

Anne Simpson Pardington (MCE'64) student trailblazer

Visiting with and hearing the story of Anne Simpson Pardington (MCE'64) in Portland, Oregon left me in awe. She is truly one of the trailblazers in the history of Austin Seminary students. Austin began offering a Master's in Christian Education in 1955 and between 1955 and 1959, the



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first four women to graduate Austin would graduate with an MCE. In 1962 Anne was one of the first women to enroll in what was then called a Bachelor of Divinity (equivalent to an MDiv today). Anne shared with me that she got "crossways" with one professor who felt the B.D. wasn't for women and she would fail unless she changed to MCE. So, while the 1963 Seminary Bulletin lists Anne as a B.D. candidate, in 1964 she graduated with the MCE. (Important to note that in May 1963, Anne was elected Secretary of the Student Body.)

Anne grew up in Louisiana and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas. In 1981 she earned a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon.

Her career highlights: Director Christian education for Presbyterian Churches in Oklahoma and Texas, 1961-1964; hospital chaplain, Texas, New York, 1964-1966; instructor mathematics and English, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, 1966-1968; at home family care, Virginia and Oregon, 1968-1994; instructor history and women's studies, Averett College, Danville, Virginia, 1976-1978; counselor, Young Women's Christian Association and S.E. Youth Svc. Center, Portland, Oregon, 1978-1981; private practice, Portland, Oregon, 1982-1989; coordinator counseling and displaced homemaker program, Women's Center, Oregon City, Oregon, 1983-1985; counselor, instructor life and career options, Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, Oregon, from 1985 until her retirement. A scholarship fund at Clackamas was established in honor of her work at the community college. And she was listed as a noteworthy Counselor by Marquis Who's Who.



The year after graduating from Austin, Anne married George Pardington, an Episcopal priest. He died in 2017. Anne lives in assisted care in Portland, Oregon, with her sweet cat. Her two adult children and three grandchildren live in the area. Anne would LOVE to hear from anyone she may have known as a student or in the years to follow. Let me know if you'd like her e-mail address, her preferred communication. Anne was so grateful for the chance to visit and thanked me profusely, with a big joyful smile.

Jen Stuart (MDiv'14) has a tree in her pulpit

Caught up with Jen Stuart (MDiv'14) in beautiful Bend, Oregon where she serves as senior pastor at Bend UMC.



Jen earned her undergrad from the University of Houston. She has a love for theater and after moving to Austin, she acted in several plays at Capitol City Playhouse and other venues. In 2006, after enrolling at Austin, she was appointed associate pastor at First UMC, Austin. As part of her role there, she helped lead the church plant, Life in the City. Despite her long-term love for Austin and dedication to First UMC, upon seminary graduation Jen asked to be transferred to the Pacific Northwest Conference in order to be ordained an elder in a region more supportive of gay and lesbian equality. She notes a major factor in this decision was seeing how a fellow seminary classmate and alum was treated and eventually removed as a candidate for ministry in the Rio Texas

Annual Conference because she was gay.

Jen then served as pastor for Ellensburg UMC, Washington and in 2019 was appointed to lead the Bend congregation. She gave me a tour of the Bend campus and sanctuary. During Covid she shepherded the congregation to renovate much of the campus and explore new ways to partner with community organizations to better provide to the needs of the Bend community, especially those in the downtown area. The church found outside space on its campus for several mini-homes which provide affordable housing. Jen has helped the congregation “rebuild and reconnect through worship, sharing resources, justice ministries and arts.” The arts component is beautifully displayed throughout the campus. From Ash Wednesday through Pentecost each year, Jen works with the congregation to create art for the chancel to go with her theme for the Easter season. This year it includes this beautiful tree, with each flower representing a congregant.



Jen and Derek live in Bend and have two daughters, the oldest of which will graduated from college last month.

Glenn Edwards (MDiv'89) guides his congregation to provide affordable housing

Glenn Edwards (MDiv'89) lives and owns an insurance agency in Albany, Oregon. He also commutes to Eugene on Sundays and other times as needed to pastor the Peace Presbyterian congregation. His long-term passion for business and the church allows him to fulfill both in innovative ways.



Glenn earned a BS in Economics from the University of Tennessee. Upon that graduation he was offered a Jean Brown Fellowship at Austin Seminary. He says he valued all of his courses and especially enjoyed courses with Lewie Donelson and Ismael Garcia. After seminary Glenn was called as associate pastor at First Presbyterian, Tulsa, Oklahoma and later as pastor at United Presbyterian, Albany, Oregon. He then served as a fundraiser for the Albany General Hospital Foundation, worked and advised other non-profits (including being a current board member of the Mid-Willamette Family

YMCA). And, for 11 years Glenn was general manager of the Newport Symphony (Oregon). During that time he became a health insurance advisor which would ultimately lead to buying the Farmers Insurance Agency he runs in Albany.

In 2016, Glenn became part-time pastor at Peace Presbyterian. His business experience helped that congregation explore ways they could be an active part of the Eugene community while also accepting their likely limited future. Glenn worked with the session and SquareOne, a local housing non-profit, and the church sold its property to build co-op housing for low-income residents. They still worship in their sanctuary.

Marta and David Ukropina (both MDiv'06) co-pastors challenge congregation

In Eugene, I also caught up with the Ukropinas – Marta and David, both MDiv'06. They are co-pastors at Westminster Presbyterian, Eugene. She is on our ASA board.

David came to seminary only a few years after becoming a Christian. He says he was eager to learn all he could about the faith from as many different perspectives as possible and he found that at Austin Seminary. Both Marta and David also believed Austin was the place for them because of our focus on pastoral ministry. Most likely if either of them had decided to attend another seminary, they would not have ever met. It is the Crown and Anchor where the two first met while at Austin Seminary! If you look around you'll find their names etched into one of the Crown wooden tables (okay maybe my road giddiness made that up).

After seminary, Marta was called as the first associate pastor for Trinity Presbyterian Church, Flower Mound, Texas. David served as associate pastor at St. Philip Presbyterian in nearby



Hurst. A few years later David joined the Trinity staff as director of Christian Education. In 2015 they left Trinity and Texas to co-pastor the Westminster, Eugene congregation. Marta has helped build a thriving youth ministry in the congregation. It is a joy to hear them share their passion for their ministry and their openness to challenge the congregation (and youth) to try new things.

Marta and David are active leaders in Cascades Presbytery. They live in Eugene with their two children. (Side note: Marta's brother, Steven Zaborowski worked at the seminary as a development officer from 2011-14.)

Kathleen Brinegar (MDiv'08) follows her son's call to seminary

It's not too unusual to have generational family members attend seminary. But it is rare that a parent earns an MDiv after a child. I caught up with Kathleen Brinegar (MDiv'08) in Sutherlin, Oregon. Although Oregon has long been her home, after retirement and feeling called to ministry, she chose Austin Seminary which she got to know as son Blake Brinegar earned his MDiv in 2001.



Kathleen earned a B.A. in English from the University of Oregon and an M.A. in interdisciplinary studies from Western Oregon University. Kathleen credits husband John for making it possible to attend seminary. He stayed in Oregon to tend to the house and all, allowing her to move to Austin. Since it was just her on campus, she was assigned to Currie Hall. She laughs whole-heartedly, but respectfully, when recalling what it was like to live in Currie Hall as a much older adult. "The things I saw and heard!" she exclaims. (But don't worry classmates, no specific stories were shared.)

After graduating she pastored the Community Presbyterian Church congregation in Oakland, Oregon. Upon her second retirement in 2015, Kathleen continued to do pulpit supply for churches throughout Cascades Presbytery. It was only recently that she decided to limit her supply work to just her home church when needed. She and John do continue to be very active in presbytery activities.

Kathleen fondly recalls all her professors and everything she learned to prepare her for parish ministry. She is especially grateful to Ellen Babinsky who introduced her to Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin. Gail Snodgrass, wife of professor Stan Hall, was pastor there. When Stan died,

Gail asked Kathleen to fill in for her for many weeks. That sign of trust and the experience of leading a congregation through a difficult time helped Kathleen validate her call to ministry. She also shares how she and another student would buy food and other items and give to the individuals who lived on the street between the Seminary and Genesis Presbyterian. Kathleen became well known to those individuals and they started looking for her car each week, knowing she had something to help make their lives a little better.

Pictured are John and Kathleen outside their home in Sutherlin.

Dawn Baird (MDiv'15) shows smaller churches and unicorns can do great things

When a congregation is known as a “little church with a big heart”, you know the pastor is doing several things right. Visiting with Dawn Baird (MDiv'15), I can see how her enthusiasm for the Gospel and to love one another as well as her innovative ideas to help the community would indeed create a big heart in a little church. Although more accurately, I would describe Lakehills (Texas) UMC, where Dawn is pastor, as a big-hearted church in a little community.



In March 2022, as the Das Goat wildfire blazed through Medina County, Dawn encouraged the congregation to open the church for families and pets who had to evacuate. She found ways for every church member to help. Those who couldn't help physically donated supplies and prayed for the evacuees. Within hours from her first e-mail to congregants, the church was ready for evacuees. The congregation also offers breakfast before Sunday worship and a weekly meal for the Lakehills community each Monday evening. And, they just held their first annual Pop Up Prom closet to help young women in the community choose their dream dress and accessories all free of charge. Some seminary alumni donated dresses and shoes for the cause.

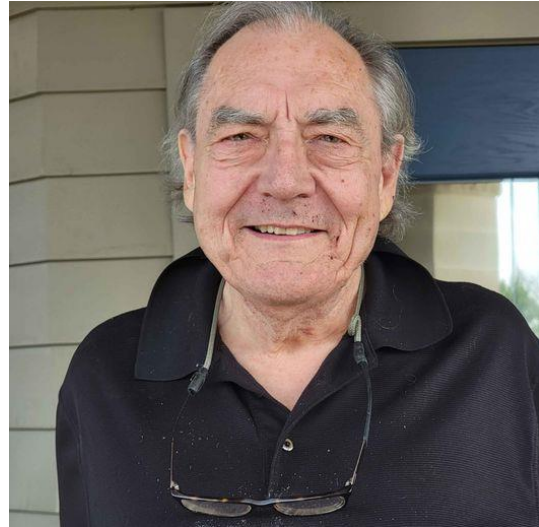
Dawn's first career was in nursing, primarily pediatric nursing. She earned a nursing degree from San Antonio College and a bachelor of Christian Ministry from Wayland Baptist University, San Antonio. In seminary, Dawn served as a pastor associate for Corredor de Esperanza, a yoked group of San Antonio UMC churches. Dawn has experience in new church plants and development with UMC congregations in Bulverde and Converse and has also served at Bracken UMC and Colonial Hills UMC, San Antonio.

Dawn is originally from Arkansas City, Kansas and still loves all things KC, especially the Chiefs. She also enjoys spreading joy wandering around in an inflated unicorn costume, often

with her dog in tow. She and David live in Lakehills and between them have 5 adult children and have three bonus daughters (aka daughters-in-law) and 6 grandsons.

John Strange (MDiv'73) and Austin Seminary's connection to fajitas

Visited with John Strange (MDiv'73) in San Antonio and discovered he is a fellow vinyl collector! John grew up as a Presbyterian in San Antonio. His family was active at Grace Presbyterian and John attended nearby Jefferson High School. After seminary he pastored several churches in San Antonio and south Texas, including Good Shepherd and First Presbyterian Taft. He earned a DMin from McCormick. John shares how important his pastoral care course was and it eventually led him to getting a PhD at Florida State in marriage and family therapy and become a certified therapist. His first practice was in Naples, Florida.



He eventually moved back to San Antonio where he continues to have a therapy practice and he also served as interim/stated supply at Pipe Creek Presbyterian and at his first home church, Grace, San Antonio.

John fondly recalls his Austin Seminary days, professors, and classmates. Today he attends Forest Hills Presbyterian in Helotes, just north of San Antonio. He and Lia live in Pipe Creek where she runs a Labradoodle kennel.

(Side note: John's father, Don Strange, ran Don Strange Catering in San Antonio as well as Don Strange Range outside Boerne, Texas. Don is credited with helping to make fajitas popular in America.)

Kristin Galle (MDiv'01) defines multi-denominational

MidWinter Lectures, APCE, and ice storms are over (fingers crossed on that last one!) and it's a joy to be back on the road visiting alumni. In Denton, Texas I visited with Kristin Galle (MDiv'01) and in absentia her husband Brent Hampton (MDiv'99, DMin'11), who is recovering after a fall and spinal surgery. Kristin's undergraduate degree is in Religion and Literature from St. Edward's University in Austin. She was ordained in the United Church of Christ. In addition to leading UCC congregations, she has served as interim and transitional pastor in three other denominations: PCUSA, Christian Church (Disciples), ELCA. She is currently senior pastor at First Christian Church, Denton, where she was called by the congregation in the midst of the

pandemic. Kristin also worked four years as a hospice chaplain and bereavement counselor. Kristin is also a current ASA board member.



Kristin shares that Brent has also been enjoying Denton and currently doing interim ministry in East Dallas at Casa View Christian Church. He previously led congregations in Woodward, Oklahoma, as well as Marble Falls and Brenham, Texas.

Kristin and Brent live in Denton. They have 3 daughters, all married, and one grandchild. Kristin loves wildflowers and she and Brent both enjoy reading, travel, and card games. They especially like finding a card shop to play Magic: The Gathering. She notes the many opportunities those card games allow for people to share their faith stories when they found out Brent and Kristin are pastors.