



NEW BRUNSWICK
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Think Critically • Act Justly • Lead Faithfully

Opening Convocation

11:00 A.M.

Saturday, August 26, 2023

The asterisk () is an invitation to rise in body or in spirit.*

Prelude *In Quiet Mood* Florence Price

Processional *Processional in D* David N. Johnson

***Acknowledge the Land** Rev. Dr. Suzanne Wenonah Duchesne
Director of Mast Chapel at NBTS

***Call to Worship** Rev. Dr. Beth LaNeel Tanner
Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs

Leader: Come! Let all God's people in love and harmony, in all our diversity, worship as one.

People: In unity, let us worship God; for only together can we find harmony.

Leader: From the many challenges of our lives, we are called into God's presence.

People: In God's presence we find the community we seek.

Leader: As community we will rescue the oppressed and seek justice.

People: As Community we will love one another and pursue harmony.

Leader: Thanks be to God, who in Christ has made us one!

People: We stretch out our hands to receive God's love as we begin our time together.

Leader: God is here!

ALL: Amen.

Welcome and Introductions Rev. Dr. Micah L. McCreary
President

Prayer of Confession Rev. Dr. Charles M. Rix
Director of M.A. in Theological Studies & Ministry Studies Programs

Gracious God, we honor you, and we bless your name, for you gave us Jesus, who emptied himself that we might be filled, who suffered and died that we might live. Who fed the hungry, healed the afflicted, and ate with the scorned and forgotten of this world. Who washed the disciples' feet and gave us the presence of God's ever-present love.

Forgive us for the times we have neglected your children, forgotten your love, and rebelled against your invitation to follow you wherever it might lead.

Transform us into the image and likeness of Christ, that we may faithfully serve in Christ's name,

Make us, while many, united,
make us though broken, whole,
make us, despite death, alive.

Put us to doing,
put us to suffering;
Let us be employed by you or laid aside for you;
Exalted for you or brought low by you;
Let us be full, let us be empty;
Let us have all things,
let us have nothing;

That we might be reconciled to you and to each other with whole hearts. Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, Almighty, God, now and forever. Amen.

Musical Selection*Blessings*Laura Story
arr. S. DeCesare**Prayer for Illumination**Rev. Dr. Nathan Jérémie-Brink
L. Russell Feakes Assistant Professor of the History of Global Christianity***Scripture Reading**

John 6:1-15

Sermon*Is Christ All That Is, Including Violent Nature?*Rev. Dr. Jaeseung Cha
Professor of Foundational and Constructive Theology**Response to the Word****Faculty Affirmation**

Rev. Dr. Beth LaNeel Tanner

We, the Faculty of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, trust in Jesus Christ and through him believe in one triune God.

We are guided by the Word of God, incarnate, written, and proclaimed.

We will be attentive to historical and contemporary confessions and expressions of Christian faith, and to the beauty and importance of diversity across traditions.

Relying upon the grace of God, we seek the peace, unity, and purity of the whole church and of creation.

We attest to the dignity of all people, affirming that all human beings are created in the image of God. In view of the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, Good News liberates the least among us, those who endure violence due to their religious beliefs, class, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, or race. We profess that Christ in the Spirit heals, sanctifies, and reconciles the pains and exploitations of people and nature.

We renounce and lament systems of oppression, and commit to speak truth to oppressive power structures, organize within our institutions, and agitate at every level of society in pursuit of justice.

Seeking the lead of the Spirit, we commit to extend pastoral care to our colleagues and students and to show the love and justice of Christ in our community and beyond.

With energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, we pledge to build up and equip the church for service throughout the world; to free the enslaved, to relieve the oppressed, to comfort the afflicted, and to walk humbly with God.

We will be faithful to the mission of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, practicing the highest standards of academic integrity and excellence and using our time and talents to advance the purposes of this seminary and our shared calling as long as we may serve.

We ask God, and ask you God's people, to help us so to do in the hope of that glorious day when, with joy and gratitude, we stand before God as witnesses of all things made new.

God of the prophets bless the prophets' heirs
Elijah's mantle o'er Elisha cast;
Each age for your own solemn task prepares;
Make each one stronger nobler than the last.

Anoint us prophets teach us your intent
To human need our quickened hearts awake;
Fill us with power our lips make eloquent
For righteousness that shall all evil break.

Anoint us priests help us to intercede
With all your royal priesthood born of grace;
Through us your church presents in word and deed
A living sacrifice with thanks and praise.

Anoint us kings help us do justice Lord
Anoint us with the Spirit of Your Son:
Ours not a monarch's crown or tyrant's sword;
Ours by the love of Christ a kingdom won.

Make us disciples, heralds of your cross;
forth may we go to tell all realms your grace:
By you inspired, may we count all but loss,
And stand at last with joy before your face.

Benediction**Rev. Dr. *Micah L. McCrearyPostlude***Voluntary in A*

William Selby

Worship Notes & Acknowledgements

Organist & Pianist: Mark A. Trautman, MM
Horn: Lee Ann Newland (NBTS MAPCC Student)
Trumpet: John Lambert

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"Prayer for Illumination", *Upper Room Worshipbook: Music and Liturgies for Spiritual Formation*, edited by Elise S. Eslinger, Nashville: Upper Room, 2007, p. 35.

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