
EMPOWER,  
STRENGTHEN AND EQUIP**

church leaders for the rapidly changing reality of the religious landscape through its variety of programs.”

—FTE Alum

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*In memory of The Reverend and Mrs. John R. Gunn*

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# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## 2010-2009 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2010	2009
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 375,684	\$ 314,047
Investments	20,920,995	22,166,236
Prepaid expenses	9,215	15,303
Fixed assets, net	42,581	67,576
	<u>\$21,348,475</u>	<u>\$22,563,162</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts and grants payable	\$ 606,349	\$ 528,739
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	4,640,370	4,302,195
Temporarily restricted	15,293,579	16,927,351
Permanently restricted	808,177	804,877
Total net assets	<u>20,742,126</u>	<u>22,034,423</u>
	<u>\$21,348,475</u>	<u>\$22,563,162</u>



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## OUR MISSION

The Fund for Theological Education (FTE) advocates excellence and diversity in pastoral ministry and theological scholarship.

Through our initiatives, we enable gifted young people throughout the Christian community to explore and respond to God's calling in their lives. We seek to be a creative, informed catalyst for educational and faith communities developing their own capacities to nurture men and women for vocations in ministry and teaching. We also aim to awaken the larger community to the contributions of pastoral leaders and educators who act with faith, imagination and courage to serve the common good.