

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Alumni and Friends of Yale Divinity School,

The year 2007 saw continued vitality in the core programs of YDS, as well as new energy devoted to important initiatives. A stellar crop of new students strengthened our community, as did the active presence of faculty who have joined us in the last year, Sally Promey, Teresa Berger, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim (the latter two jointly with Forestry and Religious Studies). The centers devoted to research and outreach (Center for Faith and Culture, Jonathan Edwards Center) continued their programmatic efforts to deepen our historical awareness and engage the contemporary world.

On the minds of many in the community during the past year was the intersection of the realms of religion and politics. Several efforts were aimed at that critical intersection, attempting to reframe the discussion in terms of the obligations and responsibilities that we all face as people of faith and as citizens. The *Initiative on Religion and Politics*, jointly led by faculty and students, continued to seek ways of engaging the local community. Several conferences in the spring and fall, including two student-led symposia on “Voices and Votes,” provided venues for fruitful discussion, much of which was captured in the winter issue of our magazine *Reflections*. The presidential primary season, with several candidates making much of their faith commitments, underscores the timeliness of our treatment of this issue.

Many alums, from members of Congress to community activists, are significantly engaged in issues of faith and citizenship and are featured in this issue of *Spectrum*. One of the most critical of those issues is the current military effort in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our alumni participate in those endeavors as military chaplains and as anti-war activists leading the campaign to change the course of American foreign policy.

Other alums continue to play roles of leadership in our Church communities. This issue highlights one remarkable team of YDS/BDS alums who serve on the staff of the National Cathedral in Washington. Many more reports about our alums fill the pages of the largest collection of *Class Notes* that we have ever published. It is gratifying to hear from so many active and engaged alums.

This issue of *Spectrum* also marks some of the important transitions that occurred this year—the retirement of Professor Margaret Farley, the deaths of several beloved emeriti/ae, Davie Napier, Paul Minear, Brevard Childs, and Letty Russell,

as well as the untimely death of Lana Schwebel, who had been for several years our colleague in the Institute for Sacred Music.

While we celebrate the present and remember those who have served YDS in the past, we look forward to the future and to the role that the School can play in this new century. We anticipate completing the rehabilitation of our physical plant, and renovation of the old ISM space will begin this spring. We plan to improve our academic programs through creative new internship possibilities and a new Berkeley-led initiative in ministry to schools. We shall continue to increase access to YDS through significantly better financial aid for all students. We hope to expand our international presence with exchange programs and opportunities for interaction among an increasingly global student body. The strong growth in Yale’s endowment and the wonderful generosity of all of our alumni and friends who have contributed or pledged to the “Yale Tomorrow” campaign has made possible impressive progress in all of these areas and will continue to keep YDS a vital center for theological education that makes a difference.

As always, we are enormously grateful to all those friends and supporters who make the success of YDS possible.

Sincerely,



Harold W. Attridge
Dean and Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament

