

For Immediate Release

**Newark Leaders, Pastors Discuss ‘Welfare of the City’  
At Seminary Convocation at Robeson Campus Center**

A Who’s Who of civic, education, healthcare and ministry leaders will discuss the impact of metro urban ministry on education and health care for Newark residents at a day-long convocation on Saturday, March 28 at the Paul Robeson Campus Center at Rutgers Newark.

“Seeking the Welfare of the City” is the theme of the Spring 2009 Convocation co-sponsored by New Brunswick Theological Seminary and the Rutgers Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience. Over 200 attendees comprised of pastors, church leaders, educators, health professionals and students are expected to participate.

Dr. M. William Howard, pastor of Newark’s Bethany Baptist Church and Chairman of the Rutgers University Board of Governors, will deliver the keynote address to the theme, from Jeremiah, “Seeking the Welfare of the City.” His presentation will be followed by an education panel in the morning and a health care panel in the afternoon.

Newark Mayor Cory Booker will welcome and address the conferees during the lunch break in the Robeson cafeteria.

“Our Seminary is committed to metro urban ministry and the vital role it plays by working with government, civic and non profit groups to create justice and opportunity

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for those living and working in urban environments,” said Dr. Gregg A. Mast, president of New Brunswick Theological Seminary. “We are honored by the panel of experts

who will discuss the impact the church can have on the welfare of Newark residents, and pleased that attendees will have an opportunity to participate in the discourse.”

The morning panel will answer the question: How do we prepare the leaders of tomorrow? Panelists include Dr. Clifford Janey, Superintendent of Newark Public Schools; Dr. Steven Diner, Chancellor of Rutgers Newark; Sister June Favata, S.C., Administrative Director of St. Vincent’s Academy; and The Rev. Dr. William D. Watley, Pastor of St. James A.M.E. Church and St. James School.

The afternoon panel will answer the question: How do we identify and serve those who are not receiving the health care they need? Panelists include: Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Professor and Interim Chair of Pediatrics at UMDNJ – New Jersey Medical School; Maria E. Vizcarrondo, Director of Health and Human Services for the City of Newark; and Deloris Dockery, Director of the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation.

At the panel sessions, each panelist will speak for 10 minutes on her or his program followed by a 30- minute Q. and A. inviting attendees to engage in the topic’s discussion.

“Newark, America’s third oldest city, is also a city where a cross section of the faithful built a remarkably diverse and thriving urban community,” said Dr. Clement A. Price, Director of the Rutgers Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience. “The timing of the Convocation could not be better, as Newark, the city that the nation is

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now closely watching, refurbishes its civic culture and recommits itself to the welfare of

all of its residents.”

New Brunswick Theological Seminary offers a Doctor of Ministry in metro urban ministry, and is one of only two seminaries in the country with an endowed chair in that concentration.

“Urban ministry seeks social justice and change,” said Dr. Warren Dennis, The Dirck Romeyn Professor of Metro Urban Ministry at New Brunswick Theological Seminary. “It goes beyond the pulpit and influences the environment through Christian witness and action. Often it is the pastor who is privy to the real needs and concerns facing members of a congregation and a neighborhood, and can be a catalyst for action.”

The day’s program will include a brief mid-day performance of “Cirkus Luna!” by the service-oriented Theatre Group Dzieci. Dzieci is the 2008-2009 Visiting Artist at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

The day will close with a worship service at 3 p.m. The Rev. Dr. J. Michael Sanders, Pastor of Fountain Baptist Church and a member of the Seminary Board of Trustees, will serve as worship leader. The featured preacher is The Rev. Dr. Bernadette Glover-Williams, Professor of Preaching at the Seminary and Executive Minister of Cathedral International in Perth Amboy, NJ. Music will be under the direction of The Rev. Stefanie Minatee and the Jubilation Choir.

New Brunswick Theological Seminary is the first and oldest seminary in North America. Founded in 1784 by the Reformed Church in America, (as was Queens College, later Rutgers), it serves 22 denominations, 80 percent of its students are people

of color and over 50 percent are women. The majority of its 225 students are mid-career,

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working days and attending classes in the evening at its New Brunswick campus or its New York campus located at St. John's University in Queens. It offers three graduate degrees: Master in Divinity, Master of Arts (Theology), and Doctor of Ministry.

Celebrating its second decade, The Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience is an interdisciplinary academic program at Rutgers-Newark. It serves the greater Newark metropolitan region by reaching into the community at large with lectures, symposia, film, and performances to enhance the understanding of urban life, the social construction of difference, race relations, local history, urban youth culture, and education.

The Paul Robeson Campus Center is located on the Rutgers-Newark campus at 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard. A parking garage is located one block east on University Avenue.

The Convocation runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Adult admission is \$25, student admission is \$15. The admission fee includes lunch. To register call Aileen Carroll at 1-800-445-6287. Credit cards accepted.

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For information on the Convocation call  
Rosemary Carroll  
732-247-5241 or visit  
[www.newbrunswicktheologicalseminary.edu](http://www.newbrunswicktheologicalseminary.edu)