



The Western FRONT

May 2014

where the gospel meets the world



Charmaine Willams stands with the panel speakers at the Alumni Connect. From left to right: Pastor Clement Wong '10 of Silicon Valley Alliance Church, Ariana Rice (student) of Vintage Faith Church, Pastor Steve Saccone of Highway Church, and Pastor Tony Cruz '12 formerly of Awakening Church.

Learning Together to Reach Emerging Generations

By Tony Cruz, Western Alumnus,
Biblical and Theological Studies,
Class of 2012

At the Alumni Connect event in March, I had the pleasure of sitting on a panel with some awesome leaders to discuss how to bridge the generational gap that is seen in some churches. In some ways I felt out of place sitting on that panel. I did not grow up in the church. I came to Christ in 2002. All of these lead-

ers had been in ministry longer than I had been a Christian! Yet, for all of us on the panel and audience, there was a deep desire to learn how to reach emerging generations with the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was a humbling and encouraging experience. After having a few weeks to reflect on the contents of that evening, there are four significant themes that stood out to me.

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IMPORTANT DATES

MAY 11

Mother's Day

MAY 16

The Christian Therapist Fellowship,
12:00pm-2:30pm at the San Jose campus
RSVP by May 9 to Steve Darrow

MAY 21

Alumni Gathering, 11:45am-1:15pm
(see pg. 4)

MAY 26

Memorial Day (campus closed)

JUNE 4

Discover Coaching, 7-9pm

RSVP by May 28 (more info on pg. 3)

JUNE 7

Campus Connection - 10:30am-1:00pm
RSVP by May 30 (see pg. 4)

JUNE 15

Father's Day

JULY 4

Independence Day (campus closed)

JULY 12

Commencement, 11am-12:30pm
(see pg. 4)

AUGUST 14-15

Global Leadership Summit (see pg. 2)

Other Community Calendar dates

**"LEARNING TOGETHER"
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1****THEOLOGY MATTERS**

Everyone believes something about God. Everyone is a theologian. As such, there needs to be a renewed focus on theology and the methodology behind developing a theology. Emerging generations will not be satisfied with a regurgitation of doctrinal information from millenniums past. They must see that while our faith is deeply rooted in our past, the beliefs that form the basis for our faith actually empower us and call us to create a future that will reflect our own interaction with eternal truths. This takes trust in Jesus and His incomparable mercy and grace since mistakes are sometimes made and corrections necessary.

SCRIPTURE MATTERS

In cooperation with theology, emerging generations long to see their faith demonstrate an active, diligent, and humble interaction with Scripture. In my experience in working with millennials, I have discovered that a reason why people do not engage with Scripture is not because of what it says. Instead, their disengagement is the result of what they have heard past generations say the Bible teaches. We must take a step back and stop telling them what it says and begin inviting them to study the Scriptures alongside one another. This takes trust in Jesus and the Spirit of God to speak to us individually even as He does corporately.

FEELINGS MATTERS

Everyone feels because everyone is human. I want to emphasize this point to balance out the previous two points. Reasonable and thoughtful presentation of theology as a result of an artfully meticulous study of Scripture is necessary, yet we must remember that humanity is not simply an intellectual or rational being. Humanity is an emotional creation as well. We must become comfortable with giving the next generation space and time to wrestle with



The attendees of the Alumni Connect event listen intently to the panel speakers as they share their expertise on how they minister to the emerging generations.

what they are discovering and learning and how Jesus is changing their lives. We need to learn to create spaces that give emerging generations permission to do that. That is why it will take trust in Jesus and His unparalleled patience and faithfulness toward humanity, especially in light of our unfaithful and inconsistent humanity.

DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Each emerging generation becomes the future for the present church. Sometimes it seems that the number of young adults or college students you have in your church carries with it a sense of status or prestige rather than carrying with

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Global Leadership Summit Discount

Western alumni, students, and faculty can register for the annual [Global Leadership Summit](#) which will be held on August 14-15, 2014 at a special rate of \$79 (Reg. \$249). GLS is telecast live from Willow Creek Community Church and features world class speakers, music and drama to help equip Christian leaders around the world.

Here are the Bay Area Global Leadership Summit host sites:

- San Jose – Church on the Hill
- Foster City – Central Peninsula Church
- San Francisco - Cornerstone Church
- Pleasanton – Valley Community Church
- Richmond/Oakland – Hilltop Community Church

Interested in connecting with other Western people at one of the sites? If so, please contact Charmaine Williams at cwilliams@westernseminary.edu.

No longer live in the Bay Area? There are [National](#) or [International](#) host sites.

Western will have a booth at most of these sites. Stop by and send people our way!

“LEARNING TOGETHER” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

it a weight of responsibility or vision for the future. As a result, I hear, read, and see a lot about attraction and not as much about development. We must resist the urge to create a false dichotomy that emphasizes one over the other. Emerging generations are not only longing to be invited into church but also longing to be recognized and developed as the future of the church. This does not mean that we hand over the reigns to leadership hastily or prematurely. It does mean that we must build into our paradigms of ministry ways to instill value and long-term vision into the emerging generations. This development must go beyond what they can do for the organization of the church as leaders. It should give them a vision for their future within their communities and cities as well. This process takes trust in Jesus and the beautiful example of humility He displayed both in His incarnation and His ministry as a servant leader, God

among us in human history.

THE GOSPEL MATTERS

Emerging generations are a yearning generation. They yearn for a grounded faith in the midst of so much that seems unknowable; for a textured faith that welcomes emotions and intellect; for a perfected faith that perfects even in the midst of imperfection. They are not looking for gospel information. They are looking for gospel transformation in the lives of those who proclaim Jesus as King. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only place where all generations are not simply restored but renewed in the image of the King. A clear understanding and proclamation of the holistic gospel goes beyond a recognition of sin and a need for forgiveness. It includes an invitation for Jesus to continue His gracious work in our hearts and our minds. This must be evident not only in what we preach but in how we live our lives. This takes trust in Jesus and in

the atoning work He did on the cross, in His power at the right hand of God, and in His Word to continue His work in us. I'll end with this quote from St. Benedict, a 5th century monk who reminds us that as we move forward in our pursuit of reaching emerging generations we must do so humbly but boldly.

Whenever we want to ask some favor of a powerful man, we do it humbly and respectfully, for fear of presumption. How much more important, then, to lay our petitions before the Lord God of all things with the utmost humility and sincere devotion. We must know that God regards our purity of heart and tears of compunction, not our many words (RB 20. 1-3).

May we humbly go before God the Father to ask for His will to be done and for His Spirit to prepare us and emerging generations for the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to His glory forever.

DISCOVER COACHING

Learn how to partner with others to help them discover and achieve their God-given potential.

June 4, 2014 • 7pm-9pm

Discover how coaching can:

- Help people grow and achieve their goals
- Empower you to listen well and ask good questions
- Increase your leadership know-how
- Maximize your ministry and kingdom impact

At Discover Coaching:

Learn more about coaching and coach training options available at Western Seminary.

RSVP by May 28, 2014 at www.westerncoaching.com/discover or contact Lisa Mueller at lmuel@westernseminary.edu

Then, experience:
Introduction to Coaching (MCS 510S)
September 18 & 19, 2014
Non-credit (audit) application deadline is
Sept. 11, 2014. Master's level fall application
(credit) deadline is July 14, 2014.

**WESTERN
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**MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES**

We receive regular contact from churches and para-church organizations. Please see the Ministry and Employment Opportunities and Counseling binders in the front lobby for more information about the recent (and previous) postings below.

Director of Youth and Student Ministries

[Living Word Community Church](#),
3520 San Felipe Road, San Jose
Part-time (10-12 hrs./wk.)
Contact Pastor Kiem Le at
kiemvle@gmail.com.

**Pastor of Worship and
Community Life**

[Great Exchange Church](#)
in Union City
MDiv or ministry-related MA
preferred. Part-time (approx. 20
hrs./wk.). Contact Pastor Brian Hui
at brian.hui@grxeastbay.org.

Worship Director

[Great Exchange Church](#)
in Union City
Part-time (approx. 12 hrs./wk.)
Contact Pastor Brian Hui at
brian.hui@grxeastbay.org.

Technical Director

[Calvary Church Los Gatos](#)
in Los Gatos
Contact Kristi Gill at
kgill@calvarylg.com.



JOIN US!
Alumni Gathering
May 21, 2014
Round Table Pizza, Palo Alto
11:45am to 1:15pm

Western will cover your buffet lunch. Come any time within this hour and a half for fellowship and networking with other alumni. Guest Pastor Steve Saccone (from the March Alumni Connect Event) of Highway Community Church will be in attendance. Please RSVP to Charmaine Williams at cwilliams@westernseminary.edu by May 19th.



Campus Connection
An informational event for those who long to advance the gospel

Saturday, June 7
10:30am - 1:00pm
RSVP by May 30



**WESTERN
SEMINARY**
Gospel-Centered
Transformation



Volunteers Needed

Commencement for the San Jose campus will be held on Saturday, July 12 at 11:00AM at Christ Community Church in Milpitas. The Class of 2014 is big, which will draw quite a crowd, so we'd love your help putting on this event! We'll need help with set-up, greeting/ushering, reception, and clean-up. If you can help for any amount of time, we'd greatly appreciate it! Please contact Carrie Priest at carriepriest@westernseminary.edu if you are interested.

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For alumni news, the Western Front,
and additional community events -
www.westernseminary.edu/alumni/sanjose
(click on the "San Jose" button)

For Western Seminary San Jose campus news -
www.westernseminary.edu/students/sanjose