



# Renewal

*A Quarterly Newsletter for Friends of Western Seminary*

## President Roberts Introduces 'Renewal'

### SEMINARY PERSONNEL UPDATES:



**LYNN RUARK**  
FINANCIAL AID  
DIRECTOR,  
Retiring after 35 years



**DR. JOHN BRANNER**  
INTERCULTURAL  
STUDIES,  
Retiring after 7 years



**CHARMAINE WILLIAMS**  
Joins Advancement  
Team in San Jose

Welcome to the first edition of Western's e-newsletter. Having recently launched our twice-yearly magazine, we are hoping that this quarterly newsletter will allow us to continue to share current news with you in a timely and easily-accessible manner. Our magazine issues will continue to focus more on developing various themes related to our renewal document. (Click here for a copy of the renewal document.) By the way, the next issue of the magazine will address the topic of ministry cooperation vs. competition; watch for it later this spring.

In addition to sharing with you what's happening throughout the Western system, this newsletter will also include human interest profiles of various members of the Western team and family; recommended reading lists; notices for upcoming events; and a brief thought related to some aspect of gospel-centered transformation. Please let us know what other features may be of interest to you.

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On the personnel side, Lynn Ruark recently announced his plans to retire effective this coming July. As many of you know, Lynn has served in a variety of key student service roles for the past 35 years. Earlier this year intercultural studies faculty member John Branner also indicated that he similarly intends to retire at the end of this school year. We will do a special feature recognizing both Lynn and John in the upcoming Western magazine.

We also recently welcomed to the team Charmaine Williams as our part-time Northern California Regional Advancement Officer. Charmaine, who also recently began her studies as a Western San Jose student, brings a wealth of advancement experience to this role. In praise of Charmaine's character and qualifications, Vice President of Advancement Greg Moon commented, "Charmaine has a deep commitment to her faith and to making the most of her gifts for the kingdom. She is personable, outgoing, and brings great presence and professionalism to all she does. Given Charmaine's expertise, heart and skill set, we are delighted to have her on the team."

*Continued on page 2*



### THINKING ABOUT GOSPEL-CENTERED TRANSFORMATION

"A chief reason for the weakness of the Christian church in the West, for the poverty of our witness and any lack of vitality in our worship, probably lies here: we sing about 'amazing grace' and speak of 'amazing grace,' but far too often it has ceased to amaze us. Sadly, we might truthfully sing of 'accustomed grace.' We have lost the joy and energy that are experienced when grace truly seems amazing."

**SINCLAIR FERGUSON,**  
By Grace Alone

# Financial Aid Consultant Offers Insightful Feedback

President Roberts Introduces 'Renewal,' continued from page 1

In late February, and after studying us for a few months, a professional financial aid consultant offered some thoughtful and wide-ranging suggestions about how we might be able to use our scholarship monies even more effectively both to attract the kind of students we desire and to help them better afford their education. The typical student today brings to graduate school around \$23,000 in undergraduate debt before even starting master's programs of 60-90 credits at \$425 per credit. These students will often enter modest paying ministries upon graduation, so incurring significant educational debt can be a long-term problem.

We therefore want to keep tuition as affordable as possible, yet tuition revenue currently funds approximately 80% of Western's \$5 million budget (gifts cover most of the other 20%). So you can see the challenge we face, which in many ways is even more formidable than public school "funding crises" that make headlines (especially when you remember that we have many of the same kinds of expenses as public schools, but receive no governmental support and are ineligible for most foundation grants because we are a faith-based school).

*"Our recent consultation was eye-opening. By inviting an institutional newcomer to explore our resources, approaches and systems, we were able to learn from his candid observations about what must be celebrated and continued, and what must change for the sake of the seminary and our greatest resource: our students.*

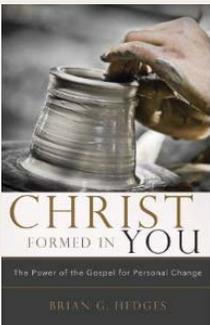
*We've already begun implementing some of the consultant's recommendations. As we move forward, we continue to prayerfully consider his proposed adjustments to our current systems and how to best allocate our resources."*

**PJ OSWALD,**  
Director of Enrollment Management

# Resources for Renewal

We are committed to serving as a catalyst and resource with and for the church — and that includes offering suggestions on books that you may find helpful for life and ministry. Here are a few recommendations from Randy's reading list for your consideration.

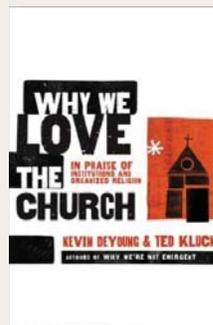
## CHRIST FORMED IN YOU: THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL FOR PERSONAL CHANGE



by Brian Hedges

This book clearly and compellingly describes the nature and dynamics of gospel-centered transformation. Organized under the broad categories of the foundation, pattern, and means of personal change, the author clearly demonstrates how the biblical gospel uniquely prompts, shapes, and enables growth in Christ-likeness.

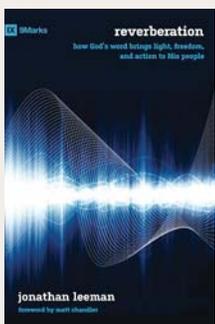
## WHY WE LOVE THE CHURCH: IN PRAISE OF INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZED RELIGION



by Kevin DeYoung and Ted Gluck

Addressed in particular to four different attitudes towards the local church—the committed, the disgruntled, the waffling, and the disconnected—DeYoung and Gluck offer a biblically compelling call to view rightly the bride of Christ and to become a contributing member of a local body of believers.

## REVERBERATION: HOW GOD'S WORD BRINGS LIGHT, FREEDOM AND ACTION TO HIS PEOPLE



by Jonathan Leeman

Focusing upon how well the church emphasizes, proclaims, hears, and lives out the Word of God, and the importance of doing all that faithfully for genuine church growth, is the central thrust of Leeman's book. While this may sound like Christianity 101, it's a message that needs to be recovered in some sectors of contemporary evangelicalism.

## RID OF MY DISGRACE: HOPE AND HEALING FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT



by Justin and Lindsey Holcomb

Sexual assault is more prevalent, and potentially even more traumatic, than is often recognized. Writing to both victims of sexual assault and those who seek to minister to them, the Holcombs provide an authentically and distinctively Christian approach to the various issues involved.

# Q&A with Board of Trustees Chairman, Pastor Scott Reavely

*Pastor and Western Seminary alum (Master of Divinity, Master of Theology and Doctor of Ministry) Scott Reavely has served as chairman of Western's Board of Trustees for four and a half years. His tenure has been an incredibly productive season for the board: selecting Randy Roberts to serve as seminary president; researching, approving and raising funds for the new San Jose campus location in Santa Clara; recruiting new members to serve on the board; and reworking the seminary bylaws. We asked Dr. Reavely to take a few moments to help us understand how the board functions as a governing body, to learn about the seminary's current opportunities from the board's perspective, and to hear more about the man who leads this arm of seminary leadership.*



## **Q: How did you come to serve as board chairman?**

A: I ended up being the chairman of the seminary's presidential search committee that walked twenty feet down the hall and snagged Randy out of his office (where he was serving as academic dean at the time). Everyone thought that was such a great idea that they made me chairman of the board.

## **Q: That's great. And how does the board function?**

A: The board typically meets three times a year. The board is a governing board which means that we have the final fiscal and legal responsibility for the school. We supervise President Roberts, and he supervises everyone else.

## **Q: So what's been on your agenda lately?**

A: We have spent a lot of time talking about the San Jose campus relocation and are very excited about that. We have talked about financial things: we approve the budget, we talk about the status of the seminary spreadsheet and cash flow. We talk about meeting requirements for accreditation. We talk about how the seminary can cultivate relationships with people on the outside – alumni, donors, and other friends.

Randy's been doing a lot of research on the state of evangelical seminaries both nationally and locally. We've been working with him in crafting a vision that the school can run with in light of that research.

## **Q: Who else is on the board?**

A: There are some really high-octane people, with a wealth of experience both in the Christian life and in business. We've got several people who have been in the high tech industry, some international, some in the "C suites" for some big companies. And now the ministry presence is really strong. We've got a "What is this going to look like in ministry over decades?" kind of view on the board. To a person, we just really enjoy the time we spend together.

## **Q: There's a lot going on at Western these days. What is the board most excited about?**

A: We love the innovative culture that's been around Western for a long time. The people we have employed, in terms of faculty and staff, are second to none.

We have the utmost confidence that the seminary will perpetuate a biblical gospel into the future and that's what all of us are most excited about. We can trust that our kids and grandkids will be pastored by people who still have confidence in the Word; still have the certainty that Jesus saves. And frankly, as a pastor,

it is very strategic for me to have counselors I can trust to bring the gospel in a counseling situation.

There are few places where we can volunteer or give that can offer a return not only now, but multiplied into the future. We think that an investment in the seminary is an investment in the future of the church, so we're really happy to make it.

## **Q: In your full-time job, you serve as senior pastor of New Life Church. Tell us a little more about your pastoral ministry and family.**

A: As far as my life outside the board, I celebrated my twenty-fifth wedding anniversary last June by going on a trip to Israel with Western Seminary. That was extremely enjoyable.

I have five children. My older kids are engaged in leading worship at our church on a weekly basis and serve alongside me, which is a delight. My oldest son's 21 and my youngest daughter's going to turn eight next week, so we're a long way from finished.

I'm pastoring the church that I attended on the very first Sunday after I moved to Portland to attend seminary. I attended the church for a while and have served as a pastor since 1993. New Life is a multi-site church. If the Lord helps us, we'll start a third location this fall in Wilsonville.

## **Q: How has your involvement with Western impacted your ministry at New Life?**

A: I have a couple of Western grads on staff with me. In the next four years, I'm planning to send four students from my church to Western and foresee them being really well-trained. Western has a long track record of staying faithful both to the Scriptures and to the mission, and I'm really confident that will continue into the future. I'm excited about the seminary, and I think the Lord's got really good things ahead.

## **WESTERN'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*Wing-Kit Chung  
Lynn Comp  
Ken Elmer  
Kent Hughes  
Rebecca Lee  
Linda Miller  
Scott Reavely  
Randy Roberts  
Abbott Smith  
Rex Smith  
Jon Venema  
Ron Wilkinson  
Andrew Winans  
Don Wood*

*Reavely will finish his term as chairman in summer 2012. Read more about his ministry and family by visiting the New Life Church website, <http://www.newlifew.com/staff/staff.shtml>*

# Western Alum Helps Vets, Families Process Trauma, Find Hope for Future

Who do you talk to, when you're a 60-year-old Vietnam vet who's spent most of your adult life ostracized by mainstream society? When your years have been plagued with gruesome wartime memories and perhaps even shame for serving in a war that many protested?

Who do you talk to, when you're a young military wife, welcoming your husband home from a tour in Iraq? When you've been looking forward to this day for months, and instead of the warm welcome you imagined, you find that your husband is a man forever changed, silent and sullen and cut off from the world?

Who do you talk to, when you're a young child whose greatest fear is that your dad might be killed on the job? When you've been moved from house to house during your father's military career, and suffered the secondary effects of his service in combat without anyone stopping to ask how you're feeling?

All too often, the answer to the question, "Who do you talk to?" is: no one.

America's military force is one of the largest in the world, second only to China, with roughly 1.5 million men and women currently serving in active duty positions. Depending on the source, experts believe that anywhere from one in five to one in eight soldiers suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It's a natural consequence to serving in combat and it usually affects entire families.

For Western Seminary Master of Arts in Counseling graduate Brenda Larson, these facts were more than statistics – they were stories. Stories that represented real men and women who live in her local community in Washington and who could experience a dramatic improvement in their quality of life through gospel-centered counseling. *Continued on page 5*



*"I think what I really enjoy is when we all get back together, and I start seeing understanding. The tension goes down. I watch families start problem solving."*

**BRENDA LARSON,**  
Western Seminary Alum  
and Licensed Mental  
Health Counselor

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SEMINARY BUDGET AND ENROLLMENT UPDATE

As of the end of January we are running just over \$90,000 ahead in revenue compared to this time last year but have \$140,000 more in expenses (largely due to the relocation costs of our San Jose campus).

By way of enrollment, spring term numbers are up a bit over last year's and show very strong retention numbers.

### PRAYER REQUESTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

We are greatly encouraged that 265 different people have recently visited our prayer page. We deeply appreciate your prayer support.

Current requests can be found at <http://westernseminary.edu/Prayer/index.php?campus=All>

### 'THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT MINISTRY LEADERSHIP' OFFERED AS HYBRID COURSE

Did you know that this spring Western will be offering a hybrid class in Fresno, California in partnership with The Well Community?

A hybrid is a distance education course that has eight hours of face-to-face interaction with a faculty member, typically on a Saturday. Application for the course is open through April 18.

For more information, visit our website at [http://www.western-seminary.edu/News/Other/hybrid\\_centralvalley.html](http://www.western-seminary.edu/News/Other/hybrid_centralvalley.html).

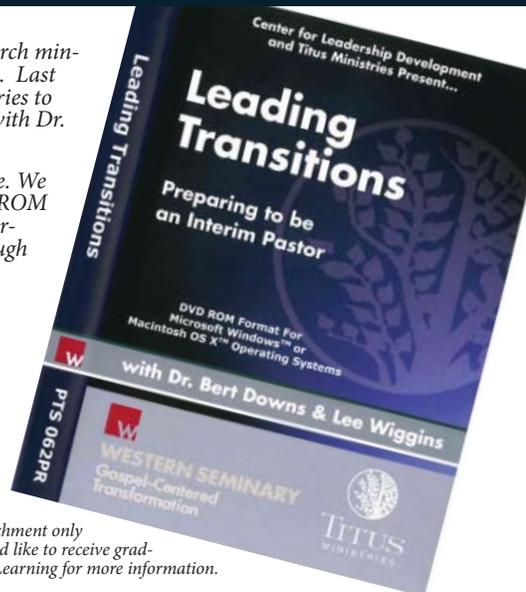
### SPECIAL OFFER FOR WESTERN GRADUATES: INTERIM PASTOR TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR \$49.95

Whether you're called to church or parachurch ministry, you'll face the need to lead transitions. Last summer, we collaborated with Titus Ministries to offer a course titled "Leading Transitions" with Dr. Bert Downs and Lee Wiggins.

Credit students paid \$850 to take the course. We are now offering to you the recorded DVD-ROM lectures as a ministry resource. You may purchase the Leading Transitions lectures through our website for a special discounted rate (and Western grads receive an even greater discount).

**'LEADING TRANSITIONS' COST**  
\$99.95 DVD-ROM lectures  
\$49.95 DVD-ROM lectures for Western Seminary graduates (please use coupon code TMS311 at checkout to redeem graduate discount)

Note: This non-credit course is offered for personal enrichment only and cannot be accepted for academic credit. If you would like to receive graduate-level credit, please contact the Center for Lifelong Learning for more information.



## Larson: 'I Spend a Lot of Time in Prayer About My Clients'

*Continued from page 4*

"Legislation within the past five years has opened the door for independent licensed professional counselors to provide services to our military veterans," explained Master of Arts in Counseling Program Director Kay Bruce. "Brenda's work exemplifies one of the diverse avenues through which our counseling graduates can reach out and touch lives. Her caring heart is a reflection of gospel-centered transformation that motivates a believer to meet the practical needs of a hurting person in Jesus' name."

Larson, a licensed mental health counselor and child mental health specialist, works out of offices in both Longview and Kalama, Washington. Her clients include veterans from both the Vietnam and Iraq wars, as well as their spouses and children. Her approach includes spending time with each member of the family individually, creating space for them to discuss their experiences and process their fears. She helps them understand how their seemingly erratic behavior – which may include horrible nightmares, isolation, sensitivity to light and loud noises, depression, anxiety, and emotional numbing – are all normal reactions characteristic of PTSD. She screens veterans for the disorder and helps them file claims for government assistance. Often, just getting family members to talk about the problems is incredibly therapeutic.

"I work with the wives, who have been married to these folks for a very long time and are very confused by the way they are," Larson said. "We talk through it with them and help normalize it for them."

She also counsels children from age 4-18. "The younger ones are very confused, because Daddy doesn't want to come out and be with them," she said. She often uses play therapy to help

her youngest clients process. Older children often need to deal with the grief of constantly moving and changing schools, unarticulated fears for their parent's safety, and symptoms of depression. If left untreated, teenagers may act out in school or seek attention in inappropriate and dangerous ways.

Larson organizes groups for similar aged clients, creating safe spaces where they can speak openly about their fears and reactions to the stress of military life, and where they can feel normal. "It just helps to know that you're not the only one," Larson affirmed.

"The trauma and things that happen in war are almost indescribable," Larson explained. While she said that it can be very disturbing to hear what her clients have experienced, it's also deeply satisfying to see healing and restoration within military families. "I think what I really enjoy is when we all get back together, and I start seeing understanding," she said. "The tension goes down. I watch families start problem solving."

Larson attributes her interest in helping others process trauma to her studies at Western. "People keep trauma to themselves, and it really wreaks havoc with their lives and relationships," she said.

Larson added that it takes faith on her part to believe God is capable of healing those who have experienced such atrocities. "I spend a lot of time in prayer about my clients and the things that are going on with them. That gives me a lot of comfort and the confidence to know that it will be okay. God will work through me."

God also provides opportunities for Larson to share her faith with clients. "There are some that are believers," she said, "but there are quite a few that aren't. It's interesting how the Lord opens opportunities to talk about Him. That's always exciting to see that happen, because they respond. And I believe the Lord leads that."

### CONNECT WITH WESTERN

*Click on the titles below for a link to each of the corresponding web pages.*

ALUMNI BLOG

TH.M. BLOG

WESTERN MAGAZINE

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION



FACEBOOK



TWITTER

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### March 31 Connect Alumni Event

**San Jose campus, 6-9: 30 pm** | Enjoy a complimentary meal with graduating students, learn about serving as a mentor for a recent Western Seminary graduate, and enjoy a visionary message from Dr. Gary Tuck. To RSVP or learn more about the event, please contact Lisa Mueller at [lmuller@westernseminary.edu](mailto:lmuller@westernseminary.edu) with the number of guests in your party. We hope to see you there!

#### April 2 Faith and Culture Writers Conference

**Portland campus, 8:30 am-5 pm** | Learn from dynamic speakers, seek practical advice, obtain publishing help and mentoring, network and connect, and find your voice at our Writers Conference. For information and registration, please visit our website at <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Events/Writers/index.htm>.

#### May 18 Discover Coaching (register by May 11 for this free event)

**San Jose campus, 6:30-8:30 pm** | The San Jose campus hosts an opportunity to learn more about coaching, a powerful tool for helping others move forward. Watch live demonstrations, hear testimonies from coaches in the ministry and business world, and consider how you may benefit from coach training. More information is available at [http://www.westernseminary.edu/News/SJNews/DiscoverCoaching\\_May2011\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.westernseminary.edu/News/SJNews/DiscoverCoaching_May2011_WEB.pdf).

*For more, check out our Activities Calendar at <http://westernseminary.edu/Calendar/index.htm>*