People

News in the March 25, 2008 issue

Serene Jones of Yale University has been selected to be the first woman president of Union Theological Seminary in New York City. She will assume the presidency of the 172-year-old nondenominational seminary on July 1, succeeding **Joseph Hough,** who is retiring after serving since 1999. Jones, 48, who holds an endowed chair in theology at Yale Divinity School, chairs the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at Yale. She has also held faculty appointments at Yale Law School and in the departments of African-American studies and religious studies. Union recently emerged from financial crises, and Hough is credited with helping boost Union's endowment to close to $100 million. "The dark clouds have passed; the place is lean but ready to go," Jones said. She is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

William H. Lazareth, 79, a former seminary professor, theologian and bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the former Lutheran Church in America, died of cancer February 23 in Bar Harbor, Maine. "A most eloquent voice in witness to the gospel is now silent," said Mark S. Hanson, ELCA presiding bishop. Hanson noted that as director of the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order secretariat from 1980 to 1983, Lazareth oversaw the drafting of the highly influential consensus-building document "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry." Lazareth taught for 20 years at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He was bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA from 1988 until he retired from ministry in 1992. At his death, he was on the faculty of Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Walter J. Burghardt, a Jesuit priest known for his electrifying preaching style and commitment to social justice, died February 16 in a Jesuit infirmary in Merion, Pennsylvania. He was 93. Over the course of his career, the prolific Burghardt wrote 25 books and 300 articles for theological journals. His memoir, *Long Have I Loved You*: *A Theologian Reflects on His Church*, was honored by the Catholic Press Association. From 1946 to 1990, he worked as an editor for the Catholic journal *Theological Studies*. During that time, Burghardt was also a visiting professor at schools such as Princeton Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Jack L. Stotts, 75, a reconciling minister and seminary president during the reunion of the northern and southern wings of the Presbyterian Church, died January 24 in Austin, Texas, of complications after heart surgery. The Dallas-born Stotts, after earning a Ph.D. in Christian ethics at Yale, served in pastoral ministry and as chaplain at the University of Tulsa before teaching ethics at Chicago's McCormick Theological Seminary, where he had received his theological degree. Stotts, who served 10 years as McCormick's president, starting in 1975, shepherded the seminary's move from Lincoln Park to Hyde Park. In 1985, two years after the reunited Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was formed, Stotts was called to lead the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, which he did for 11 years. A memorial service will be held April 4 at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago.