

HOOD'S HERALD

VOL. XXX IV, NO. 1, Spring 2026 *Magazine*

Building Bridges

Across Institutions

Across Communities

Across Generations



A Publication of Hood Theological Seminary



A MESSAGE FROM **THE PRESIDENT**

Greetings, faith partners and friends,

“The Beloved Community is a world built on peace, justice, and equality. It is a world where love is greater than hate, where understanding overcomes fear.” – Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.

Many years ago, when I was a second-year seminary student, I was invited to submit an article to a divinity school publication – *Havanee*.

The Article was the outgrowth of a paper I had written for a Systematic Theology class. It was titled – “Race Relations in America: Theological Task of Redemptive Relations.” It became my first published article. This article relates to the theme of this issue of Hood’s Herald – “Building Bridges.” In that article, I argue that the matter of race relations involves the challenge of human dynamics, as well as spiritual reconciliation.

Building bridges requires a complex understanding. Mutual respect involves two-way communication. First, building bridges demands recognition of the needs of the other person, groups or organization as an entity of value and worthiness. Second, any invitation to construct a bridge involves an implicit desire to know what life is like to walk

in the shoes/boots/sandals of another person. This experience or sensitivity is often called empathy or sympathetic identification with a person, group, or organization. Third, building bridges requires that we know our values, beliefs, and life priorities. Moreover, our values, beliefs, and priorities should be firm, but elastic enough to meet and appreciate others whose life experiences and knowledge vary from our own.

A true bridge is what the mystic and spiritual theologian Howard Thurman referenced in his book – *The Search for Common Ground*. Building bridges involves finding or actualizing common space for two parties to seek and explore new ways of being together, as an extension of each party’s evolving and growing identity. Common ground involves the consideration of new concepts and new visions of community beyond historical conflict, traditional competition, conquest orientation and collective criticism.

Building bridges mandates the practice of humility, where each party acknowledges the inadequacy of self-sufficiency and the need for health, healing, hospitality, holiness, and hope. Building bridges requires interpersonal justice (treating others as we ourselves desire to be treated) and intrapersonal attentiveness (kindness with others beyond our family, clan, tribe, church, or community).

Finally, building bridges is transpersonal and transgenerational. The Martinique-born psychiatrist, philosopher, and author, Franz Fanon – provides a challenge in his book – *Wretched of the Earth*. He says,

“Every generation must discover its mission, betray it or fulfill it.”



Vergel L. Lattimore, III

Vergel L. Lattimore, Ph.D.
President & Professor of Pastoral
Psychology & Counseling



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Building Bridges:

A Call to Faithful Connection

Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker, Doctoral Candidate

In every generation, the Church is called not only to stand firm in its faith, but to move boldly, intentionally, and compassionately into the world God so loves. This year, at Hood Theological Seminary, we embrace that call through our theme: Building Bridges.

Bridges are not built for comfort. They are built for connection. They require vision, courage, and a willingness to span divides that others might avoid. As a small, private, historically Black Seminary, we know well the challenges of limited resources, shifting cultural landscapes, and the responsibility of sustaining a sacred legacy in uncertain times. We are navigating an era marked by rapid change, where institutions like ours must continually discern how to remain both rooted and relevant. We also live in a time when voices lacking wisdom are often given platforms of power. Fear can masquerade as authority, and what is not understood is too often dismissed or dismantled. These realities are not abstract. They press in on our communities, our classrooms, and our calling. And yet, we are neither surprised nor defeated. For we follow the One who built bridges where others built walls. Jesus Christ crossed boundaries of culture, class, and creed. He met people where they were while calling them to something greater. His ministry was not confined to sanctuaries. It unfolded in streets, along shorelines, and at tables where transformation could take root.

So too must we go.

At Hood, building bridges means extending ourselves into the community, not as distant experts, but as partners in the work of justice, healing, and hope. It means listening as much as we speak, learning as much as we teach, and recognizing that the Spirit is already at work beyond our walls. It also means inviting

the community back to us, ensuring that our theological education remains responsive to the needs of the present age.

This is not easy work. Bridge-building requires us to confront division, to name hard truths, and to risk vulnerability in pursuit of genuine connection. But it is holy work.

And we do it with hope.

Not a shallow optimism, but a deep and abiding hope grounded in the promise that God is not finished with us yet. Even in troubling and ever-shifting times, a faithful remnant can rise. A movement shaped by love, justice, and truth can still shake the foundations of the world.

We believe that from classrooms and chapels, from conversations and communities, God is raising up leaders who will build what others have tried to break, who will connect what others have divided, and who will carry forward a Gospel that is as transformative today as it has ever been.

So we build. We reach. We connect.

And we trust that every bridge we dare to construct becomes a pathway for God's enduring grace.

Welcome to the journey.



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Faculty & Staff News



Dr. Vincent Howell, Associate Dean and DMin Director, attended the 2026 Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference in Chicago, IL, as part of Hood's recruiting efforts. In addition to connecting with potential applicants, he also greeted HTS alumni, Bishop Teresa Snorton, the CME Church's first female elected to the episcopacy, and The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, who served as the 27th presiding bishop and primate of The Episcopal Church.



Dr. Mary A. Love, Affiliated Professor of Christian Education, delivered a meaningful presentation during the Board of Bishops' February gathering in recognition of Black History Month. Her presentation highlighted the importance of preserving and sharing the stories of the African American faith tradition, emphasizing how historical memory strengthens the church's witness and ministry. Through thoughtful reflection and storytelling, Dr. Love encouraged the bishops to continue honoring the legacy of those who shaped the denomination while preparing future generations for faithful leadership. Her contribution underscored the vital role of theological education and historical scholarship in sustaining the life and mission of the church.



Rev. Dr. Tom Mabry, Director of Global Methodist Studies, has been put forward by the North Carolina Conference of the Global Methodist Church for consideration as a candidate for bishop to serve anywhere in the Global Methodist Church's worldwide ministry. Dr. Mabry has played a pivotal role in shaping the foundation of the North Carolina Conference, serving as Chair of the Conference Leadership Team and offering steady leadership, theological depth, and courageous clarity during a formative season. His guidance has helped establish both the conference's organizational structure and its ministry vision. The Hood community celebrates this significant moment of discernment and honors Dr. Mabry's faithful leadership and service to the church.



Dr. Reginald Boyd Jr., attended the ATS S.P.A.N. Conference in March 2026 for professional development. One key insight gained from the conference was that many seminaries are recruiting from the same pool of prospective students. As a result, we should consider developing strategic partnerships with one another to enhance recruitment efforts and support student admissions.



Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner., On February 5, 2026, Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner, Director of the Center for Bold Leadership at Hood Theological Seminary, served as a featured speaker in a public discussion on Christian nationalism titled “Christian Nationalism: Then and Now,” sponsored by Actions in Faith & Justice in Rowan at the Rowan Museum in Salisbury. Turner contributed theological and pastoral insight, encouraging participants to ground their civic engagement in the teachings of Jesus and the pursuit of the Beloved Community. Her participation reflects Hood’s ongoing commitment to equipping leaders to engage critically and faithfully with pressing social and political issues



Dr. Davis-Baxter., was featured in In Trust Magazine, the official publication serving leaders of graduate theological schools across North America. In the article, she highlighted the importance of understanding the lived realities of theological students, many of whom return to school after years away from formal education, while balancing family, work, and ministry responsibilities. Dr. Davis-Baxter noted that despite these pressures, Hood students bring remarkable joy, determination, and a deep desire to grow and serve. Her insights reflect her ongoing commitment to ensuring that students at Hood Theological Seminary are seen, supported, and equipped to fulfill their callingground their civic engagement in the teachings of Jesus and the pursuit of the Beloved Community. Her participation reflects Hood’s ongoing commitment to equipping leaders to engage critically and faithfully with pressing social and political issues.



Dr. John Everett., attended the ATS D.I.O.P. Conference in February 2026 for professional development. Dr. John Everett was a presenter at the ATS 2025 Seminar for New Executive Officers on December 9, 2025, in Charlotte, North Carolina. He spoke to the new presidents of ATS Theological Graduate Schools on “The President and Institutional Advancement–A Needed Relationship for the Success of a Theological Graduate School.”

New Staff & Faculty

NEW STAFF:



Rev. Dierdre Parker, Marketing & Communications Coordinator



Rev. Kelly Shrader, Registrar



NEW FACULTY:

Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, Affiliate Professor & United Methodist Church Bishop-in-Residence

Dr. Sterling Allen, Adjunct Professor of Worship and Global Methodist Studies



Dr. Jeff Johnson, Adjunct Professor, Global Methodist Studies

Dr. Andy Lambert, Adjunct Professor of Evangelism and Global Methodist Studies



Dr. Kerry Wood, Adjunct Professor of History and Global Methodist Studies

Three Institutions, One Campus Home:

Hood Theological Seminary Welcomes Catawba and Livingstone Students During Dorm Renovations



Hood Theological Seminary is serving as a shared campus home for students from Hood Theological Seminary (HTS), Catawba College (CC), and Livingstone College (LC), demonstrating what it looks like when neighboring institutions work together with care, planning, and collegiality.

With Catawba College and Livingstone College currently completing construction and renovations on their residence halls, many students needed temporary housing that still supported strong academic focus and daily wellbeing. In response, Hood opened its campus housing to accommodate the increased number of residents—creating a living-learning environment that reflects partnership, flexibility, and hospitality.

Facility Upgrades to Support a Growing Residential Community

To ensure students could transition smoothly and thrive on campus, multiple improvements were implemented to expand capacity and maintain quality of life. Internet services were expanded to accommodate increased student use. Additional laundry space was added to accommodate the increase in residents and reduce wait times, ensuring that everyday needs are met with convenience.



By Rev. J. Frances King

Executive Assistant to the President, Class of 2010

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Hood also expanded food-prep options across residential buildings by establishing a second kitchen in the 400 Building, complementing the existing kitchen that already serves residents in the 500 Building. With two kitchen hubs now available, students have access to more meal preparation space, community gathering opportunities, and practical support for daily living.

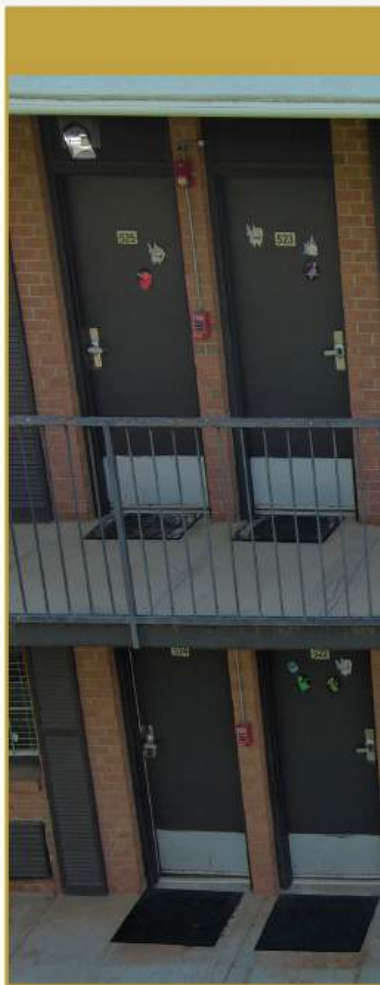
These upgrades are more than logistical adjustments—they represent thoughtful hospitality in action.

Transportation Support Through Catawba Shuttle Service

Recognizing that students' academic and personal responsibilities extend beyond a single location, Catawba College provides shuttle service for students to ensure students can reach classes, campus services, work commitments, and other essential appointments without disruption.

Working Together to Ensure Campus Safety and Peace of Mind

Housing students from three institutions requires more than beds and building access—it requires a unified commitment to a safe, well-coordinated campus environment. Hood, Catawba, and Livingstone have worked collegially to maintain consistent expectations and layered support around campus security. This includes shared protocols, coordinated response planning, and a unified approach to ensuring that students—regardless of home institution—feel protected, respected, and cared for while living on Hood's campus. In a season of change, the shared message from Chiefs Milton (HTS), Moody (LC), and Meadows (CC) has been steady: student safety is not negotiable, and campus peace is a collective responsibility.



Residence Life Leadership: Dorm Directors on the Ground

A successful shared-housing environment depends on strong day-to-day leadership—people who understand the rhythm of residence life and can respond quickly to student needs. David Burton from Hood, Kailyn Lamb from Catawba, and Maurice Roper from Livingstone provide a steady presence and guidance which helps maintain community standards, offer resident support and ensure that students have a consistent point of contact for concerns and care. Together, the dorm leadership teams have helped shape a residential culture marked by communication, accountability, and compassion.

Renovations and Project Support: A Shared Investment

Hood also extends appreciation for the partnership of Willie Watts, Director of Maintenance at Hood, and Thaddus Adams, project manager from Catawba College, whose work helped guide key renovations that improved functionality and preparedness for increased occupancy. Their combined efforts ensured that needed upgrades—like expanded kitchen access and residential readiness—were completed with excellence and attention to student experience.

A Living Expression of Hood's Mission

This moment is not only operational—it is spiritual and missional. Hood Theological Seminary's mission reminds us that "As the Body of Christ and as a Seminary of the A.M.E. Zion Church—"The Freedom Church"—we embody values that define us as a community of welcome: for persons of all backgrounds."

In opening its campus to students from Catawba and Livingstone, Hood is not simply offering temporary housing. Hood is practicing welcome. Hood is extending community. Hood is embodying the kind of freedom the church proclaims—freedom to belong, freedom to be cared for, freedom to learn and grow in a safe environment, and freedom to live in community marked by respect and shared responsibility.

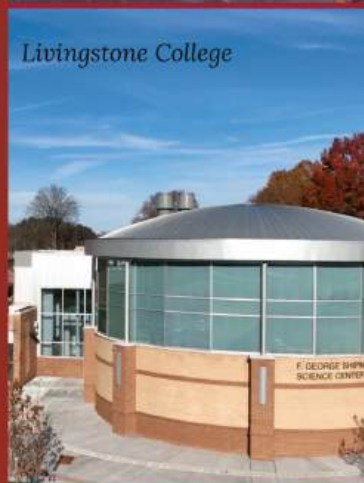
Looking Ahead

As dorm construction continues at Catawba and Livingstone, Hood remains committed to being a stable, supportive partner. This shared housing season has highlighted the best of what higher education can be: institutions working together rather than competing, sharing resources rather than withholding, and centering student wellbeing as a common goal. Hood is grateful for every staff member, project leader, security professional, and residence life director who has contributed to this work—and for the students who have adapted with patience and cooperation.

In a time of transition, these three schools are proving something powerful: when institutions lead with collegiality and care, students don't just find housing —
they find community.



Livingstone College



Catawba College



Hy-Flex coming soon!

“A Sacred Ecosystem for Learning”

— Hood Theological Seminary Prepares to Launch “Hy-Flex” in Fall 2026

Hood Theological Seminary (HTS) is pleased to announce that it will once again make it possible for students to participate in classes in-person and on-campus each week with the fall launch of its new “hyflex” option on track one— the Seminary’s during-the-week course track. “Hood Theological Seminary is a graduate school that values spiritual formation and growth in personal relationships,” said President Lattimore. “While we have invested in state-of-the-art online technology and methods, we are committed to training pastoral leaders who treasure and appreciate the human voice and the actual ministry of presence in teaching and learning.”

In this new hyflex option, HTS instructors will teach their track one courses in-person each week on the Seminary’s Salisbury campus. (The Seminary’s previous hybrid model for track one offered in-person instruction only once per month.) But the students enrolled in these courses will decide for themselves each week whether they will attend class on-campus and in-person or virtually, through video conference.

An advantage of this new hy-flex option is that it not only provides students with a weekly in-person educational experience but also opens up track one, for the first time, to online students, who have been limited to taking classes on the Seminary’s weekend course track (“track two”).

Describing hy-flex as a “win-win” for HTS students, Dean Epphimer said that members of Hood’s online student community will now have the option of taking classes from Hood both on the weekends and during the week. “Up to this point, our online students have had no option but to take classes with us on Friday evenings and Saturdays, causing many to miss valuable family time and community events. Now, online students can take classes with us during the week as well, which will re-open weekends for time with family and friends in many cases.”

“And hy-flex also allows online students who work on weekends the flexibility of taking classes with us during the week instead.”

Many current HTS students, like Cassandra Moore, who greatly values in-person instruction, are looking forward to increased time on campus in a traditional, classroom-based teaching and learning environment. “There is nothing like a hands-on learning experience,” said Moore, “where both knowledge and community come together to enrich the overall Seminary journey.”

Echoing Moore’s sentiments, HTS faculty member Dr. Clay Barrow noted the consonance between the in-person educational experience and the discipline of theology. “Theology is not only learned cognitively; it is also lived and experienced within community. In this sense, students are formed not merely through participation, but through presence. Being on campus creates a sacred ecosystem for learning—an immersive environment in which the classroom, library, chapel, refectory, and faculty office contribute to the work of formation. Relational depth and community formation are further enriched through the organic conversations that occur before and after class between students, and between students and their professors, which themselves become meaningful moments of theological reflection.”

The Seminary will have to wait until the fall to see whether current and entering students take advantage of its new educational option. Staff and faculty, however, are hopeful that the new hyflex option will not only enliven the HTS campus with increased in-person connectivity but also engage and increase its growing online student community with increased scheduling options.

“Anytime we give students more options in terms of course delivery and scheduling,” said Dean Epphimer,

“HTS more effectively fulfills its mission to make high quality theological education as available as possible for as many persons as possible.”

Living the Legacy: Family Connections

The life and gospel labors of Bishop James Walker Hood is an important part of the legacy of Hood Theological Seminary. As the namesake of the seminary, we carry on an important part of ministry and educational excellence that dates to his early years in North Carolina. Each year a notation in our graduation program reminds us of this important part of our history, stating, “the Seminary bears the name of a renowned bishop of the [African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church], James Walker Hood, who inspired others in the denomination to join him in creating an institution for training Negro youths for the Christian ministry.”

Bishop James Walker Hood (1831–1918) was one of the most influential church and educational leaders of the nineteenth century, particularly within the African American community of North Carolina. Being born in Pennsylvania, Hood gave his life to Jesus Christ at a young age. As he grew and matured, he demonstrated outstanding intellectual and Christ-centered gifts. When we review what researchers have spoken of him, his ministry, and his life’s work, they reflect deep faith, a foundation rooted in education, and a passion for community advocacy and social justice. Clearly, we see a faith in Christ that shaped both his ministry and his public leadership. A man of many accomplishments, one of Bishop Hood’s most prevailing legacies is tied to his leadership in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church. He served the church admirably and was ultimately elected bishop in 1872. As a bishop, Hood helped expand the AME Zion Church throughout the South, strengthening congregations, building churches, and advocating for racial justice and political participation for newly freed African Americans.

His words are memorialized at the NC Freedom Park (located in Raleigh, NC; it is a monument to freedom in the words of North Carolinians) stating - “You might as well talk of the safety of a flock of sheep with a pack of hungry wolves . . . as to take the ballot from the colored man; We expect to maintain the right of suffrage, at whatever cost.” Known throughout North Carolina, Bishop Hood was respected for his oratory, his theological depth, church leadership, and dedicated advocacy for Black civil rights within church and society. At the intersection of Broad Street (U.S. 17) and George Street in New Bern, the State Department of Archives and History placed a historical marker denoting his importance to the state that includes the following inscription - “Asst. Superintendent Public Instruction, 1868-70; a founder Livingstone College, 1885; Bishop A.M.E. Zion Church; founded St. Peters, 1864.” Christopher C. Kiernan, writing in the *For God and Race: The Religious and Political Leadership of AMEZ Bishop James Walker Hood* states that “Hood believed that the future of the race and the church depended upon an educated ministry and laity, and he labored tirelessly to build both the church and the school as twin pillars of black advancement.”⁽¹⁾ Hood was also an influential Prince Hall Mason. Masonic historian David G. Hackett reminds us that “At his death in 1918, the Masonic Quarterly Review hailed Hood as ‘one of the strong pillars of our foundation.’ This quote is especially significant because it reflects how Hood was viewed within Prince Hall Freemasonry itself - not merely as a participant, but as a foundational leader whose influence shaped Black Masonic institutions in the South. Bishop Hood left an important legacy for leadership, community engagement, preaching, and the importance of education and theological learning for African Americans and the world.



Dr. Vincent Howell

Associate Dean & DMin Director

with Bishop James Walker Hood

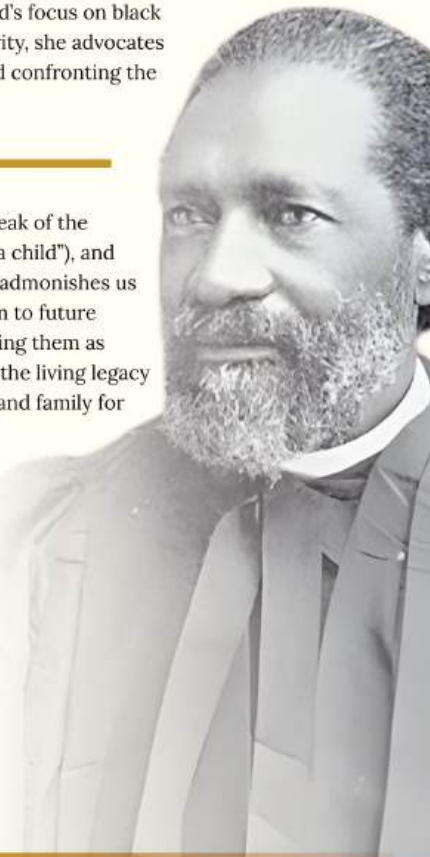
This legacy has not only touched the AME Zion Church, but North Carolinians as a whole. It has also touched his descendants. When I was appointed the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program in 2023, when the time came for doctoral candidates to do their oral evaluation (defense) of their professional ministry projects, the first candidate to come before the committee was a student named Rev. Margo Hood Gaddy. Upon further conversation, Rev. Gaddy is a relative of Bishop James Walker Hood. What a wonderful historical note – a relative of the name's sake of the seminary is a student at the seminary! Dr. Margo Hood Gaddy currently serves as Pastor of the Zion Grove AME Zion Church in Eagle Springs, NC. She has previously pastored Savannah Church, and served as an Associate Minister at Troy Chapel. Married for 35 years, she and her husband William are the proud parents of two children. They are also grandparents of two adoring grandchildren. In addition to her pastoral responsibilities, Dr. Gaddy serves along with ministries in collaboration with area churches, the Greensboro District Studies Team, Greensboro Finance Board, and Ministry of Kindness Secretary, Assistant Secretary for the West Central Piedmont Conference, and Dean of District Studies (Greensboro District). Dr. Gaddy has also previously served as Director of Counseling Services at Montgomery Community College. A graduate of North Carolina A&T State University, she went on to earn both the Master of Theological Studies (2015), and the Doctor of Ministry degree from Hood Theological Seminary in 2023. Currently she serves as a member of the Doctor of Ministry Committee at the seminary. Dr. Gaddy was also the 2026 Service of Candidacy preacher. In the same spirit of Bishop Hood's focus on black community advancement, Dr. Gaddy, as a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, she advocates for the importance of college-educated women, and focuses on impacting and confronting the challenges of the Black community.

Bishop James Walker Hood

If I were able to speak with Bishop James Walker Hood, I am sure he would speak of the importance of Psalm 78:4 ("tell the next generation"), Proverbs 22:6 ("train up a child"), and Proverbs 31:8-9 ("speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves") as he admonishes us to follow Jesus. These scriptures emphasize the importance of passing wisdom to future generations and advocating for the marginalized, while at the same time framing them as essential acts of love, community stewardship, and justice. We praise God for the living legacy of servant leadership that Bishop James Walker Hood has left through his life and family for each of us as we serve the church of Christ.

References:

- Christopher C. Kiernan, *For God and Race: The Religious and Political Leadership of AMEZ Bishop James Walker Hood* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), 87.
- David G. Hackett, *The Prince Hall Masons and the African American Church: The Labors of Grand Master and Bishop James Walker Hood, 1831-1918*, in *That Religion in Which All Men Agree: Freemasonry in American Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 149-174
- Bishop Hood also wrote the book, *Sketch of the Early History of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church with Jubilee Souvenir and an Appendix*. If interested in reading this, go to <https://docsouth.unc.edu/church/hood/hood.html>





Why Theological Education

Rev. Dr. Reginald Boyd, Jr. DMin

Coordinator of Recruitment, Admissions & Alumni Engagement

When I first sensed God's call to preach, I did not yet know that I would one day be called to pastor. To step into that calling faithfully, I needed more than enthusiasm, I needed formation, disciplined reflection, and theological grounding. I recognized early two core needs in my own journey: (1) to explore what I did not yet know, to cultivate breadth, depth, and discernment beyond what I had inherited; and (2) to define and own my theology, to move beyond what Sunday school or family tradition taught, to understand how doctrine, Scripture, ethics, and mission interlock, and to be ordained as a credible, prepared servant. In that process, theological education became more than a degree, it became a spiritual and intellectual formation that reshaped my life and ministry. In today's world, marked by shifting cultural identities, religious pluralism, globalization, and contested truth claims, the need for well-formed Christian leaders is urgent. Theological education offers unique advantages.

1. Hermeneutical Breadth and Depth

Without formation, ministers often read the Bible through limited lenses shaped by personal upbringing or immediate tradition. But trained interpreters learn to approach Scripture as narrative, history, prophecy, wisdom, apocalyptic, and theological witness. This multidimensional reading reveals God's interaction with humanity across creation, covenant, exile, incarnation, and restoration. It guards against reductionism and helps ministers communicate in culturally intelligible ways.

2. Intellectual Rigor and Capacity to Engage Worldviews

Ministers without training can be vulnerable to shallow thinking, cultural syncretism, or defensive reactions to pressing questions. Theological education disciplines one in philosophy, ethics, worldview critique, political theology, and engagement with secular and religious alternatives. In effect, pastors become more "streetwise theologians" able to listen, reason, and converse without being overwhelmed by complexity.

3. Cross-Cultural and Contextual Formation

To minister across difference, to race, culture, socioeconomic status, gender, migration contexts, requires more than goodwill. Seminary exposure to global theological voices, cross-cultural mission studies, liberation and feminist theologies, and interfaith engagement strengthens ministers' capacity for empathy, learning, and humility.

4. Vocational Outcomes, Accountability, and Resilience

Theological education also yields measurable benefits. For example, Phoenix Seminary reports that over the past four years, 95% of its M.Div. students passed the culminating theological oral exam on the first attempt, and 34% of those passed with an "exemplary" rating.¹ Their employer surveys further affirm that 100% of graduates demonstrated integrity, compassion, and relational skills; 95% showed cultural awareness.² Palmer Theological Seminary notes that 76% of alumni (serving or volunteering in ministry) hold roles closely aligned to their degree programs.³ These data points reflect a broader pattern tracked by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), showing a meaningful correlation between formal theological training and sustained ministry placements.

1. 1. Phoenix Seminary. "Assessment Philosophy." <https://ps.edu/about/accreditation/assessment-philosophy-1/> (accessed October 9, 2025).

2. 2. Phoenix Seminary. "Employer Survey Results." <https://ps.edu/about/accreditation/assessment-philosophy-1/> (accessed October 9, 2025).

3. 3. Palmer Theological Seminary. "Seminary Education Effectiveness."

4. 4. Association of Theological Schools. <https://www.ats.edu/Recent-Research>

Matters in a Diverse World

By contrast, many pastors serving without formal theological training struggle with theological drift, confusion in doctrine, and higher burnout rates. Industry studies suggest that 70% or more pastors report significant stress and many have considered leaving ministry altogether. Moreover, the 2025 Ligonier “State of Theology” survey reveals a troubling instability of doctrine even among evangelicals: 53% affirm that “everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature”; 53% think the Holy Spirit is a force rather than a person; and 47% believe God accepts multiple religions equally.⁵ These findings underscore how theological confusion is not just a problem for laity but for those in leadership. Theological training helps pastors avoid incoherence and confusion.

5. Safeguarding Against Syncretism and Superficial Faith

In a world of competing ideologies and cultural pressures, well-formed ministers are less likely to drift into watered-down or incoherent faith. Theological education helps pastors articulate convictions, test assumptions, and resist the seduction of “easy faith” in favor of faithful discipleship.

A Word from Willimon

In *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*, Will Willimon writes, “A good teacher must be content to be a sower rather than a reaper. ... If they have any effect upon their students, it will show up later in life, long after their students have left them.”⁶ Seminary sows. We may not see immediate returns, but over the years, that formation bears fruit. He also reminds us, “If pastors know whose they are, where they come from, and why they are here, they will better know what to do, here, now.”⁷ Theological education helps pastors name identity, lineage, and calling. It helps ground us so we can act wisely in the present. Now, as Coordinator of Recruitment and Admissions at Hood Theological Seminary, I witness every day the transforming power of theological education. I see students from all walks of life, various ethnicities, nationalities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and church traditions, wrestling with Scripture, discussing ethics, developing preaching skills, serving in internships, and being stretched by community and mission. I see them graduate with more confidence, humility, theological clarity, and pastoral competence.

Conclusion — An Invitation to the Journey at Hood

If you sense God’s call, whether toward preaching, pastoral leadership, teaching, chaplaincy, social witness, or justice work, I invite you to consider Hood Theological Seminary. This is not a place to merely earn a credential. It is a place to be shaped. Here, you will engage Scripture deeply, wrestle with real-world issues, be challenged by peers from different backgrounds, and be supported by faculty who care about your soul and calling. You will learn not only what to believe, but how to think, speak, and act in a pluralistic, ever-changing world. You will plant roots in a community of faith that stretches you in love and truth.

Theological formation is a long game. But if you enter humbly, with curiosity and obedience, Hood is a place where your calling can increasingly become your competence, your character, and your fruitfulness. Join us. Walk the journey. Let God and community shape you for service that lasts for generations.

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5. Ligonier Ministries. “The 2025 State of Theology.” <https://www.ligonier.org/posts/the-results-from-our-2025-state-of-theology-survey-are-in> (accessed October 9, 2025).

6. Willimon, William H. *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002, p. 65.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Pathways for Tomorrow:

Advancing Faithful Leadership Through Academic Discernment, Justice Formation, and Financial Empowerment

During the 2025 academic year, Hood Theological Seminary continued to advance its historic mission through the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative of the Lilly Endowment, Inc., by strengthening academic discernment, expanding justice-centered theological formation, and equipping students and alumni with essential financial tools for sustainable ministry. Rooted in its founding vision of preparing spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous, and socially responsive leaders, the Seminary has approached this season with intentional reflection, strategic planning, and faithful stewardship. As the Initiative moves toward its final phase, the work accomplished during this academic year reflects both continuity with the original grant commitments and thoughtful responsiveness to the evolving realities of theological education, ministry leadership, and institutional sustainability.

Academic Program Discernment and Strategic Planning

A central component of the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative during the 2025 academic year has been the intentional exploration and discernment of future academic degree and certificate programs designed to serve both traditional and emerging ministry contexts. Over the past three years, in alignment with the original grant proposal, HTS has added new degree and certificate programs, and the Pathways for Tomorrow Team

remains engaged in extensive institutional assessment to evaluate capacity, identify priority areas of need, and establish a thoughtful strategic timeline for potential future certificate and degree program development.

Among the program areas under active consideration are certificate offerings in Baptist Studies, Rural Church Ministry and Communities, and Church Management and Administration. These areas reflect HTS's ongoing commitment to ensuring that future academic offerings will be responsive to the evolving needs of congregations, clergy, and faith-based organizations.

This work has been guided by the Pathways for Tomorrow Team led by Dr. Karen Owens, who guides the work alongside Dr. Clay Barrow, Dr. Regina Dancy, Dr. Richard Gerald, Dr. Kevin Griffin, and Rev. Thomas Grinter. Together, this leadership team has engaged in extensive institutional assessment, operational readiness, and programmatic priorities. New program and course offerings reflect HTS' ongoing commitment to ensuring that its academic programs remain responsive to the practical, theological, and organizational needs of clergy and congregations in a rapidly changing ministry landscape.

Advancing Justice Formation Through Anti-Racism and Contested Issues Education

Equally central to the Seminary's work has been the continued advancement of anti-racism and contested issues education, which is deeply rooted in HTS's founding identity. Established in 1885 under the leadership of Bishop James Walker Hood during the Reconstruction era, the Seminary emerged from a historical context marked by racial injustice, social upheaval, and the urgent need for theological education that empowered Black leadership and communities. From its inception, HTS has understood theological education not merely as academic instruction, but as a vehicle for spiritual formation, social responsibility, and prophetic witness.

In response to contemporary social realities including racial inequity, political polarization, economic instability, and contested cultural narratives, the Seminary has continued to develop structured didactics that equip ministry leaders with the theological, historical, and pastoral tools necessary to engage these issues faithfully. Through an open-enrollment community engagement model, HTS has expanded access to these educational opportunities beyond degree-seeking students to include alumni, clergy, and community leaders. This approach strengthens the

Seminary's role as a theological resource for the wider Church and ensures that leaders are equipped to serve

congregations navigating complex social realities.

To sustain and institutionalize this work, HTS established the Center for Love, Justice, and Belonging, which serves as a permanent hub for dialogue, education, and community engagement. The Center provides lectures didactics, and collaborative partnerships that extend theological formation beyond the classroom and into the life of the Church and community. Its creation ensures that anti-racism education and contested issues engagement will remain an enduring component of the Seminary's mission beyond the life of the Pathways for Tomorrow grant.

A key example of this work was the two-part national didactic series, "Where Do We Go From Here?" held in November 2025. This series provided a forum for theological reflection and public dialogue on pressing issues such as voting rights, immigration, violence in marginalized communities, poverty, gender identity, and white Christian nationalism.

Featuring nationally recognized scholars, pastors, and public intellectuals, the series demonstrated HTS's commitment to equipping leaders with the theological clarity and pastoral courage necessary to guide congregations through uncertain and contested times.

Financial Literacy and Student Debt Reduction:

Strengthening Vocational Sustainability
Recognizing that financial challenges can significantly impact vocational longevity and ministry effectiveness, HTS has also made substantial progress in advancing financial literacy and student debt reduction initiatives.

Through the Student Debt Reduction Alumni Ambassadors Cohort SDRAAC, the Seminary has equipped alumni to serve as mentors and financial ambassadors who support students and fellow graduates in navigating student loan repayment, budgeting, credit management, and long-term financial planning. This work has been institutionalized through the establishment of the Center for Financial Empowerment, which serves as a central resource for financial education, coaching, and strategic programming. The Center provides workshops, individualized coaching, and mentoring relationships that equip participants with the tools necessary to manage debt responsibly and build sustainable financial practices. This initiative ensures that HTS graduates are prepared not only theologically and spiritually, but also financially, to sustain their ministry over time.

The second SDRAAC cohort was established and participated in a structured and comprehensive training program that included foundational financial literacy education through the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's personal finance curriculum, specialized didactic sessions, and individualized coaching. Topics included stewardship theology, student loan repayment strategies, clergy compensation, tax planning, credit management, and wealth-building. Upon completion, participants were commissioned as financial ambassadors, empowered to extend financial literacy and mentorship throughout the Seminary community.



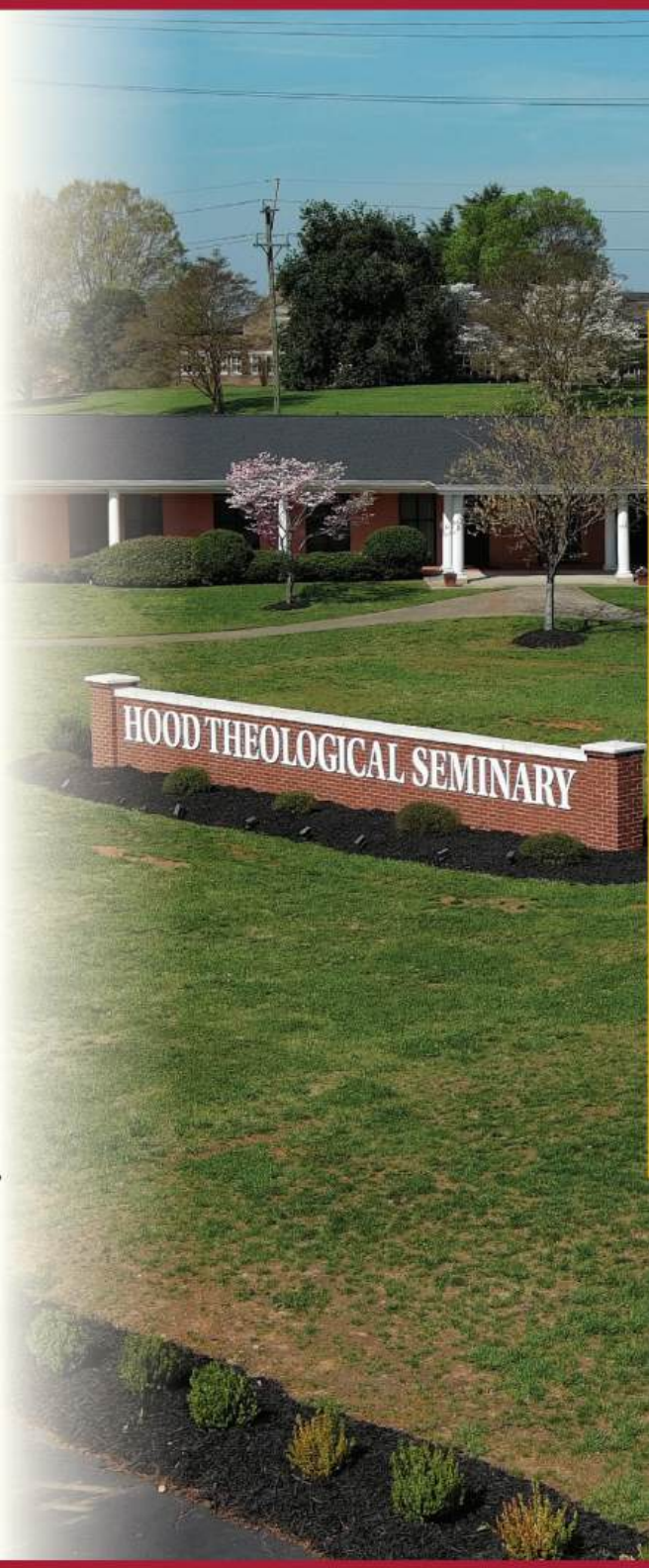
Karen L. Owens, D. Min.
*Director of Strategic Research,
Adjunct Faculty,
Pastoral & Spiritual Care & Theology*

A Year of Faithful Progress and Sustainable Vision

The work of the 2025 academic year at Hood Theological Seminary has been marked by sustained focus, thoughtful discernment, and strategic responsiveness. Throughout this period, the Seminary has remained committed to fulfilling the goals of the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative while also adapting to the realities of institutional capacity, student needs, and the broader landscape of theological education.

By establishing permanent institutional centers, strengthening financial literacy initiatives, expanding justice-centered formation, and carefully discerning future academic program development, HTS has laid a strong foundation for long-term sustainability and continued mission fulfillment. These efforts reflect a holistic vision of leadership formation that integrates theological education, justice engagement, and financial empowerment.

As the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative enters its final phase, Hood Theological Seminary stands well-positioned to sustain and build upon the progress it has achieved. Guided by faithful leadership, institutional wisdom, a clear sense of mission, and the dedicated work of the Pathways for Tomorrow Team, HTS continues to prepare leaders who are spiritually grounded, intellectually equipped, financially resilient, and prophetically responsive. Through this Initiative, the Seminary remains committed to advancing pathways that align with the gospel message and equip leaders to nurture, strengthen, and sustain the life of the Church, both in the present moment and for generations to come.





THRIVING

is

Bridge-Building Work



Dr. Rona Williams, J.D.
Director, FaithLearnThrive

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Every thriving congregation learns the same lesson eventually: shifting declines in church growth & congregational thriving will not reverse with a one-time outreach project alone.

More often, it begins with a bridge.

A bridge between a church's vision and its daily ministry.

A bridge between faithful traditions and new possibilities.

A bridge between what a congregation senses God is calling it to do and the tools needed to bring that calling to life.

Thriving churches are built through this kind of bridge-building work. At Jones Tabernacle CME Church in Lawndale, NC, that work has been unfolding step by step. Like many congregations, Jones Tabernacle carried both a deep love for its history and a desire to see God move in fresh ways in its community. Through the FaithLearnThrive Learning Community, church leaders began a journey of reflection, training, and practical planning designed to help congregations move from vision to action.

Along the way, something powerful began to happen. Leaders clarified their priorities. Goals were set with intention. Ministry systems began to align with the church's mission.

What had once felt like scattered efforts started to move in the same direction. The results were not just organizational. They are impacting their community through their backpacks-for-kids partnership with a local and a commitment to pursuing a renewed vision. The congregation is experiencing renewed passion for ministry and worship increased after a season of worship without a musician. They are experiencing membership growth as a result of persistent commitment to their congregational goals & strategic ministry plan. With the help of FaithLearnThrive and Learning Community Coaches, Jones is thriving.



Thriving, it turns out, is not the result of one big moment. It grows from sustained clarity, commitment, and consistency over time. This kind of progress recently led to another exciting milestone for the congregation. Jones Tabernacle was awarded a Hood Empowers Grant (the Rural & Small-Town Churches Initiative at Hood Seminary) to support the congregation's goal of constructing a community playground, an initiative they dreamed of during the learning community experience. This playground is designed to serve neighborhood children and families while strengthening the church's connection to its surrounding community.

This vision reflects the heart of thriving ministry. The playground is about more than just a place for children to play. It will create a safe, fun environment, where families will gather, friendships develop, and the church emerges as a beacon of light and hope. It is a simple idea with profound impact; one that embodies radical hospitality and risk-taking mission in a tangible way.

In many ways, this project represents the very essence of bridge-building work. It also reflects a larger mission at Hood Theological Seminary. For generations, seminaries have served as bridges to theological education, preparing leaders to preach, teach, and shepherd God's people. The story builds a bridge connecting the seminary to the local church, the local church to a neighborhood, and a neighborhood to the light of the Gospel.

Through initiatives like FaithLearnThrive and Hood Empowers, Hood is building bridges that connect theological wisdom with practical ministry. Churches aren't just getting the knowledge; they are getting resources, training, and tools to transform vision into thriving ministry. Pastors and leaders gain the skills to lead their teams. Congregations are renewed by wise planning and a collective vision. We have a simple, yet powerful goal: to help guide churches from survival to thriving. We help build **STRONGER CHURCHES!**

The story of Jones Tabernacle reminds us that renewal does not happen in isolation. It happens through partnership, education, and confidence to act in faith. And it often starts with a bridge. A bridge from seminary to sanctuary. From vision to execution. A bridge between a congregation's calling and the community God has formed around it.

Churches rediscover their mission. Communities experience hope.

And the work of the gospel unfolds in ways that bless both the congregation and the neighborhood it serves.

“Thriving, after all, is not simply about growth. It is about building the bridges that allow God’s mission to move forward, one faithful step at a time.”





Building Bridges Across Generations:

The Work of Dr. Mary Love

Rev. Dierdre' R. Parker



Dr. Mary Love, Affiliate Professor of Christian Education

At Hood Theological Seminary, Dr. Mary Love serves as an adjunct professor of Christian Education, but her influence reaches far beyond the classroom. For years, she has shaped minds, nurtured callings, and expanded the historical imagination of students who now serve in pulpits, classrooms, and communities across the nation. She is loved and revered throughout the Hood community not only for what she teaches, but for how she teaches it.

I recently had the opportunity to travel with Dr. Love to the February Board of Bishops gathering of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. What unfolded there was more than a presentation. It was an act of bridge-building. Through an expansive Black History exhibit that spanned generations of accomplishment, invention, faith, and culture, Dr. Love created a living conversation between past and present.

Her exhibit included little-known Black history facts, rare artifacts, and commemorative postage stamps that told stories often left untold. There were stamps honoring inventors, educators, clergy, artists, and activists. Each artifact invited viewers to look closer. Each story extended a hand across time. The display reminded bishops and attendees alike that Black history is not a footnote to American history. It is foundational to it.

At the heart of her exhibit was the legacy of Carter G. Woodson, widely known as the Father of Black

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History. Woodson, a Harvard-trained historian and son of formerly enslaved parents, founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915. In 1926, he established Negro History Week to ensure that the contributions of African Americans would be studied and celebrated. He intentionally chose February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Over time, Negro History Week expanded into what we now observe as Black History Month. Woodson believed that a people who do not know their history are vulnerable to misrepresentation and erasure. Dr. Love's work stands firmly in that tradition.

The exhibit also highlighted the courage and conviction of figures such as Sojourner Truth, whose speeches challenged racial injustice and gender inequality, and Harriet Tubman, whose leadership on the Underground Railroad embodied faith in action. The prophetic ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was honored not as a distant memory but as an ongoing call to justice and beloved community.

Within the heritage of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Dr. Love highlighted members whose contributions continue to shape Black history. James Varick, the first bishop of the denomination, helped establish a tradition of abolitionist witness. Julia A. J. Foote broke barriers as one of the first women ordained as a deacon in the denomination and became a powerful voice in the holiness movement. Benjamin Tucker Tanner advanced theological education and published works that defended the intellectual and spiritual contributions of Black Christians. Their lives serve as bridges between faith and freedom, scholarship and activism.

What made Dr. Love's exhibit so compelling was its intentional breadth. It moved from nationally recognized leaders to lesser-known inventors, educators, and community builders whose stories rarely appear in textbooks. A commemorative stamp might feature a groundbreaking scientist. A

brief biographical note might reveal a patent that transformed daily life. An artifact might tell the story of a local congregation that funded schools when public systems refused to do so. Each detail widened the circle of remembrance.

Dr. Love's approach is both scholarly and pastoral. She understands that history is not merely information. It is formation. When students encounter the resilience and creativity of their ancestors, they begin to see themselves differently. They recognize that they stand in a long line of thinkers, builders, preachers, and organizers. They begin to understand that their work today is part of a larger narrative.

"It has been my desire to personally contribute to enhancing the role of educational ministry by developing and publishing resources to help people grow and become more effective in nurturing believers in the faith," she said.

In a time when historical narratives are contested and sometimes narrowed, Dr. Love's work models a different path. She builds bridges between generations, between scholarship and church life, between memory and mission. Her exhibit at the Board of Bishops did more than display artifacts. It reminded leaders that faithful ministry requires historical consciousness.

Bridge building is not abstract work. It is patient and intentional. It requires research, curation, and a willingness to tell the truth about both struggle and triumph. Through her teaching and her public scholarship, Dr. Mary Love continues to ensure that the stories of our ancestors are not forgotten but carried forward. In doing so, she equips a new generation to cross those bridges and to build more for those who will follow.

Where BOLD ministry begins!

The Center for Bold Leadership at Hood Theological Seminary is shaping a new generation of clergy and lay leaders who are prepared to serve the church with courage, creativity, and spiritual depth. Under the leadership of Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner, the Center serves as a hub for leadership formation, spiritual renewal, and practical ministry training. Rooted in Hood's historic mission to prepare women and men for bold and creative leadership in a diverse world, the Center equips leaders to navigate the complexities of ministry in the twenty-first century while remaining grounded in faith and community. The Center's work is especially focused on supporting clergy in the early years of ministry, a season that can often be marked by isolation, burnout, and the challenge of leading congregations through change. Through its flagship Bold Leadership Development Cohort, pastors in their second through ninth years of ministry are paired with experienced clergy coaches and spiritual directors who help them assess their strengths, develop leadership strategies, and cultivate sustainable ministry practices. Participants engage in one-on-one coaching, spiritual direction, wellness support, workshops, and renewal retreats designed to strengthen both their professional skills and their spiritual lives. In addition to the cohort program, the Center offers a range of continuing education opportunities for clergy and lay leaders. Courses and workshops explore topics such as digital discipleship, congregational leadership, and the realities of clergy family life. These programs provide a space where church leaders can reflect on the challenges of ministry, share wisdom with peers, and gain practical tools for engaging

their communities with clarity and compassion. The Center also hosts retreats and gatherings that nurture spiritual formation and create opportunities for networking, encouragement, and renewal.

A distinctive aspect of the Center's work is its commitment to cultivating communities of support. Events such as the Transformation Retreat and programs like the "Tribe of R.U.T.H." initiative create spaces where clergy and lay leaders, particularly women of color in ministry, can find encouragement, affirmation, and spiritual empowerment. Through worship, workshops, and fellowship, these gatherings strengthen leaders who often serve in challenging ministry contexts.

The Center for Bold Leadership is also part of a broader effort supported by the Lilly Endowment's Thriving in Ministry initiative, which seeks to help pastors build resilient and sustainable ministries. Through mentoring networks, leadership development, and continuing education, the Center fosters a community of learning that extends beyond the seminary classroom and into the daily work of the church.



Through the vision and leadership of **Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner** and the dedication of its partners and participants, the Center for Bold Leadership continues to strengthen the church by nurturing leaders who are spiritually grounded, intellectually engaged, and boldly committed to serving God's people in a changing world.



Susan Cooper

Rev. Damita Jo Wilder, MDiv

Dr. Carrie Graham



HOODEMPOWERS

We Empower Rural and Small-Town Churches

Building Momentum – Driving Participation – Sustaining the Foundation

The Institute for Rural & Small-Town Ministry & Leadership began in December 2024 on the campus of Hood Theological Seminary after receiving a grant from the Lily Endowment, Inc.

Lilly Endowment, Inc. awarded grants to 20 organizations across the United States to provide resources to help churches in rural areas and small towns. The endowment made the grants through its Ministry in Rural Areas and Small Towns Initiative.

“Rural and small-town congregations play critical roles in supporting the vitality of their local communities,” said Christopher L. Coble, the Endowment’s vice president for religion.

“Yet many resources available to support congregations do not address adequately the challenges faced by churches in rural settings. Our hope is that these grants will provide much needed resources and support to rural and small-town churches to help them address their challenges and enhance and extend the many ways that they serve their communities.”

One of the criteria required for us upon receiving the grant from the Lily Foundation is for us to give grants to deserving rural and small-town churches. However, there is much more involved in our program. Hood Empowers is dedicated to strengthening North Carolina’s rural and small-town churches by addressing their unique challenges and opportunities. Through our four-pillar approach, formatted under Foundation, Formation, and Faith, we equip churches with the tools they need so that they can serve their communities, grow spiritually, and as a result, create a lasting impact.

Rural and Small-Town churches face unique challenges, including resource limitations, geographic isolation, and demographic changes. Through our four-pillar approach, formatted under Faith, Foundation and Formation, we equip churches with the tools they need to serve their communities, grow spiritually and create lasting impact, while honoring their rich contributions to America’s religious and cultural heritage.

Grant recipients are not simply given a check. They are assigned coaches during the grant period that will help them with education, proper fund utilization, annual reporting and Impact assessment. We want to see them use the funding to grow and become sustainable. Our goal is to help the rural and small-town churches become pillars of their communities.

Here are a few things that our grant recipients had to say when they sent in the grant applications:

Institute for Rural and Small-Town
Ministry and Leadership **704-798-0483**

"In a world increasingly marked by isolation and need, churches stand at the crossroads of faith and community. This ministry will highlight the church's presence in the community and create community engagement for spiritual connection and relationship building."

"Your foundation has to be strong so that your future can be improved. The African American church has a rich and powerful history. A lot of our local churches have shut down permanently and this historical building will be a way to preserve their legacies and unify the churches that remain."

"I want an expanded ministry to not only include children, but also to address the needs of youth and young adults. We want to help those who want to go to college or work a trade by teaching them what they need to know about applying to college and applying for jobs."

We have had four town hall events, where we have told the attendees about our program and discussed ways that it would be beneficial to them. The town hall meetings have been a great way to meet with small groups of people in a relaxed setting where we can get feedback about community and congregational concerns and needs.

We have had two town hall meetings at the Second Presbyterian church in Salisbury and one town hall meeting in Franklinton, NC. Franklinton was interesting because the challenges there were different than the challenges here. Franklinton, just outside of the Raleigh, Durham area is in a food desert and lacks viable grocery shopping locations. The town hall meeting in Franklinton was hosted by Joni McPhetridge who runs the Sowing Seeds food pantry. The meeting consisted of Joni and a group of people that all had similar programs focusing on helping others in need. These town hall meetings are great for learning what people are doing to address community needs and for meeting people that will be valuable resources for us and for people in our program.

By meeting these people, we are able to connect people to different resources.

We have held four workshops, two on the Hood Theological campus in the Aymer center and two virtual. We have had presenters at the workshops who have presented on Grant writing, Financial Stability, Insurance for Churches, Storytelling, Congregation outreach and many more topics. Our attendees enjoyed the presenters but also had the opportunity to gather together with other community members all reaching for a common goal. It has been fun to see them connect and share and laugh together. The friendships they are making are another thing that our institute is proud to help create. These bonds are invaluable.



Aymer Center Workshop. John Drye, Central Carolina Insurance

Since we are a new and developing center, and we have just started giving out our first grants, we are excited to see the results of the center and to see the transformations of the ministries after the education and coaching journey. The goal is to help them build bridges that can be walked across for generations to come.



2025 Grant Recipients.



Mt. Pleasant AME
Zion Church in Statesville, NC.



& Franklinton, NC.
Town Halls



Hood Theological Seminary National Alumni Association Celebrates the 2025 1885 Society Alumni Awards Banquet



On the evening of November 20, 2025, the Aymer Center on the campus of Hood Theological Seminary was transformed into a vibrant tribute to culture, scholarship, and service as the Hood Theological Seminary National Alumni Association (HTSNAA) hosted its annual 1885 Society Alumni Awards Banquet. Held under the evocative theme, “The Harlem Renaissance,” the event brought together alumni, students, faculty, clergy, and community partners for an unforgettable evening of reflection, recognition, and celebration.

The banquet theme paid homage to one of the most influential cultural movements in American history—an era defined by artistic brilliance, intellectual exploration, and unapologetic expressions of Black identity. In that same spirit, the evening celebrated the enduring legacy of Hood alumni who continue to embody excellence in ministry, leadership, and service.

A highlight of the evening was the keynote address delivered by Daran H. Mitchell, Presiding Prelate of the Mid-West Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. His message, titled “Drop Me Off in Harlem,” resonated deeply with attendees, offering a powerful framework for navigating adversity and “surviving a siege” in today’s complex social and spiritual landscape.



President Lattimore & Guests

His words challenged and inspired, reminding all present of the resilience, creativity, and faith required to lead in challenging times.

The banquet also served as a platform to honor three distinguished alumni whose lives and ministries exemplify the very best of Hood Theological Seminary's mission:

- **Alumni Award for Distinguished Service** was presented to David A. McLean, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the life, welfare, and ongoing development of the Seminary.
- **Alumni Award for Excellence in Pastoral Ministry** was awarded to Franklin D. Watkins, whose impactful pastoral leadership and steadfast commitment to ministry continue to serve as a model of excellence.
- **Alumni Award for Community Leadership and Social Witness** was given to Holly Cobb McKim, honoring her innovative and compassionate work in community engagement, empowerment, and spiritual outreach.

Each honoree represents the heart of Hood's legacy—leaders who are not only grounded in theological education but also actively engaged in transforming communities and advancing the work of justice and faith in the world.

The HTSNAA extends its deepest gratitude to all who contributed to the success of this year's banquet, including dedicated volunteers, generous supporters, and all who gathered in fellowship. Their collective presence underscored the strength and unity of the Hood community.

Founded in 1885, Hood Theological Seminary remains committed to preparing women and men for visionary leadership in both church and society. Through a steadfast dedication to spiritual formation, academic rigor, and transformative ministry, Hood continues to shape leaders who are equipped to meet the evolving needs of the world.

As the Seminary looks toward the future, events like the 1885 Society Alumni Awards Banquet serve as both a celebration of legacy and a call to continued excellence—reminding us all that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before, even as we prepare the way for those yet to come.

Office of Recruitment, Admissions, and Alumni Engagement



It's Award Time!

Advancing Ministry. Deepening Impact.

The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) Program at Hood Theological Seminary

As the demands of ministry continue to evolve in an ever-changing world, so too must the preparation of those called to lead. At Hood Theological Seminary, we remain committed to equipping leaders not only for faithful service, but for transformative impact in the church, community, and beyond. The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) Program at Hood is designed for seasoned and emerging ministry leaders who seek to deepen their theological reflection, strengthen their leadership capacity, and engage critical issues shaping today's ministry contexts.

A Timely Opportunity for Continued Growth

For those preparing for the next level of ministry leadership, the Doctor of Ministry program provides a meaningful pathway to continue building on your academic foundation and ministry experience. This advanced degree equips leaders to think critically, lead effectively, and serve faithfully in a variety of ministry settings.

Designed for the Working Leader

Understanding the realities of ministry, Hood's D.Min. program is intentionally structured to support those actively engaged in leadership:

- Three-Year Completion Timeline (Six Semesters)
- Monthly Class Meetings – Every second Monday during the semester
- Two One-Week Intensives – Held during J-Term sessions
- Hybrid Accessibility – Designed to

balance academic rigor with ministry responsibilities

This format ensures that students can remain fully engaged in their ministries while pursuing doctoral-level scholarship.

Focused Areas of Study

Students in the D.Min. program have the opportunity to specialize in areas that directly align with their calling and context:

- Pastoral Theology and Care Leadership and Ministry
- Community Advocacy and Social Justice Ministry
- Homiletics and Preaching
- CPE Supervision

Each concentration is designed to integrate theological depth with practical application, equipping students to address real-world challenges with informed, faithful leadership.

From the Classroom to the Community

At Hood, we believe theological education must extend beyond the classroom. Our D.Min. graduates are actively making a difference; pastoring congregations, leading organizations, advocating for justice, and shaping communities.

We invite you to explore our Alumni Spotlight, where the

stories of our graduates reflect the transformative power of theological education in action. These leaders embody the very mission of Hood: preparing individuals for a vibrant and balanced ministry of service.

Your Next Step Begins Here

If you are approaching graduation or already serving in ministry, the Doctor of Ministry program at Hood offers a meaningful next step in your journey. With a strong academic record, including a qualifying GPA, you may already be positioned to apply.

This is more than a degree; it is an opportunity to:

- Deepen your theological insight
- Strengthen your leadership capacity
- Expand your ministry impact
- Join a community committed to excellence and service

Join the Journey

We invite you to take the next step in your calling.

For more information or to begin the application process, please contact the Admissions Office:

- 704.636.6455
- hoodseminary.edu

Hood Theological Seminary:

A place of theological preparation for effective leadership in a diverse society.

Alumni Spotlight



Rev. Angellica S. Sweat, M.Div. '20

Rev. Angellica S. Sweat, a 2020 graduate of Hood Theological Seminary, is a scholar-practitioner whose work engages ministry, theological scholarship, and community care. During her time at Hood, she served as Student Government President and graduated with the President's Award, the institution's highest honor. She also received several academic distinctions, including the Albert Stout Memorial Scholarship, the Bishop George E. Battle Scholarship, and recognition as a Bishop George J. Leake Scholar. In 2023, she was named an inaugural Preaching Exemplar in Christian Theological Seminary's Compelling Preaching Initiative, led by Dr. Frank A. Thomas. Sweat holds membership in the Academy of Homiletics and is a Princeton Seminary Black Leadership Institute Fellow. She is also a Young Adult Pastoral Fellow with the Forum for Theological Exploration and a member of the World Methodist Council's Order of the Flame.

Sweat's academic formation reflects an interdisciplinary approach to theology and ministry. She earned an Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration from Gaston College and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Livingstone College. She then completed the Master of Divinity at Hood Theological Seminary, with concentrations in Worship and Preaching and Biblical Studies. She later earned a Master of Theology (Th.M.) from Duke Divinity School, with a focus on Womanist Homiletics. Her thesis, *Sanctuary of Healing: Trauma and the Wisdom of Womanist Preaching*, examines trauma-informed preaching practices within Black women's theological traditions. She is currently pursuing the Doctor of Ministry in Womanist Discourse at Candler School of Theology at Emory University. In her professional work, Sweat serves as Program Coordinator for the Institute for Youth Ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary, where

she leads program development for the Foundations Project, a \$1.25 million grant initiative supporting 30 congregations as they respond to the emerging needs of young people through innovative ministry practices. She also serves as Program Coordinator for the A.M.E. Zion Church's Compelling Preaching Initiative, a \$1.25 million denominational effort that equips clergy through webinars, cohorts, and regional trainings to strengthen preaching praxis. An ordained deacon in the A.M.E. Zion Church, she remains actively engaged in mentoring emerging clergy. In addition to her programmatic leadership, Sweat contributes to the field through writing and scholarship. She is the author of *Outpour: A Devotional Journey on the Holy Spirit* and *Innovation for Youth Ministry* and is currently contributing a chapter to the forthcoming volume, *Seen and Known: Theological Foundations for Accompanying Young People*. Her scholarship and ministry center womanist theology, trauma-informed pastoral care, and the role of preaching as a site of healing and formation. Across academic, ecclesial, and programmatic contexts, her work contributes to the development of leaders and communities engaged in transformative ministry.



Rev. Cleo A. Brooks Jr.

Rev. Cleo A. Brooks Jr., a graduate of Hood Theological Seminary, embodies the seminary's mission of preparing leaders for bold and faithful ministry in the church and community. Rooted in the tradition of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Brooks has dedicated his ministry to pastoral leadership, preaching, and strengthening congregational life. Brooks currently serves as pastor of Greater Warner Tabernacle

A.M.E. Zion Church, one of Knoxville's historic African American congregations with roots dating to the nineteenth century. The church has long been an important spiritual and cultural center in the city's Black community and continues to serve as a place of worship, fellowship, and community engagement. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Brooks guided the congregation through a challenging season for churches across the country. As worship resumed in person, he reflected on the importance of gathering together again, emphasizing how the shared experience of worship strengthens faith and community. In addition to his congregational leadership, Brooks participates in ecumenical partnerships across Knoxville, working with other faith leaders to build relationships and support collaborative ministry in the region. His work reflects the kind of leadership cultivated at Hood Theological Seminary, where students are prepared to serve the church with theological depth and pastoral care. Through preaching, pastoral leadership, and community engagement, Rev. Brooks continues to live out the calling shaped during his theological education, faithfully shepherding congregations and strengthening the church's witness in the communities it serves.

Degree:

Master of Divinity,
Hood Theological Seminary

Current Role

Pastor, Greater Warner Tabernacle
A.M.E. Zion Church

Denomination

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Ministry Focus

- Pastoral leadership and preaching
- Congregational care and discipleship
- Community collaboration and outreach

Commencement 2025

Hood Theological Seminary celebrated its twenty-fourth commencement on Saturday, May 17, 2025, at Varick Auditorium on the campus of Livingstone College. Family and friends gathered to support the 2025 graduating class. The day was met with excitement and support for the graduates' futures. The highlight of the graduation service was the conferring of eight Doctor of Ministry degrees, nine Master of Divinity Degrees, and two Master of Arts degrees in Chaplaincy. Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr., Senior Bishop, The African Methodist Episcopal Church, Presiding Prelate, Piedmont Episcopal District, was the Commencement Speaker.

HONORARY DEGREES AWARDED DURING THE 2025 GRADUATION PROGRAM

DOCTOR OF DIVINITY

Bishop Darryl B. Starnes

DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS

Joseph King Davis Jr.
Jesse Gentile Everett
Nancy Robertson Baker

THE ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE SERVICE AWARD

An award given to a staff member by Trustee Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr. and Dr. Charles Davidson, in recognition of significant teaching creativity and exceptional contributions to the Seminary's visibility in the wider community. Donna Wilson Cuthbertson, Kelley M. Bryant

THE DISTINGUISHED TRUSTEE SERVICE AWARD

An award given by an anonymous donor in honor of Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr., a distinguished Alumnus and Trustee who models selfless leadership and extraordinary service to the mission of the Seminary. The award is a bronze relief sculpted by renowned artist Perry Carsley.
Rev. Dr. Randell A. Cain Jr.



DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Aldana W. Allen
Avram Lemuel Davis
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Kevin Harlow Jasper
Dorothy A. Patterson
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MASTER OF DIVINITY

Donald Wayne Clodfelter
Tanetta Roslyn Issacs
Doreen E. Johnson
Robert Allen Macy
David Randall Montgomery
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2025

Donor & Scholarship Recognition Dinner

The **James Walker Hood Donor and Scholarship Recognition Dinner** on May 15, 2025, was a joyful evening of gratitude, remembrance, and vision for the future of Hood Theological Seminary. Held as part of the seminary's ongoing commitment to honoring those who invest in theological education, the event celebrated the generosity of donors and the transformative power of scholarships in preparing leaders for ministry and service.

The keynote address was delivered by **Sheldon R. Shipman**, who spoke on the theme, "The Importance of Philanthropy and Scholarships in the Present Landscape." Dr. Shipman reminded attendees that financial support for theological education is not simply charity, but a vital investment in the church's future. Through philanthropy and scholarship support, donors help remove barriers for students who are called to ministry, leadership, and community transformation.

The evening also honored several individuals and families whose generosity and commitment exemplify this spirit of giving. The **Zion Heritage Appreciation Award** was presented to **Georgia Thompson** for her faithful support and dedication. The **Alumni Donor Award** recognized **Cynthia S. Stafford**, whose continued investment demonstrates the enduring impact of alumni generosity. The **Family/Organization Award** was presented to the Walls Family, including **Marionne Walls Fort, Brenda E. Walls, and Arthur Walls**, in recognition of their collective commitment to supporting the seminary's mission.

A particularly meaningful moment of the evening was the special naming celebration led by **Iris Miller Battle** and family in honor of her late husband, **George E. Battle Jr.**. Their generosity established the **Bishop George E. Battle Jr. Welcome and Student Engagement Center** and the **Iris Miller Battle Auditorium**, creating spaces that will welcome, inspire, and equip students for generations to come.

Together, the evening served as a powerful reminder that generosity fuels the mission of Hood Theological Seminary, ensuring that future leaders are prepared to serve the church and the world.



2025 Scholarship Recipients

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD—An award given to a graduating senior who has demonstrated excellent academic performance and outstanding citizenship in the seminary community. **Anthony Michael Taylor, Jr.**

THE WILLIAM B. AND LILLIAN HOWELL MEMORIAL PRIZE—An award given to an outstanding Doctor of Ministry graduate whose Professional Paper demonstrates academic excellence, outstanding research, potential for publication, and broad application and impact on the church and the community. **Richard Allen Gerald**

THE FACULTY AWARD—An award given to the graduating senior who has demonstrated academic excellence and who has made the most outstanding contribution to the life of the Seminary. **LaTayna Williams Pender**

THE WOODSON ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A Scholarship endowed by the Margaret C. Woodson Foundation. The honoree is a deserving student with financial need who has displayed academic excellence and outstanding promise for ministry. **Thomas Mitoraj, Cassandra Moore, Bonnie Tomlin**

THE BISHOP AND MRS RICHARD K. THOMPSON ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship based on need and merit endowed by Bishop and Mrs. Richard K. Thompson for an entering student in the Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church. **Reginald Bradshaw**

THE DR. ALBERT J.D. AYMER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established by the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury, North Carolina, in memory of President Aymer and awarded, based on academic merit and financial need, to a deserving student who shows outstanding potential for ministry. **Percy Arrington, Vonetta Carter**

THE BISHOP GEORGE E. BATTLE JR. ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established in honor of Bishop Battle and awarded to a seminary student showing great promise in the field of ministry, with strong consideration given to need and merit. **William Grant III, Dorothy A. Patterson**

THE ROBERT AND LOIS PRUEHSNER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship provided by Robert and Lois Pruehsner to a deserving student or students selected by the faculty based on need and a demonstration of academic excellence and outstanding potential for ministry. **Margaret L. Anderson, Cynthia M. Cobb**

THE DR. FRANK AND FLETCHER BROWN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established in the memory of Dr. Frank and Fletcher Brown by their son, Mr. Reginald Brown of Salisbury, North Carolina, and awarded based on academic merit and financial need to a deserving student who shows outstanding potential for ministry.

Cynthia Shelton

THE DR. ROBERT HARKRADER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established anonymously by a friend in the First United Methodist Church of Salisbury, North Carolina, and awarded based on academic merit and financial need to a deserving student who shows outstanding potential for ministry. **LaTayna Pender**

THE THOMAS WILLIAM LANGFORD ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by the late Thomas and Barbara Langford, members of the First

United Methodist Church of Salisbury, North Carolina, in memory of their infant son and awarded based on academic merit and financial need to a deserving student who shows outstanding potential for ministry. **Daphne Pickett**

The Reverend N. Fred & Katherine P. Jordan Endowed Scholarship—A scholarship established with endowed funds given by the Rev. N. Fred & Katherine P. Jordan of Salisbury, NC, to be awarded to a well-deserving United Methodist Church student or a Hood student in good academic standing showing outstanding potential for parish ministry. **Stacie Jordan Eller**

THE J. ROY VALENCOURT ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship given to a well-deserving student based on academic merit and financial need. This endowed scholarship fund was established with funds given by Carol Valencourt and sons, Rene', Joel, Keith & James, in memory of her husband, Dr. J. Roy Valencourt, who was a dedicated professor of New Testament at Hood. Dr. Valencourt served in the mission field and was a civil rights activist in the South. **Jamisha Rinnix**

THE REV. ARTHUR W. WALLS SR. & MRS. CARRIE WALLS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given to the Seminary by the children of the late Rev. Arthur W. Walls, Sr., in memory of Rev. Walls, Sr. and his wife Carrie, awarded to a deserving student in ministry. **Karen A. Robinson**

THE ANDREW MCLEAN SPAULDING ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by Rev. Spaulding's son, Dr. Henry Moses of Nashville, Tennessee, and awarded based on academic merit and financial need to a deserving student who shows outstanding potential for ministry. **Mari-kate Tennis**

THE BISHOP GEORGE JUNIOUS LEAKE III ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established by the Connectional Lay Council of the A.M.E. Zion Church to perpetuate the legacy of Bishop Leake and awarded to qualifying A.M.E. Zion members of the ordained clergy enrolled in the Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, or Doctor of Ministry program. The recipients are designated Leake Scholars. **Rondah Nelson**

THE BISHOP CLARENCE AND BARBARA S. CARR ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established by Barbara Carr and the late Bishop Clarence Carr and awarded to a deserving A.M.E. Zion student based upon academic merit and financial need. **Michel Hester**

THE BISHOP ROY A HOLMES ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by friends and family of Bishop Holmes as a tribute to his role as a young Episcopal leader and awarded to a deserving A.M.E. Zion student. **Mark A. Carr**

THE JIM ARTHOR WADFORD ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established by Dr. Jim R. and Pamela Wadford in memory of their son and awarded to an incoming Doctor of Ministry student. **Sophia L. Russell**

THE TREVOR WILLIAMS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by the late Dr. Trevor Williams and Gail Hounshell to a deserving student who demonstrates promise in the field of preaching, homiletics, and/or worship leadership. **Shamond Riddy**

THE ELLEN AND JAMES ROBERT KEEVER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by the Keever family in memory of Ellen Keever and in honor of James Robert Keever and awarded to a student who demonstrates significant improvement in research and writing skills. **Ray Battle**

THE GENERAL OFFICERS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by General Officers of the African Methodist Episcopal church and awarded based on academic merit and financial need to a deserving A.M.E. Zion student who shows outstanding potential for ministry. **Derrick D. Scurry**

THE MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship established with endowment funds given by the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in memory of Bishop Richard K. Thompson and awarded to a deserving A.M.E. Zion student. **Gregory I. Washington-Gerald II**

DR. J. DALLAS JENKINS WRITING ENDOWED FUND IN EVANGELISM, CHURCH GROWTH & RECLAMATION—An endowed scholarship established in memory of Dr. J. Dallas Jenkins and awarded to a student or faculty member who is studying in the area of evangelism, church growth, and reclamation. **Rayvon J. Moore**

THE HOOD NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP—An award given to the Seminary by Hood Alumni/ae Association, in recognition of a student who shows outstanding academic progress, the promise of competent leadership in the church, and selfless service in the seminary community. **William Grant, Tanisha DaCosta, Tamica Robinson**

Rev. Ronald E. Davis Annual Scholarship—A scholarship given to a Hood Theological Seminary student who has financial needs or who demonstrates determination to receive a theological education and is in good standing as a student at the seminary. **William E. Richburg**

THE GEORGE AND EDNA B. ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL AWARD—An award given to the Seminary by the Reverend James David Armstrong in memory of his mother and father, and in recognition of the student demonstrating the greatest proficiency in studies relative to the history of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. **William L. Johnson IV**

THE EUGENE AND ENID SMITH SCHOLARSHIP—An award given by Lester E. and Fredricka E. Smith to a deserving veteran ministerial student who demonstrates exemplary leadership ability and high ethical Christian character and who is deserving of financial assistance. **AlJaleel N. Eaddy, Audrey H. Johnson**

THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATION SCHOLARSHIP—An award given by Bishop Joseph Johnson to the A.M.E. Zion student who has excelled in the area of church administration. **Denise L. Davenport**

THE REVEREND BRENDA V. HARRIS SCHOLARSHIP—An award given by alumna Brenda V. Harris, '13, in support of a full-time student residing in the Charlotte or Matthews, North Carolina area. **Georgia B. Woodruff**

THE REV. DR. WILLIAM M. WHITE, SR. PASTORAL THEOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP—An award given to the Seminary in memory of the Reverend Dr. William M. White, Sr. by his immediate family, in recognition of the student who has completed two years at Hood, with a "B" grade or better, and who demonstrates desirable qualities of character and leadership. **Darlene Dellinger**

THE GEORGE LEILE PRIZE FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE—In memory of the founding pastor of the First African Baptist Church, Savannah, Georgia, this prize is awarded annually to the Baptist student who, having earned at least 60 credit hours, holds the highest grade point average. **Ray Anthony Battle**

THE REVEREND REID R. AND MRS. RUBY M. WHITE, SR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP—An award given to the seminary by the White Taylor family to a deserving seminarian from a rural charge, a dedicated student of the Bible and Biblical history, passionately committed to teaching ministry, in good standing and deserving of financial assistance. **Whitney Cassell**

THE L.C. ASBURY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD—An award given to the Seminary by the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society of the Concord District in memory of the late Dr. Loucio Cecil Asbury, Presiding Elder, to a student who aspires to become a minister, has exemplary leadership ability, a high ethical Christian character, and is a member of the A.M.E. Zion Church. **Frederick E. Cannady-Kelderman**

THE STONE-CAMPBELL SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship awarded to a deserving student in good standing at Hood. **William E. Richburg**

THE HELEN BROWN EARNHARDT SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship awarded to a deserving Hood student. **Derrick D. Scurry**

THE ANDREW AND ANNETTE WHITTED SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship awarded to a deserving Hood student. **Arthur K. Burnett, Tracy Y. Gardner**

THE REVEREND JOHN G. WYATT SCHOLARSHIP—A scholarship given by Mrs. Anna Wyatt in memory of her husband, the Reverend John G. Wyatt, and awarded to a deserving Hood student. **Maceo E. Scott, Jr.**

THE CIVITAN/U.S.A.T. DORCHESTER SCHOLARSHIP is awarded annually to a second-year student in the Center for Chaplaincy Program who aspires to be a military, hospital, hospice, corporate, or other professional chaplain. The successful candidate will be selected based on academic performance and financial need. **Samuel Baxter Allen**

HOOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SPECIAL SERVICE AWARD—An award given to graduating seniors who have made outstanding contributions to the life and work of the Seminary. **Margaret L. Anderson, Jackie F. Caldwell, Robert Macy, David Montgomery, Chelsey I. Simms, Jr.**

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Each spring, the Hood's Herald provides us with a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the power of generosity and the lasting impact of those who believe in the mission of Hood Theological Seminary. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every donor, partner, church, and friend who continues to invest in the work and ministry of Hood.

Your gifts are more than financial contributions; they are seeds planted into the lives of students who are preparing to lead, serve, and transform communities through ministry. Because of your support, Hood Theological Seminary can strengthen academic programs, enhance technology resources, provide scholarships, and equip future faith leaders with the tools they need to answer God's call.

Each donation, regardless of size, helps sustain a legacy of theological education that has shaped generations of pastors, chaplains, and leaders serving congregations and communities across the country and beyond. Your continued commitment allows Hood to remain a place where faith, scholarship, and service intersect.

As we look toward the future, we invite you to remain connected with Hood's mission. Your generosity helps ensure that the next generation of leaders will be prepared to serve with wisdom, compassion, and courage.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, students, and Alums of Hood Theological Seminary, thank you for your continued support and for being an essential part of the Hood community and for helping to sustain a legacy of faith, leadership, and opportunity for generations to come.

To support the ongoing mission of Hood Theological Seminary, gifts may be made online through our Hood website www.hoodseminary.edu or by mailing a check made payable to Hood Theological Seminary (HTS) to:

Hood Theological Seminary
Attn: Institutional Advancement
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From the Desk of
**Tyesia Walker, Director of Annual
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A Tax-Saving Way to Help Hood Theological Seminary Make a difference today and save on taxes. It's possible when you support Hood Theological Seminary through your IRA.

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Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.

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No matter your age, you can designate Hood Theological Seminary as the beneficiary of all or a percentage of your IRA, and it will pass to us tax-free after your lifetime. It's simple: just contact your IRA administrator to request a change-of-beneficiary form or download one from your provider's website.

Tip: It's critical to let us know of your gift because many popular retirement plan administrators assume no obligation to notify a charity of your designation. The administrator also will not monitor whether your gift designations are followed. We would love to talk to you about your intentions to ensure that they are followed. We would also like to thank you for your generosity.

For more information, contact John Everett at jeverett@hoodseminary.edu or (704) 636-6545, or visit our Planned Giving website for lots of helpful information.

<https://www.hoodseminary.edu/donate/planned-giving>

Thank you for supporting Hood Theological Seminary!



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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 16 Commencement 25 Memorial Day Observance	August 24 First day of classes Track I 28 First day of classes Track II	November 23-28 Thanksgiving holiday (no classes) 24 Offices close at 5:00 PM for Thanksgiving Holiday 30 Classes Resume
June 1-5 Master Intensive Week 8-12 Master Intensive Week 15-18 Master Intensive Week	September 18 Opening Convocation 6:00	December 7-12 Final examinations and end of Fall Semester
July 13-17 DMin Intensive Week 20-24 DMin Intensive Week	October 1 Board of Trustees Retreat 2 Board of Trustees Meeting 2-3 Speaks Lecture Series 5-10 Reading Week (no classes.)	



Get ready to take your ministry to the next level

Hood Theological Seminary is committed to providing our students with the highest-quality seminary experience possible and takes pride in its gender, racial, and denominational diversity. Hood offers a unique choice for your ministerial formation and spiritual growth. Our Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts in Chaplaincy, Master of Arts in Christian Education, Master of Arts in Christian Ministry, Doctor of Ministry, and graduate certificate programs are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the U.S. and Canada. Two tracks of classes, plus hybrid courses, provide options for flexible, individualized programs of study. Our world-class faculty, comprised of graduates of premier theological schools across the country, is firmly rooted in Wesleyan Christian tradition.

**Take your mind, ministry, and mission to
the next level!**

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