Ask and You Shall Receive

New $1.5-million gift sets pace for enhanced education and leadership

At a time when mainline church membership in Canada is in statistical decline, with congregations closing or amalgamating, populations aging, ethnic demographics shifting, and younger generations moving away from the church, new strategies – unlike any used before – must be employed.

To make theological education more responsive to the real-world needs of the United Church, Emmanuel College recently launched the Campaign for Theological Education and Congregational Leadership. The goal is to closely align Emmanuel’s mandate with the needs of the community through various teaching, research and student support initiatives.

At the first of two dinners held in the autumn to launch the campaign, Principal Peter Wyatt posed a bold challenge to 80 guests.

“Our first goal,” he said, “is to endow a permanent chair in congregational leadership. The University of Toronto standard for endowing a chair is $3 million. Victoria University’s Board of Regents has agreed to match donations up to $1.5 million. If there is any individual in this room tonight who will fund the entire chair, I would be pleased to hear from you.”

Two guests that evening, the Rev. Jane Brushey-Martin Emm 0T2 and her husband Geoff Martin, were particularly moved by Wyatt’s words, his illustrated address on the history of Emmanuel, and the impassioned testimonials they heard from student Michelle Robinson and Professor Michael Bourgeois on how Emmanuel has impacted their lives (see next page).

The next morning, Wyatt received a call from Brushey-Martin with her unexpected news: the entire $1.5 million had been found. The gift would come from the family’s private foundation.

As successful business owners committed to empowering leadership qualities amongst their staff, the Martins hope their gift will motivate others to also support the campaign. The couple envisions the new faculty member bringing fresh ideas to Emmanuel – approaches that address the diverse leadership needs of United Church congregations in Canada.

Wyatt believes the incumbent of the new chair will be someone who is capable of offering courses on the spirituality of leadership, which includes teaching ministers how to attain the internal spiritual strength to do the very hard work of ministering in a “changed context”. The incumbent will also teach courses on how to make congregations more strategic about their mission and reaching the constituencies they
seek to serve so as to minister effectively minister in their contexts.

“It takes a more entrepreneurial style of ministry; it takes strategic thinking and enormous perspective and skill to invite congregations to change how they relate to the surrounding community,” Wyatt says.

“This gift from the Martins is wonderful affirmation of the excellence in theological education that Emmanuel provides,” says Coral Martin Emm O'T1, president of the Emmanuel College Alumni Association. “And it comes at the perfect moment, when Emmanuel has undergone a curriculum review and the national church has initiated the Emerging Spirit campaign to attract younger people.”

“What is at stake in this campaign,” says Wyatt, “is not only raising funds, but also spreading the good word about theological education and helping the church become more active in recommending Emmanuel College as a place to learn and grow.”

The campaign also will raise the profile of Emmanuel College in church constituencies and, it is hoped, make theological education an attractive option for many more people, not just a select few, while enabling congregations to become more active in recruiting candidates for ordained ministry from across a broad spectrum.

“I see the campaign unfolding as a series of expanding circles, as when a pebble is thrown into a pond,” Wyatt says. “The pebble is the energy to endow a chair as shown through this visionary gift from the Martins. As this news spreads in ever growing circles, more people will be touched, fresh thoughts about theological education will ripple out and the number of candidates excited about the challenge of leadership will grow.”

During the last several months, Principal Peter Wyatt has been going “to and fro in the earth,” seeking to raise awareness of Emmanuel’s contribution to church leadership through quality theological education.

What Emmanuel means to me…

At the campaign launch dinner that the Martins attended in September they heard personal accounts of what Emmanuel means to two members of the college community.

A River Journey

Student Michelle Robinson recalls the image of a river used at the worship service when she came to Emmanuel’s annual Open Doors. This image coaxed her into dipping her toe into the river of theological education, “to see what the water is like.”

“What excites me about Emmanuel is the diverse and inclusive community,” said Robinson. “It is a community that is energetic and that invites involvement. As students, we have all come to study here at different ages and stages, with various backgrounds and experiences. This makes for a very rich learning environment and I appreciate so much that these individual experiences are valued by faculty and fellow students. This supportive environment is necessary because from my experience, the river can sometimes feel like a tidal wave. Emmanuel is a place that is challenging – academically, spiritually and personally – and it is a place that has pushed me to grow.”

Faculty member Michael Bourgeois echoed Robinson’s sentiments about Emmanuel as a special place, by identifying four fundamental pillars of the United Church and the college.

A matter of faith, leadership, location and mission

In referring to the campaign theme, Professor Michael Bourgeois built a progressive argument, declaring that four things matter. First, the United Church matters because it embodies distinctive faith values treasured by folk both inside and outside the Church. Second, leadership matters because no organization can thrive without good leadership and the United Church needs good leaders to live up to its distinctive calling. Third, as in real estate, location matters: while the college receives students from across the country who are attracted by its quality programs, Emmanuel serves a regional constituency from which comes the bulk of candidates for United Church ordained ministry. Fourth, Emmanuel matters because it has the opportunity and responsibility to equip a large proportion of the ministry leadership for the United Church, enabling the Church to carry out its distinctive mission.
Greer Boyce: Lessons in Leadership

BY JOHN McTAVISH
EMM 6T6

“My best profile is when my back is turned,” Greer Boyce announces as I appear at the door of his modest retirement home in Gravenhurst, Ont. Greer and Margaret have been living in the scenic Muskoka town for the past 20 years. Before that, Greer taught pastoral theology at Emmanuel College for almost 30 years.

“I tried to get the students to think theologically about their life and work,” he says. “I didn’t want them regurgitating lectures. I took the Socratic approach. As the unexamined life is not worth living, so too, the unexamined ministry is not as rich as it should be.”

Specifics, Greer?

“When you’re visiting somebody who is dying, where’s your theology? How do you get at the pain, the loneliness that people are experiencing? How does your theology help you do that in a sensitive and helpful way? A lot of students think pastoral care is only common sense. It’s not that simple, as you jolly well found out when you got out there.”

Greer also taught Homiletics. What does he think about preaching today?

“Well, it’s central, isn’t it? I was teaching an introductory class in the 1960s and a student said, ‘Preaching is dead. Sensitivity groups are where it’s at now.’ A Roman Catholic student immediately stood up and told this guy he had no idea what he was talking about. ‘Last year,’ the Catholic student said, ‘I was helping a priest at Easter. There were four masses, and all the priest talked about was how well the congregation was doing at penance. Not a word was said about the resurrection! That’s why I’m in this class today.”

I inquire about Greer’s personal journey, and how he came to the ministry.

“I came through the stage. I used to do comedy. I played at church suppers all over the country. I might have become an English teacher but I failed Latin, dropped out of the honours course and the next thing I knew I was headed for theology.

“I studied at Queens and then later at Union. Tillich. Niebuhr. John Bennett – giants all. But my best theological mentor – and critic – has always been my wife. I’ve known other wives who would sit there in adoring wonder while their husbands screamed like cats in a back alley. Margaret would have killed me.”

Greer taught under a number of principals at Emmanuel: Richard Cousland, Earl Lautenschlager, William Fennell, Douglas Jay.

I ask for recollections.

“They were all good. Cousland, especially, was gentle and kind, but also tough. As a commander in the First World War, Cousland had to take a hill once. He told the guys in his company he’d shoot them if any ran off. And I gather he did shoot, or at least gave orders for one of the deserters to be shot!

“Fennell’s administrative skills and passion for the college were infectious. Fennell, by the way, was known around Union as the only guy who ever dared to ask Reinhold Niebuhr any questions. Oh yes, Niebuhr used to say, ‘When I preach, I want to preach the gospel, but I also want everybody to think it’s a good sermon.’ That’s the crazy bind we’re trapped in,” Greer adds.

This remark triggers, for me, a memory of something one of my classmates, Harold Wells Emm 6T6 recently said about Greer Boyce: “His great contribution was to impress upon us the complexities and ambiguities of the human condition.”

I also recall Harold’s personal indebtedness to Greer: “I first encountered him long before I went to Emmanuel, at a Five Oaks retreat where, as a young agnostic, I had been dragged by my girlfriend. He talked with me long into the night about the ‘problem of evil,’ which was obstructing the possibility of faith for me. I was impressed by how seriously Greer took the whole question, and with his sensitivity to suffering. He showed me that a deeply intelligent, honest person could actually be a believer. Without that conversation with Dr. Boyce when I was 21 or so, I may have remained permanently outside the church.”

That’s Greer. He hasn’t just talked the talk. He has also always displayed a pastor’s heart along with an intelligent theological mind. Without that mind, our pastoral work is sloppy and sentimental; without the heart, theology turns cold and lifeless.

I prepare to bid a reluctant farewell to my old teacher only to have Greer deliver one last bon mot: “I think there’s only one real preacher in the world, and that’s the Holy Spirit. The poor fellow or poor woman – has to take our words and make the gospel out of them. The miracle is that it happens as often as it does.”

John McTavish Emm 6T6 retired from pastoral ministry in 2003 and lives in Huntsville, Ont.
Away Days at Emmanuel College

Wednesday morning opportunities for conversation and learning are offered monthly at Emmanuel College as part of the continuing education program. Emmanuel faculty and alumni/ae and leaders in a variety of fields offer workshops to share best practices, offer new approaches or bring theory into dialogue with experience.

Away Days at Emmanuel are designed to support ministers in their work and offer a “day away” with a focused learning opportunity, a chance to read in the library, catch up with friends over lunch, join the students and faculty in community worship or take off to the museum for the afternoon.

Fall programs included Professor Gary Redcliffe’s Family Systems and Congregational Life, Nancy Reeves’ Decision-making with God, and Widening the Circle of Belonging in United Church Congregations with Isaac Kawuki-Mukasa.

The new year includes Anne Simmonds Emm 976 offering spiritual preparation for Lent and Easter (Jan. 24), and Bill Steadman Emm 777 leading a workshop on funding mission (Feb. 28). Suggestions for topics and leaders are welcome and should be sent to Betsy Anderson, coordinator of continuing education at ec.events@utoronto.ca or 416-813-4096. Up-to-date information is available at www.vicu.utoronto.ca.

In Honour of a Beloved Professor & Friend

The Rev. John Webster Grant, emeritus professor of the history of Christianity, died Dec. 16 in Toronto. Widely considered the dean of Canadian church historians, he served Emmanuel’s students from 1963 to 1984.

Greer Boyce (featured on page 3) wrote the following in honour of Grant:

I have rich memories of John Webster Grant. I experienced him as the “ideal” scholar, diligent and dedicated in research, instructive and enlightening in his analyses of both the past and current affairs. I benefited from his correction of my often hasty judgments, and relied upon his clear insights.

But scholarly effort did not make him aloof. He was a warm and hospitable person, a gracious host, and was endowed with a subtle sense of humour which eased tensions, punctured self-importance, and made him always a lively companion. In my years at Emmanuel I counted it a real privilege to be a colleague. I find his death not so much a matter of sorrow but of thanksgiving. I want to join in spirit the Emmanuel staff past and present able to celebrate his life and his contribution to learning, and to the college and church he loved with critical devotion.
FAITHFUL GIVING
Celebrating Life Emmanuel Style!

2006 will be remembered at the college as a year in which many Emmanuel alumni and their families chose to celebrate life’s milestones with a gift to the Emmanuel College Bursary Fund.

Supporting Global Education

Serving on the Senior Alumni Association for the University of Toronto and supporting Emmanuel College through a number of activities, the late Rev. Howard Milton Pentland Vic 4T9, Emm 5T2, honorary doctorate of divinity 7T8 was also an active proponent of international educational opportunities for students.

After his sudden death in January 2006, Pentland’s family members, friends, former classmates and colleagues decided to commemorate his life and his connection to the University of Toronto (which included the organization of several class of 1952 reunions at Emmanuel) by establishing the Howard Pentland Award for Education in a Global Context.

To date, a total of over $18,000 has been raised. With the James Morrow Regents Fund match, an endowment of over $36,000 now exists at Emmanuel College.

“"We all miss my father in an infinite number of ways. Establishing this award so quickly was both a relief and a blessing. It gave us some comfort that we were doing something Dad would have truly supported. We hope that these funds will create many positive experiences for future recipients.” – Lawrence Pentland

Gifts to the Bursary Fund in Lieu of Traditional Gifts

Bruce Scott

The Rev. R. Bruce Scott Emm 5T6 received a surprise gift for Father’s Day from his wife Lois Scott and daughter Leslie Buehner, commemorating his 50th anniversary of ordination. Bruce was presented with a certificate announcing donations made in his honour to the Emmanuel Bursary Fund by members of the Scott family.

Stewart Bell

In deciding what to give her husband, the Rev. J. Stewart Bell Emm 6T5 for his 75th birthday, Anne Stewart asked family and friends to support the Emmanuel Bursary Fund in lieu of purchasing birthday gifts.

“As a self-supporting student at Victoria College and Emmanuel College in the late fifties and early sixties, I was the beneficiary of bursaries. I know how important this assistance can be to students trying to finance their way through college. I am just delighted that my celebration will give a little boost to the bursary fund.” – Stewart Bell

These are just three examples in which members of the Emmanuel community have chosen to commemorate a loved one, or celebrate happy occasions with a gift that will benefit Emmanuel College students. If you would like to direct donations to Emmanuel College, please fill out the coupon below or call the Alumni/ae Office at 416-585-4469 or 1-888-262-9775.

THINK what you can do for Emmanuel students.

Yes!

I would like to contribute $__________ to the Emmanuel College Annual Fund.

☐ I have enclosed a cheque payable to “Victoria University”, OR I wish to pay by ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard.

Card No.: Exp.: Signature:

Name: Grad Year: Tel.: Email: City/Province/Postal Code:

☐ Please send me information about planned giving. ☐ I have already included Emmanuel in my will.

Please mail your contribution to the Victoria Alumni Office, 150 Charles St. W., Toronto ON M5S 1K9 or fax to 416-585-4594.

Emmanuel College Newsletter WINTER 2007
ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to the Rev. Muriel Carder Emm 6T9 who will receive the 8th annual Katharine Hocken Award on Feb. 25, 2007. This award, sponsored by the Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries, recognizes her groundbreaking work as the first Canadian Baptist woman ordained to ministry and her 30-year service in India where she contributed in no small way to the decision of the Church of South India to ordain women.

Seismic Shifts: Leadership in Times of Change is a recently published book by the Rev. Christopher White Emm 8T7 that offers an invitation to journey toward an authentic leadership for our time. Drawing on two decades of experience as a United Church minister and input from other leaders inside the church and out, Christopher White examines new directions in leadership. The book is available from the United Church Resource Distribution Centre. White will be the keynote speaker at Emmanuel College Alumni/ae Days May 16 to 17, 2007.

Bill Lamb Emm 5T6 and members of his 1956 graduating class are still meeting regularly 50 years later. Recently, 15 alumni and their spouses gathered for a two-day reunion at the Elmhurst Inn in Ingersoll, Ont. Their collective project is writing their 33 stories in ministry (including those of the deceased). Lamb points out that many of these do not follow the typical model of 40 years in congregational ministry. Then, as now, theological training is a good basis for many vocations in the world as well as the church. They wonder if such a project has ever been undertaken before.

MARRIAGES

G. Bert Mather (age 90) Vic 4T1, Emm 4T4 and Rowena (Smith) McLellan (age 80) Vic 4T6 were married Dec. 30, 2005 in Saskatoon, Sask.

BIRTHS

Congratulations to Grant Williams Emm 0T1 and Laura Williams Emm 0T1 on the birth of their second daughter, Sarah Rose, Nov. 1, 2006 in Oakville, Ont.

DEATHS

The struggles for knowledge, justice, and communities of right relation are rooted in basic questions. The moral question is: what befits and does not befit human life and its earthly setting? The theological question is: how and with whom do we build our capacity for right relation — for justice and love — with God, self, neighbour, and creation? At Emmanuel and Vic, I teach strong narratives and sometimes introduce strident mentors to help us wrestle with injustice as the ongoing consequence of relations of domination, subordination and conferred privilege. For all of us, social justice is about how to think and act with others to support conditions where one’s own and others’ well-being are simultaneously possible.

To imagine such possibilities, a favourite event in each Vic class is the student contribution of an image, song or poem that speaks to them about struggling for justice and why. Their selections and insight have been variously acute, tough, and moving, whether they have presented a post-colonial poem by Guyanese Martin Carter; personal poetry and art about identities that are targeted or being created across many borders; an arresting painting by Frida Kahlo, Modigliani or Picasso; a photo of banana farmers protesting contamination of bodies and land in Nicaragua; images of sumptuous work by an Indian fabric artist who lives cross-culturally; or a song by Somali-born Toronto rapper, K’Naan Warsame, whose name means “one who carries words of peace.”

The Vic One class this semester is well suited to dig into the fact that different cultures, communities, and nation states have different values and moral systems. For example, a survey of their roots and recent experience include Cairo, China, Dubai, India, Israel, Nicaragua, Don Mills, Guyana, High Park, Kitchener, Massachusetts, Montreal, New Zealand, Nova Scotia, Oakville, Scarborough, Peru, Uruguay and downtown Toronto. While some obliquely acknowledge their religious affiliation as Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, or Protestant, for the most part they bracket explicit talk in the classroom of the role of religion in social (in)justice.

Testing one’s moral compass in relation to others is a life skill. Students in both colleges want to make connections — between personal and public, between values and action, between work and play, between those who are similar and those who are different. I hope that students in both colleges will contribute to a new global commons — as multivocal and polycentric, practical and moral, inherently evaluative and interdisciplinary.

The cross-appointment is still very fresh, and I often feel like dancing.
CONTINUING EDUCATION AND COMING EVENTS

Alumni/ae Days
Wednesday, May 16 to Thursday, May 17
• Seismic Shifts: Leadership in Times of Change
  The Rev. Christopher White will address the question of how church leaders can respond to the rapid changes in North American society. Sessions are followed by the alumni/ae lunch, annual meeting, and the 4 p.m. Victoria University convocation/Emmanuel College graduation.

Winter Away Days at Emmanuel College
• One Act of Grace – Sabbath Time for You with the Rev. Anne Simmonds
  Wednesday, Jan. 24, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
  How to strengthen your own spiritual practices through the seasons of Lent and Easter.
  Workshop fee of $45, does not include lunch.
  Deadline for registration Wednesday, Jan. 17
• Funding the Emerging Mission: Promoting the Mission and Service Fund in Congregations with the Rev. Bill Steadman
  Wednesday, Feb. 28, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
  Share ideas on promoting the Mission and Service Fund, learn about new resources, and discuss the challenge of funding the mission of the United Church into the future.
  Workshop Fee $30, does not include lunch.
  Deadline for registration Wednesday, Feb. 21

Foundations of Spiritual Companionship
Jan. 19 to Jan. 20, Feb. 16 to Feb. 17, Emmanuel College
20-hour workshop: Friday afternoons – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
A lay pastoral education program offered by teacher-chaplains Bonnie and Don Misener to equip caregivers for ministry with elders, those suffering illness and grieving loss.
Deadline for registration is Jan. 12, 2007.
Registration $325*

Theology and Church in China Today with Professor Milton Wan, Chinese University, Hong Kong
Saturday, Feb. 3, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Registration $20, includes lunch

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Minister with Professor Sandy Cotton
Friday, February 9, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Registration $20, includes lunch
Contact Patti James to register: pjames@torontoconference.ca; 416-241-2677, ext. 225; or 1-800-446-4729, ext. 225.

A World of Song: Worship, Music and Culture with Michael Hawn
Friday Feb. 9, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m and Saturday Feb. 10, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Michael Hawn, author and professor of church music at Perkins School of Theology will explore the particular richness of global music for congregational worship.
Workshop fee of $100* includes reception on Friday and meals on Saturday.
Deadline for registration is January 31

The Cousland Lecture and Continuing Education Event – March 7 and 8
The Very Rev. Stanley McKay: “First Peoples and the Churches – For Generations Yet to Come”
• Community worship Wednesday at 1:45 p.m.: free-will offering to support the United Church’s Healing Fund.
• Wednesday, 4 p.m. – free lecture to address the colonial history that shapes the present, despite our longing for right relations
• Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Continuing Education event: a conversation about the Toronto-Ontario-Canada-World context.
Registration for Thursday – $40 for students, $80* for others, includes coffee breaks and lunch.
Deadline for registration is Feb. 28

Starting Well: First Years in Ministry
June 18 to 21 at Emmanuel College
This ecumenical three-year program gathers new ministers annually to reflect on their contexts and practice and to participate in collegial groups. The June 2007 event is open to those ordained or commissioned in the last three years and to all those who participated in Starting Well for the first time in 2005 or 2006.

Treasure in Earthen Vessels: Toward a More Embodied Spirituality
With Don Evans and Catherine Stone
Monday, May 28, noon to Thursday, May 31, 3:30 p.m.
A retreat/workshop to bring an embodied awareness of spirit and of ourselves as humanly divine. Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon are free.
Course fee $300*, cheque payable to Victoria University. Accommodation and meals not provided.

Ministry of Supervision Training with Abigail Johnson
Monday, June 4 to Friday, June 8, and Monday Oct. 22 to Friday, Oct. 26, 2007.

Congregational Discounts
An asterisk (*) denotes events that offer a 15 percent congregational discount for two or more participating members.