



ROCHESTER COLLEGE Church Connections

A Forum for the Churches of Christ in the Great Lakes region

Vol. 3 No. 1—Fall 2005

mission: Church Connections

engage the Churches of Christ in the Great Lakes region and offer a link for them to engage one another

educate the people of the Church of Christ in the Great Lakes region for lives of study and service

empower the Churches of Christ in the Great Lakes region to complete their redemptive mission

mission: ROCHESTER COLLEGE

Rochester College exists to engage students in a vigorous liberal arts education within a Christian community for a life of study and service.

Church Connections is published in the spring, fall, and winter by the Rochester College public relations office, 800 West Avon Road, Rochester Hills, Mich., 48307. Rochester College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 30 North LaSalle, Suite 2400, Chicago, Ill., 60602. Phone: 312.263.0456. Rochester College does not discriminate on the basis of ethnic or national origin, religion, or skin color. The College does not discriminate on the basis of gender except for specific necessary religious principles held by the College and its governing body.

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Responding to cries for help

The heart of the Jim Wood Seminar

by Amanda M. Wolfe

What has happened to the world today? A glance outside the window reveals a world that has grown more troubled despite the medical, social, political, and spiritual advances celebrated throughout the decades. Fifty years ago, people seemed less bothered or possibly life was more simplistic, therefore fewer problems arose. Regardless of cause, evidence shows that the human race digresses and more often than not morning only brings with it the feeling of dread that was left behind with sleep's arrival.

According to the Current Population Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau, 35.9 million people in the United States live in poverty. Studies from the Global Issues Organization reveal that nearly half of the world's population, which equals about 3 billion people, exist on little more than a dollar a day.

Hurt's slow procession does not stop with the issue of poverty. Addictions of every kind run rampant across the nation. Based on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's

(SAMHSA) National Survey on Drug Use and Health in 2002 and 2003, "an estimated 30.7 million persons aged 21 or older (16.6% of adult drivers) reported driving under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during the past year."


The glance out the window has become more than one can bear. Christ sees the burden is too great, and for this reason he calls for the church—his body—to mobilize. On the campus of Rochester College, the call to action has been heard. Planning for the 2005 Jim Wood Seminar, designed to challenge, encourage, and motivate local congregations toward growth, began late 2004.

"We're living in a hurting world. I don't know how else to put it," said Elton Albright, director of institutional advancement and coordinator of the seminar, which is scheduled for October 28-29.

The issues congregations struggle with in today's society beg for educated church leadership. Designed for this reason, the Jim Wood Seminar invited experts in church growth to speak at the event. Dr. Charles Siburt, the vice president for church relations and professor of ministry at Abilene Christian University, will focus on tactics to nurture hurting churches. Additionally, Dr. Brian Stogner, vice president of academic affairs at Rochester College, will use his expertise in psychology to equip churches for effective outreach to the grieving and suffering.

Albright says that the church is facing issues that have not been dealt with in the past such as the increasing divorce rate among the church body, broken homes, addictions of many kinds, substance abuse, and the list goes on. He believes that the Seminar will give churches the tools necessary to better assist hurting members.

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." —Philippians 4:7 (NIV)



Jim Wood Seminar
Small Church
HEALTH
...A seminar to challenge,
encourage, motivate the local
congregation toward growth
October 28-29, 2005

A legacy that lives on

by Dr. David Fler, vice president for church relations



Rochester College lost one of its closest friends this June 4th when Dr. Royce Dickinson, Jr., died from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Royce's relation to the College was multifaceted and deep. He served Rochester College as adjunct professor, as a Sermon Seminar lead thinker and participant, a servant to the churches, a mentor to our students, one of the finest examples of a thoughtful and studied minister, a

financial supporter, and as a strong advocate for the College's direction with deepest respect for its past.

Royce was known for devotion to his family, congregational building, tenacious pursuit of God's will, sense of humor, and the belief that rigorous biblical studies should be the foundation of faithful ministry. In fact, Royce's own scholarship encouraged us to bring world-class scholars to the Sermon Seminar, most recently, the British Marcan Scholar, Professor Morna Hooker. Upon conception of Rochester College's graduate program, Royce was the clear choice to teach adjunct courses in Practical Theology. There is no one

see "Legacy"
p.2



events:

September

30 31st Annual State Lectureship
 "Declaring the Righteousness of God"
 Exploring Romans
 Elmwood Church of Christ
 2001 Antietam at St. Aubin
 Detroit, Mich.
 7:00 PM

October

- 1 Rochester Fall Festival
 "A Season to Connect"
 Rochester College
 Contact: Birgie Niemann
 248.218.2113
- 15 Diversity Luncheon
 Rochester College
 Contact: J C Thomas, Jr.
 248.218.2047
- 28-29 Jim Wood Seminar
 "Small Church Health"
 Rochester College
 Contact: Elton Albright
 800.521.6010 x.4

Legacy

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quite like this robust man.

Royce will long sustain us even in his absence. For example, in a recent email he wrote about his "confessional preaching." I share his words here as a model of devotion to the important task of ministry.

"I subscribe to what I sometimes call 'Jacob Preaching'—when you wrestle with the text all week don't be surprised if you're



Dr. Royce Dickinson

limping on Sunday! I am on a never-ending journey to knowing. Does this make sense? I want to be an example of someone who hungers and thirsts to know God, who is driven over and over again to the text, for in it is a word from God, and that such an endeavor is painful!"

May God continue to raise and nurture "Royce Dickinsons" for our colleges and churches and the people they serve.

Songfest connects the church

by Amanda Johns

The first annual gospel Songfest, one of the many special events and activities at the daylong Rochester Fall Festival event, is dedicated to bringing the diverse social and spiritual communities together and uniting the body of Christ.

"Rochester College is deeply committed to retaining our spiritual heritage within the churches of Christ and to the notion of racial reconciliation and multiculturalism," says J C Thomas, Jr., director of diversity relations. "We are excited about opportunities such as Songfest, which we believe will assist in bridging the racial divide between predominately African-American and white churches of Christ."

Songfest features five a cappella singing groups. Rochester College's own A cappella Chorus will perform. Dr. Joe Bentley directs this group of over 50 students, as well as Autumn—a dynamic group of six Rochester College scholars. Chosen, a 10-voice ensemble from the Linwood Church of Christ will use their talents to honor and praise God. The Gospel Harmonizers, a

10-voice ensemble comprised of the Booker family from Columbia, Tenn., will cross generational lines through their soulful gospel songs. The Ministry, a vibrant group consisting of former Abilene Christian University students, says they created this ministry to uplift the hearts of all who hear them. Additionally, other singing groups and church choruses from the metropolitan Detroit area will participate in Songfest, rallying together to bridge the racial divide.

Songfest will take place on the campus of Rochester College during Rochester Fall Festival on Saturday, October 1, at 1:00-5:00 p.m. under the Big Tent. Admittance is free, and parking is a \$5 donation per car. Other activities, such as the children's area, vendors, and extreme games, will be taking place at the Festival, so feel free to come and spend a day filled with fun and worship!

Visit www.rc.edu/rochesterfallfestival for more information on the Festival and Songfest. Contact J C Thomas, Jr., with further questions concerning Songfest or how to enter at jthomas@rc.edu or 248.218.2047.

fyi:

203 attendees at Rochester College's May 2005 Sermon Seminar

32 states and provinces represented at Rochester College's May 2005 Sermon Seminar

20 Christian fellowships represented amongst the attendees at Rochester College's May 2005 Sermon Seminar

The Beginning of the Church of Christ among African-Americans in Michigan

by Dr. Vernon Boyd

Thomas W. Cross was born in Virginia in 1826. He moved to Ohio, married, and became a deacon in the Monday Creek Church of Christ. He and other African-American families moved to Wheatland Township, Mecosta County, Mich., in 1867 and worshiped in a local school building with both African-American and white members. That church continued to grow and became the Remus Church of Christ.



Rochester Fall Festival

A Season to Connect

The Rochester Fall Festival, on the campus of Rochester College, is scheduled for Saturday, October 1. Walking across the campus during the festival, attendees may participate in the "Extreme Activities," take the kids to the children's activities area, or shop at the vendors' booths. Vendor space is still available! Vending opportunities exist in a wide variety of areas such as arts & crafts, direct sales and non-profit.

Rochester College partnered with the Rochester/Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) to provide a special opportunity for the community in conjunction with the festival. A "5k Warrior Run" will start off the day at 9:00 a.m. Participants will run through the rich foliage of the campus proudly displaying its fall colors. Additionally, basketball enthusiasts may participate in 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, which begin at 10:00 a.m. and last throughout the day. A RARA Fall Hoedown concludes the festival, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Those who would like to sign up for any of these events may contact RARA at 248-656-8308.

To help coordinate the many activities and



events during the Festival, Rochester College would like to ask for volunteer help from its friends! There are 15 different areas that need help including information booth, extreme events, food court, Big Tent entertainment, and others. For more information contact Cathy Ries at cries@rc.edu or 248.218.2011.

Complete information, applications, and all rules and regulations are found at the official Rochester Fall Festival website www.rc.edu/rochesterfallfestival.

Overcoming addiction by stepping into the "Light"

Roseville Church of Christ sees renewed lives

by Amanda M. Wolfe

"Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.'" Matthew 9:12 (NIV)

It's happening as we speak. Since the fall of man, the world, our bodies, our relationships have been dying. The bright hope and saving grace from this sickness that has fallen upon us is Jesus Christ, who came to seek and save the lost. Those of us who realize this salvation continue to struggle with the sin that permeates our every day lives, but now, we do not struggle alone. Jesus takes the fallen by the hand, picks us up, and reminds us that we must keep pressing towards the mark.

At the Roseville Church of Christ in Roseville, Mich., regular men and women realize that they are the lifeline that Christ uses to reach the fallen and hurting. Church elder George Westerman, Jr. ('99), with the help of his mother, Virginia Westerman, implemented a program called the James Group, which is dedicated to helping those afflicted with addictions of any kind. Patterned after popular 12 step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, congregation members say that this particular program provides the added measure of biblical application.

Doug Allen ('81), preacher at the Roseville Church of Christ, says that this ministry reaches out to people who have traditionally been overlooked and neglected by society and the church. The James Group, named for the encouragement that James provides throughout his letter, provides people a place where they can try and fail, but continue trying.

"Too often people fear [addictions], don't understand the problem, and so they avoid dealing with it. I'm guilty of it. But, dealing with it is the hard part until you realize that sin in general is an addiction and we're all dealing with it," explains Allen.

Since the program's inception in 2003, the James Group has seen many individuals' lives transformed. Now, men and women who seek healing have found a place of refuge, accountability, strength and acceptance. Westerman says that he knows firsthand the difficulty one faces in returning to church after living a wayward lifestyle and wants to help light the pathway back.

"The single-most destructive human emotion is guilt. But, if people can overcome that and find value and security in the Lord, they won't do things that are destructive to the emotional, physical and spiritual state," says Westerman.

Allen says the change he has seen from the James Group is astonishing. Men and women who rarely attended, participated, or gave are now reaching out to others. The healing Christ worked in these lives has now incited them to lead prayer, help in worship, preach and lead devotionals. The outpouring of the in-dwelling Christ has begun because one man allowed Christ to use him. But, Westerman remains humble and explains that Christ's work can be scary.

"This type of work comes with a cost, but it's not about me. It never has been. It's God working through the church," Westerman finishes.



Grant "Refresh"-es campus

by Amanda Johns

Rochester College won a competitive grant for the fall 2005 year to train students to be effective worship leaders. The grant made possible the upcoming Refresh worship renewal program, instituted through the campus ministry department. Refresh will include a series of four seminars devoted to training worship leaders, targeting students with gifts in worship renewal and other aspects of worship.

Campus ministers Sara Barton and Steven Corp enthusiastically approach this opportunity for Rochester College to effectively train its students to serve churches through worship ministry.

"Ideally, the seeds planted during these times will benefit not only our daily Assembly worship times, but will continue to come to fruition over the next several years as the participants enrich their home congregations with the wisdom gained from this experience," says Corp.

Each seminar brings thought-provoking topics vital to worship renewal into the forefront. Such topics include Theology of Worship, Practical Aspects of Leading Worship, Cultivating Servant Leadership and Humility as a Worship Leader, and the Connection Between Worship and Evangelism.

A nationally or regionally recognized worship leader or team will conduct each seminar. Local congregational worship leaders attending all four seminars will serve as facilitators for discussion.

"I envision this grant as being an invaluable resource to our church family," says Dr. Michael Westerman.

This program was made possible through a Worship Renewal Grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, with funds provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

Rochester College, in partnership with Abilene Christian University, presents the second annual

Elder Link

forum
ROCHESTER
Saturday, January 28
2006

What is an ElderLink Forum?

ElderLink Forum Rochester returns to Michigan for the second year with a slate of highly-qualified speakers and a wide variety of topics. Attendees will have an opportunity to hear church leaders share their understanding and experiences in dealing with the challenges elders face. Practical resources and strategies for responding to such challenges will be offered along with special topics of interest rooted in scripture and Biblical principles. Sessions designed to strengthen and encourage church leaders and their spouses in meeting the demands of their roles will be presented by an elder and his wife.

Watch for more information coming in your mail this fall or by going to the web site at www.acu.edu/ministry/elderlink/conferences/rochester



Church Group Outings

Visit the Rochester College Bookstore on a Saturday or Sunday by prearranged appointment!

Include a tour of our new buildings in your visit.

Contact Larry Stewart at 800.521.6010

TEMPLE CARE

FOR WOMEN
MARCH 25, 2006



Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

1 CORINTHIANS 3:16

SPEAKERS

DR. JENNIFER HAMILTON
GLENDA THOMAS
CANDACE CAIN

DR. SONJA CHISOLM
BIRGIE NIEMANN

EMCEE | SARA BARTON
WORSHIP | ROCHESTER COLLEGE STUDENTS

Cost per person is \$15. Lunch will be provided. For more information, see www.rc.edu/news.

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ROCHESTER COLLEGE

connected

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