



**E-Newsletter
APRIL 2026**

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Did You Know?

You can audit a class at HTS! Learning is a lifelong process; continue the journey with us. For clergy, church professionals, and laypersons. All denominations welcome! Read more [HERE](#)

Also, each course in the Certificate Programs at HTS is \$500 per course. The certificate program courses cannot be applied to any of the master's programs at the Seminary. [Read More](#)

The Center for Chaplaincy



On April 27th from 10–12, the **Center for Chaplaincy** will sponsor a Zoom symposium titled *"Addiction, Stigma, and the Faith Community: How To Be Our Sibling's Keeper."* The symposium will feature Unshame NC, a statewide campaign led by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human

Services in partnership with Shatterproof, a national nonprofit. According to Jaylah Stewart, who serves as the Program Coordinator, "Our goal is to remove the stigma around substance use disorder through a community-driven approach focused on awareness, education, and uplifting the voices of lived experience." The symposium will feature substance use specialists, medical personnel, and individuals who have experienced recovery.

The purpose of this symposium is to equip faith leaders and community members with the knowledge, tools, and compassionate frameworks necessary to address substance use disorder, dismantle stigma, and foster supportive, healing-centered environments within their congregations and communities.



Stay tuned for details regarding opportunities to engage the Center for Financial Empowerment and The Center for Justice, Love, and Belonging.



Autism Awareness: Honoring the Gifts Within the Spectrum

April is widely recognized as **Autism Awareness Month**, a time to deepen our understanding of individuals living with Autism Spectrum Disorder and to celebrate the many ways people on the spectrum enrich our communities, families, and world.

Autism is not simply a diagnosis; it is a spectrum of ways people experience and engage with the world. Individuals on the spectrum often bring remarkable perspectives, deep focus, creativity, honesty, and passion to the spaces they inhabit. Their unique ways of thinking have contributed significantly to fields such as science, technology, the arts, and advocacy.

Throughout history and today, individuals believed or known to be on the autism spectrum have shaped society in profound ways. Visionaries such as Temple Grandin transformed the livestock industry while also becoming a powerful voice for autism awareness. Advocates like Greta Thunberg have shown how clarity of purpose and determination can inspire global movements. These examples remind us that neurological diversity strengthens our collective future.

Beyond public figures, many of us know the impact of autism personally—through children, siblings, friends, students, and colleagues whose presence teaches us patience, attentiveness, and a deeper appreciation for different ways of communicating and connecting. Those who love someone on the spectrum often discover that their lives are enriched by unexpected joy, profound sincerity, and extraordinary insight.

Awareness invites us to move beyond stereotypes and toward understanding. It calls us to build communities where every person is valued, supported, and given the opportunity to flourish. When we recognize and celebrate neurodiversity, we affirm a simple but powerful truth: every mind reflects a part of the beautiful diversity of humanity.

This month—and every month—may we listen more closely, learn more deeply, and honor the gifts that individuals on the autism spectrum bring to our world.



Spring Cleaning: Clearing Space for What Matters

Spring has long been a season of renewal. As the days grow longer and the air grows warmer, many of us feel the urge to open windows, dust off forgotten corners, and restore order to our homes. Yet spring cleaning can also be an invitation to renew our lives. Just as we tidy our closets and attics, we can also tend to the spaces of our hearts and spirits.

Start with the closet. Closets often hold what we no longer wear but hesitate to release. A good rule is simple: if it no longer fits your life, it may be time to let it go. The same wisdom applies to our habits and attitudes. Scripture reminds us to “lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely” (Hebrews 12:1). Clearing out what no longer serves us makes room for growth and purpose.

Next, consider the attic. Attics are where memories gather. Some are treasures; others are clutter from seasons long past. As you sort through what is stored above your living space, reflect on what you carry in your mind and heart. Hold onto what strengthens you, but release what keeps you anchored in yesterday. As the prophet writes, “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing” (Isaiah 43:18–19).

Finally, tend to your spirit. Spiritual spring cleaning is like returning to prayer, setting aside quiet time for reflection, or reconnecting with scripture. The psalmist offers a simple yet powerful prayer: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).

This season, open the windows of your life. Let fresh air and fresh faith move through every room of your being. A little cleaning, after all, can make space for God to do something beautifully new.



Strengthening Partnerships in Theological Education

In March 2026, Dr. Reginald Boyd Jr. participated in the S.P.A.N. Conference hosted by The Association of Theological Schools as part of his ongoing professional development. The gathering brought together leaders in theological education to explore emerging trends in recruitment, student formation, and institutional collaboration.

One of the key insights Dr. Boyd brought back from the conference is that many seminaries are currently recruiting from the same limited pool of prospective students. This reality presents both a challenge and an opportunity for theological schools. Rather than competing for the same students, institutions can benefit from developing strategic partnerships that expand access to theological education.

Through collaborative recruitment efforts, shared programming, and stronger institutional relationships, seminaries can better support prospective students as they discern their call to ministry and theological study. Dr. Boyd's participation in the conference underscores our commitment to staying engaged with the broader landscape of theological education and seeking innovative ways to strengthen enrollment while advancing the mission of the seminary.

Planned Giving



Create your legacy through a planned gift by remembering Hood Theological Seminary in a bequest or will with gifts of stocks and bonds, gifts of real estate or personal property, life insurance, charitable trust, retirement funds/IRA or life income gifts.

By making a planned gift, you will become a member of the [Hood Legacy Society](#).

- ~ Do you have an IRA?
- ~ Are you at least 70 1/2 years of age?
- ~ Would you like to help HTS in its mission to prepare women and men for bold and creative leadership for the Christian church for a diverse world?

If you answered "Yes" to all three questions, please consider an IRA Charitable Rollover.

In an IRA Charitable Rollover, the distribution of up to \$100,000 annually made directly from the IRA custodian to a qualifying public charity, such as HTS, is excluded from gross income and counts toward the required minimum distribution.

Contact:

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Visit our [Planned Giving](#) website for lots of helpful information.



Your gift is essential in promoting the mission of the Seminary. Every gift, small and large, is greatly appreciated and stewarded responsibly!

It's so easy to [donate securely online](#) or mail your check directly to the Seminary at 1810 Lutheran Synod Dr., Salisbury, NC 28144.

April is **Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month**, a time to affirm that every child deserves safety, dignity, and the opportunity to grow in a community that protects and nurtures them.

For people of faith, caring for children is not only a social responsibility—it is a sacred one. In **the Bible**, Jesus reminds us of the value and vulnerability of children when he says, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"* (Matthew 19:14).

Child abuse prevention begins with awareness, compassion, and action. It means listening when children speak, supporting families in times of stress, and creating communities where every child is seen, valued, and protected.

This month, we stand with advocates, caregivers, educators, and faith communities who work every day to ensure that children grow up surrounded by love and protection.

Wear blue. Speak up. Stay aware. Protect our children.

#ChildAbusePreventionMonth #ProtectChildren #FaithInAction #CommunityCare



Faculty/Staff News

Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore



Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President and Professor, of Hood Theological Seminary

Dr. Lattimore participated in Good Friday/Seven Last Words Service, Aldersgate Retirement Center, Charlotte, NC (4/3/26)

He participated in webinar - "An Eclectic Approach to Support Clients with Somatic Symptom Disorder" (4/10/26)

Presided at Pastor's Appreciation for Dr. J.C. White at Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion Church, Statesville, NC (4/12/26)

He was the speaker for Hospice Memorial Service, Salisbury Veterans Hospital (4/16/26)

He will participate in the A.M.E. Zion Commission on Chaplaincy meeting (4/14/26)

FaithLearnThrive News



EVENT INFORMATION

FLT Learning Community Pilot Launch

There are moments in ministry when you can feel the shift—and this is one of them.

We are excited to celebrate the **pilot launch of our reimagined Learning Community experience** with three incredible congregations:

Brooklyn CME Church

Holsey Memorial CME Church

New Gethsemane Baptist Church

What made this launch special wasn't just the content—it was the alignment in the room.

Leaders leaned in.

Teams engaged deeply.

And vision began to move from idea → action.

☐ **What We're Seeing Already**

Clarity is rising – Teams are defining who they are becoming

Ownership is expanding – Vision is shared, not carried alone

Momentum is building – Conversations are turning into next steps

☐ **A Moment from the Room**

One of the most powerful parts of our time together was hearing teams reflect in real time.

Take a look at this moment:

☐ <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1HvxqnsVGM/>

☐ **To Our Pilot Churches**

Brooklyn CME, Holsey Memorial CME, and New Gethsemane—

Thank you for saying yes to the journey.

You're not just participating... you're helping shape what this experience will become.

□ Final Thought

Thriving churches aren't built by doing more—they're built through alignment, clarity, and action.

And we're already seeing it begin.

FaithLearnThrive

From vision to vitality



Building Momentum – Driving

Participation – Sustaining the

Foundation

The Institute for Rural & Small-Town Ministry & Leadership has been busy, and we are excited to share what we've been up to.

We've been busy getting ready for our next workshop, which is on Saturday, April 18th in the Aymer Center on campus. We will have presenters on the following topics:

Building Community Partnerships: *Is it possible for Rural and Small-Town Ministry and Leadership?*

Jesus and Mental Health: *What effect does isolation have on Rural and Small-Town Ministries and Leadership?*

Rural and Small-Town Community Development: *Can we make an impact?*

Good for the Soul...Good for the Body: *Nutritional Foods and the Impact on Ministry*

So far, 31 people have registered, and we're excited about the workshop and looking forward to the fellowship with the attendees.

Our coaches and our grant recipients are now fully involved with each other. They are working together and getting to know each other. We've started to hear from them about how they've been using the grant money that they received.

Our website is being updated regularly, and you will be able to see photos and stories on our website soon at www.hoodempowers.org. These can be found under "Monthly Spotlights". Please check it out and let us know what you think!



Applications for The Center for Bold Leadership's Leadership Development Cohort are now being accepted. The Cohort begins on January 8, 2026, and runs through November.

The Cohort is open to African American female clergy in their 2nd through 9th year in pastoral ministry. This is a wonderful opportunity for early-career clergy to hone their leadership skills and focus on wholeness, wellness, and renewal. Coaches and Spiritual Directors will walk alongside Cohort members to provide guidance and help them build strong, sustainable, and successful ministries.

The Cohort includes:

1:1 Clergy Coaching

Spiritual Direction

Wellness Coaching

Classes & Workshops

Renewal Retreat

Book study

If you are interested in applying or know of an early career clergy woman, please click the link to apply:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd144eq_lbuEXeKdhUE5c8aoTCJPT2MJm8JKIpbcdOjSELWA/viewform
or go to <https://boldlead.org/program/early-career-and-senior-clergy-cohort/>

for additional information. For questions, please contact Rev. Kimberly Clarke Turner, CBL Program Director at 704-636-6891.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

To all our Faculty, Staff, Alumni & Donors - A Joyful January Birthday with Many More to Come!

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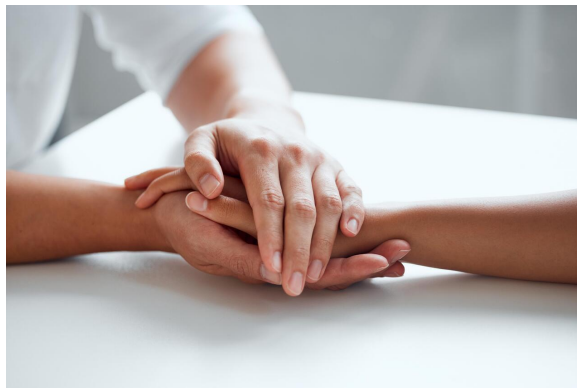
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For More Information on Monthly Giving

Contact:
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In Memoriam

We hold in prayer all within our community who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Grief is a sacred and complex journey, and there is no fixed timeline for sorrow or healing. In moments of loss, may you know that you are not alone and that your pain is seen and honored.

As a community of faith, we remain committed to walking alongside you with compassion, patience, and care. May the presence of God bring comfort in the midst of sorrow, and may hope quietly emerge as a sustaining gift, even in the hardest days.

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