The Opening Convocation of the 192nd Academic Year of McCormick Theological Seminary

Tuesday, September 7, 2021
5:00 p.m.
live streaming at

https://www.facebook.com/
McCormickSeminary/live/

In person attendance
at the Quadrangle
5460 South University Avenue
Call to Worship  
Rhonda Greer, Rajitha De Mel, Catherine Amber

Let us gather in the Quad and in cyberspace  
to worship the one who calls us into the journey,  
the Giver of Faith, the One we can Trust.

Let us worship the Divine  
who call us into a living hope  
on the Creator’s lands.

As a community of staff, students, and faculty,  
Let us praise together our God, our Caller,  
our Companion on the road,  
our conversation partner,  
and Guidance through the journey.  
And let the people of God say,  

All: Amén!

Gathering Prayer  
Christopher Culley

Salutation and Welcome  
David Crawford

Prayer of Illumination  
Rhonda Greer

Rhonda Greer

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about  
seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things  
that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came  
near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And  
he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?”  
They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas,  
answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the  
things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?”  
They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in  
deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and  
leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we  
had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now  
the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group  
astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not  
find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision  
of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the  
tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.”
Reading 2 – Quotes from Jürgen Moltmann

“Even the disciples of Jesus all fled from their master’s cross. Christians who do not have the feeling that they must flee the crucified Christ have probably not yet understood him in a sufficiently radical way.”
—Jürgen Moltmann, The Crucified God

“For resurrection faith means courage to revolt against the "covenant with death" (Isa. 28:15), it means hope for the victory of life which shall swallow up and conquer life-devouring death.”
—Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Play

“That is why faith, wherever it develops into hope, causes not rest but unrest, not patience but impatience. It does not calm the unquiet heart, but is itself this unquiet heart in man. Those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it. Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the goad of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present.”
—Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology

“Resistance is the protest of those who hope, and hope is the feast of the people who resist.”
—Jürgen Moltmann, The Power of the Powerless

Reading 3 – 1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead....

Introduction

Steed Davidson

Address

Jennifer McBride

“We Had Hoped”: Theological Education after Devastation

Song – We Shall Overcome

Dafne Nola, Eddie Rosa-Fuentes

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome, some day.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.
Prayers of the People – Person (Korean), Rajitha De Mel (Sinhala) and Catherine Amber (English)

One: Gracious God, in your steadfast love and faithfulness,

All: We trust in living hope that you receive our prayers.

Song – We Shall Overcome

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome, some day.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

Matriculation of New Students

Dean: Today you formally begin your journey in this community of McCormick Theological Seminary, a community of teaching, learning, and service. Do you commit yourself to building this community and supporting its mission? Will you dedicate yourself to learning and growing so that you can be a vital participant in God’s work in the world? Are you prepared, with God’s help, to commit your hearts and minds to work, study, and serve as part of the McCormick community today?

New Students: Yes, with God’s help, we willingly and with purpose, join the McCormick community and will work, study, and serve to sustain its mission.

Dean: To those returning to this McCormick community will you join with our new students in dedicating yourselves to participate in learning and growing in knowledge, and re-dedicate yourselves to serve our mission and the wider community?

Returning Students: Yes, we will, and we rejoice with those who join us today.

Academic Announcements

Benediction
Postlude Music – *My Hope is Built on Nothing Else*  Dafne Nolla, Eddie Rosa-Fuentes
Public Domain

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name

On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

When darkness veils his lovely face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil

On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand
Dr. Jennifer M. McBride is Associate Dean of Doctor of Ministry Programs and Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics. Prior to McCormick, McBride held the Board of Regents Endowed Chair in Ethics at Wartburg College in Iowa from 2011 to 2016 and was a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Initiative in Religious Practices and Practical Theology at Emory University. At Emory, she served as program director for the Atlanta Theological Association’s Certificate in Theological Studies at Metro State Prison for Women. She has founded a similar program through McCormick at Cook County Department of Corrections and serves as the academic representative of McCormick’s Solidarity Building Initiative.


Dr. McBride’s method of scholarship and teaching is best described as "lived theology." Lived theology, as she defines it, holds in dynamic conversation modern philosophical theology and contemporary social ethics; lessons learned from church-communities engaged in situations of social concern; and theological insights from people directed impacted by injustice. Her book, Radical Discipleship, for example, is based on her experience teaching theology in a women’s prison and participating in the Open Door Community, an intentionally interracial, residential, Christian activist and worshipping community in Atlanta, Georgia, that, for forty years, had been engaged in works of mercy and justice with people experiencing incarceration and homelessness. McBride was a professor and close friend of Kelly Gissendaner, who was the only woman on Georgia’s death row until her execution in September 2015, and was a leading activist in the international #KellyOnMyMind campaign. Her forthcoming book, You Shall Not Condemn: A Story of Faith and Advocacy on Death Row (Cascade Books), will publish the written correspondence between Kelly and German philosophical theologian, Jürgen Moltmann.

Dr. Jennifer McBride is president of the International Bonhoeffer Society – English Language Section, has served on its Board of Directors since 2008, and has served as chair and member of the steering committee for the American Academy of Religion’s “Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis” group. She is co-editor of the T&T Clark book series, New Studies in Bonhoeffer’s Theology and Ethics and also serves as a Research Fellow in the Department of Historical and Constructive Theology at the University of the Free State, South Africa.