

News from the Director

by Richard S. Sarason, PhD, Director, Pines School of Graduate Studies



Dr. Richard S. Sarason

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends of the Pines School of Graduate Studies,

As I write these lines, we have returned to the classroom after a month-long break for the fall holidays. We are all delighted to be learning in person again this semester and reconstituting our Hebrew Union

College-Jewish Institute of Religion community, responsibly, face-to-face. (Vaccinations and masks are required of everyone on campus). And we now have full access once more to the stacks of the Klau Library and the reading room of the American Jewish Archives, which is a particular boon

to graduate students studying for their comprehensive exams and writing dissertations. So, although we are not out of the COVID woods just yet, we at least are moving toward some semblance of normalcy.

At the beginning of October, we celebrated our first in-person graduation ceremony since the pandemic began. This took place at Plum Street Temple. Our PSGS graduates of the past two academic years had chosen not to hold virtual graduation ceremonies, but to defer the formal conferring of their degrees until they could be hooded in person. (Nonetheless, concerns about the Delta variant and unvaccinated children prevented several of our graduates from attending.) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred on Matthew A. Boersma, Phillip M. Bollinger,

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Graduation at Plum Street Temple



John Johnson and Matthew Boersma were each awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.



Gretchen Johnson receives her MAJS degree from Dr. Richard Sarason as President Andrew Rehfeld looks on.

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Kyungji Ha, and John C. Johnson. The Master of Philosophy degree, marking the fulfillment of all PhD requirements except for the dissertation, was awarded to Phillip J. Fischaber, Hara Jun, Michael W. Owen, Ryan M. Replogle, Chelsea A. Simon, and Rabbi A. Brian Stoller. The Master of Arts in Jewish Studies degree was conferred on Gretchen S. Johnson, Matthew R. Liethen, and Devin G. Olachea. The degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, was conferred on Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph, PhD, who delivered the graduation address.

We welcomed our newest graduate students at the beginning of the academic year with several days of mostly in-person orientation, which included visits to the University of Cincinnati libraries and the downtown public library, as well as our own Klau Library, American Jewish Archives, and Skirball Museum. At the downtown public library, students were treated to a view of an 1872 prayer book edited by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise. (See photos on page 4.) New students also had a chance to socialize with their more veteran peers, and to meet members of the faculty with whom they would be studying. As in past years, a cocktail reception was held for new students at the home of Board of Advisors member Dr. Scott Joseph and Dr. Trish Joseph. We welcome new PhD students Samantha Allie

(joining the HUC-JIR/UC joint program in Modern Jewish History and Culture with the Department of History), Chris Beecher, and C.J. Gossage (both pursuing the study of the history of biblical interpretation). Our new MAJS students are Ben Crane and, in New York, Raymond Jasen and Hye mee Moon.

This year, because of ongoing concern about the spread of COVID, our annual alumni reception in conjunction with the joint annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature will again be virtual. We look forward to the day when we can all meet again in person over lunch, but in the meantime, we hope to repeat the success of last year's virtual meeting, which afforded an opportunity to hear updates from our president, provost, and PSGS Alumni Association officers, as well as the chance to socialize in small breakout sessions. This year's reception will be held on Sunday, November 21, 7:00 to 8:30 pm ET. A notice with the Zoom address will follow shortly. We hope to see you there.

Please remember as well how much we depend on you, our alumni, for recruitment and other contributions of your time and generosity. You recently received updated recruitment information about our academic programs for the upcoming year.



The Master of Philosophy degree was conferred upon six students (four in person) in the first graduation that the PSGS has been able to hold in two years. From left: Hara Jun, Chelsea Simon, Provost Andrea Weiss, Dr. Richard Sarason, President Andrew Rehfeld, Michael Owen, Ryan Replogle, Dean Jonathan Hecht.

Beginning Again . . .

By Joel Wildermuth, President, Graduate Student Association



Joel Wildermuth

The rhythm of the religious year—whether Jewish, Muslim, or Christian—has an odd way of clashing with the secular calendar. Perhaps “clash” is incorrect. Syncopation more aptly captures the variety of rhythmic texture that those of us who attend to religious observances experience throughout the year. Having just returned from

the High Holy Days recess, the students at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion are only entering their third week of classes. Whether reading, studying, taking care of self or family, or, like our rabbinical colleagues, honing pastoral and homiletic skills, the recess has made for an interesting start to the school year.



New students on campus: Samantha Allie, Benjamin Crane, C.J. Gossage, and Chris Beecher.

After nearly three semesters of online classes, we are delighted to be learning and socializing in person again. The incoming cohort of the Pines School of Graduate Studies once again had the opportunity of meeting face-to-face for orientation, and we were pleased to share food, swap stories, and get to know one another. This year, we welcome two PhD students in the History of Biblical Interpretation track: C.J. Gossage and Christopher Beecher. Samantha Allie is enrolled in the joint PhD program in Modern Jewish History and Culture with the Department of History at the University of Cincinnati. Ben Crane and, in New York, Raymond Jasen and Hye mee Moon, are our newest MAJS students. All have earnestly engaged with their studies and the HUC-JIR community.

The usual work of student advocacy and administration of the Graduate Student Association is well underway. We have a high degree of student interest in a Syriac course. Plus, we have requests for the Philosophy of History course taught by Dr. David Aaron and Dr. Jennifer Grayson. Meeting the learning needs of PSGS students, whether on the Cincinnati campus or through cross-campus registration, is one of our priorities. We will continue the popular Bible and Beer events that began last year, inviting students writing their dissertations and other scholars to share their research while enjoying our favorite brews and beverages. In our endeavor to support current graduate students entering comprehensive exams, we look forward to arranging opportunities for our more seasoned graduate students to share their experiences and strategies for navigating the exam process.

Community engagement continues to be a priority for us. As with every year, we look forward to participating in the interfaith services on campus, which are student-planned and led in coordination with the Rabbinic Student Association. The collaborative process and interfaith dynamic of the worship have proven to be both instructive and meaningful for all involved. Finally, we remain open and eager to encountering new ideas for building community. The innovation required for this over the past year and a half of being fully online has yielded to the need to relearn and reengage embodied forms of social interaction—a daunting undertaking for some of us!

As a semblance of normal campus life resumes, we anticipate fruitful outcomes from our shared learning and time together. We will even embrace the moments of syncopation that result when the rhythms of religious and secular life coincide. Personally, I am grateful to be doing this with an effective and gracious GSA leadership team: David Johnson (PhD), vice president; Ruby Jeffery (PhD), secretary; Lev Rooks-Rapport (PhD), treasurer; and Evan Vossman (MAJS), GSA/RSA liaison. We look forward to serving our fellow PSGS students and engaging with our rabbinic colleagues and the wider HUC-JIR community.

שנה טובה ומתוקה and may it be full of peace and good health.

Touring the Public Library



The PSGS' newest students began their academic year with a tour of the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library.



Benjamin Crane examines an 1872 prayer book edited by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise.

Your Support is Needed

Alumni support is *vital* for funding student fellowships. Our spendable annual endowment income does not fully cover the aggregate cost of tuition that the Pines School of Graduate Studies pays to Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion each year. Additionally, student stipends are funded entirely out of annual fundraising and contributions. Our goal is to accept more qualified PhD students to the PSGS, but without generous alumni support the number of students that we can fund remains limited.

Please consider a gift specifically designated to the PSGS Scholarship Fund, which supports PhD student stipends. Help us to invest in our current and future students, just as we have invested in each one of you. Every dollar that you contribute goes *directly* to student financial support. You can donate by mail (your check must specify that this is a gift to the PSGS Scholarship Fund) or online at <https://donate.huc.edu/giving>. When donating online, please click "Other" in the dropdown menu under Designation, then type in PSGS Scholarship Fund.

Graduate student tuition and candidacy fees are supported by endowed scholarship funds that are earmarked for this purpose. Recently, a PSGS scholarship endowment fund has been established in honor of PSGS director Richard Sarason. If you wish additionally to contribute to this fund, you should make out a separate check and specify the PSGS Sarason Endowed Scholarship Fund on the memo line. You can also contribute to this fund online at <https://donate.huc.edu/giving> but you must, as directed above, specify the Sarason Endowed Scholarship Fund in the comment box after you click "Other" in the dropdown menu. For questions, contact Shelly Goldfarb, PSGS Administrative Assistant, at 513.487.3230 or gradschool@huc.edu.

We need your support!

A Message from the Alumni Association

by Michael Graves, PhD, President, PSGS Alumni Association



Dr. Michael Graves

The Pines School of Graduate Studies Alumni Association sends warm greetings to alumni and friends this fall of 2021, as we each carry on with our work amid continuing COVID challenges. Many of us are still navigating altered procedures and cancelled events. We are thankful for the many positive developments in the past months that have allowed for the return to some aspects of normal life. But we also grieve many losses that have taken place in the past year. The PSGS Alumni Association is proud of the amazing accomplishments of our alumni and looks forward to finding new ways to connect people and offer support.

AAR/SBL Alumni Gathering Will Be Virtual

The November gathering of PSGS alumni and friends that normally takes place in conjunction with the AAR/SBL annual meetings will happen virtually this fall. This is not the new normal, but was deemed the best course of action for this year. We greatly encourage you to attend this live, informative, and fun event. Last year's virtual meeting was a strong success, and we expect an enjoyable time together this November. The link to join the PSGS alumni gathering on November 21, 7:00 to 8:30 pm ET will be sent in a future email.

Graduation

The PSGS Alumni Association sends congratulations (and wishes a warm welcome!) to all those who received their PhD and MAJS degrees at the in-person graduation ceremony that took place on October 3 at Plum Street Temple. Greetings were offered there on behalf of the PSGS Alumni Association by Dr. John I. Kampen, alumnus and member of the HUC-JIR Board of Governors.

Successful Open House with Andrew Rehfeld

The PSGS Alumni Association hosted an Open House via Zoom on March 17, 2021, with HUC-JIR president Andrew Rehfeld. Many PSGS alumni attended, and the conversation was informative and helpful. Many topics were addressed,

such as:

- President Rehfeld articulated his support for the Pines School of Graduate Studies as an important part of the broader mission of HUC-JIR.
- Lessons learned about online education and future possibilities for cross-campus education were discussed, along with PSGS involvement with HUC-JIR online continuing education.
- A brief report was given on the Task Force on Safe and Respectful Environments that was established by Board of Governors.
- Specific ideas related to the work of the PSGS Alumni Association received attention, such as making available a bibliography of PSGS alumni on the HUC-JIR website.
- President Rehfeld gave a wider picture of strategic planning in light of overall financial realities and the mission of HUC-JIR as a whole. On the question of academic subject areas that have been and will be represented in the PSGS, it was noted that the mission statement for the PSGS identifies the fields covered as “those areas of Judaic, Hebrew, and Cognate Studies, from antiquity through the modern era, that are supported by our faculty.” Support for the mission of the PSGS remains consistent, but shifts in disciplinary focus are to be expected as areas of expertise among the faculty change in keeping with contemporary academic discourse and the broader curricular needs of HUC-JIR.

HUC-JIR Strategic Goals and Plans

The Board of Governors adopted the following strategic goals for HUC-JIR for the next five years:

1. Educational Excellence: Strengthen academic and program excellence in all areas.
2. Student Experience: Strengthen the student experience at HUC-JIR.
3. Growing Our Impact: Expand the reach of HUC-JIR's impact throughout the Jewish world.
4. Financial Sustainability: Manage HUC-JIR to be resilient and financially well-positioned for our future.

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The HUC-JIR Alumni Leadership Council met for two days, April 19-20, 2021. The Alumni Leadership Council fosters a mutually supportive and collaborative relationship between HUC-JIR and its alumni in various ways, including support of the alumni association for each school (such as the Pines School of Graduate Studies). At the meeting this April, proposals were considered for alumni engagement over the next five years in conjunction with the College-Institute's strategic goals. Some ideas discussed were enhancing alumni engagement with recruitment, increasing alumni financial support of HUC-JIR, and meeting alumni needs in areas of continuing education. There was some discussion of reconfiguring how the alumni associations of HUC-JIR are structured. We are waiting to hear more details on how any such restructuring will affect the work of the PSGS Alumni Association.

PSGS Alumni Association Goals

Major discussion points at the March 31 meeting of the PSGS Alumni Association were the future of working groups

(e.g., the Admissions and Recruiting Working Group), the revamping of the alumni-student mentorship program, strategies for hosting future alumni gatherings, and plans for an online bibliography for PSGS alumni publications. Progress toward these goals will require coordination between alumni and current HUC-JIR faculty and staff.

We are still compiling an initial bibliography of Pines School of Graduate Studies alumni publications. A link to the publications we have received so far can be found [here](#). For those PSGS alumni who have not yet submitted a bibliography of their published works, feel free to send your bibliography to [Dr. Hélène Dallaire](#).

I know that many of us will miss being physically present with fellow alumni and friends at AAR/SBL this year. Please join us at our virtual gathering on November 21, 7:00 to 8:30 pm ET. We look forward to seeing you there!

Michael Graves, PhD ('06), is the Armerding Professor of Biblical Studies at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL.

Presentations, Publications & Other News

PRESENTATIONS

NewCAJE Annual Conference

Ari Ballaban | "Using Humor in Educational Settings"

Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting

Bill T. Arnold | "Deuteronomy as the Ipsissima Vox of Moses: An Update."

Invited paper for the Pentateuch Research Group, Institute for Biblical Research in conjunction with the Society of Biblical Literature.

Andrew W. Higginbotham | "Archaeology and Text at Qumran: Archive and Oeuvre in 11 Caves" in the Book History and Biblical Literatures session.

—"Parting of the Prayers": How Heb 11 and Didache 10 Inform the Development of the Apostolic Constitutions 7.32-33 and the Amidah (Shemoneh Esrei)," for the Jewish Christianity/Christian Judaism virtual session.

J. Michael Thigpen | "Like a Signet Ring": Zerubbabel and the Day of Small Things"

American Schools of Oriental Research Annual Meeting

Kristine Garroway | "Hush Little Baby, Don't Say a Word: Rattles, Lullabies, Demons, and Dead Ancestors in the Bible and Ancient Near East"

Evangelical Theological Society

J. Michael Thigpen | "Writing a Wrong? Understanding Zerubbabel in Context"

PUBLICATIONS

Bill T. Arnold | "Deuteronomy, Hosea, and the Theory of Northern Origins." In *Oxford Handbook of Deuteronomy*. Edited by Don C. Benjamin. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

—"Innovations of the Deuteronomic Law and the History of Its Composition." In *Deuteronomy in the Making: Studies in the Production of Debarim*. Edited by Diana Edelman, Benedetta Rossi, Kåre Berge, and Philippe Guillaume. BZAW 533. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2021. Pg. 163-94.

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–“A Centennial Review of *Die große Täuschung*: Friedrich Delitzsch’s Final Reflections on the Babel-Bibel Controversy.” In *Der Babel-Bibel-Streit und die Wissenschaft des Judentums: Beiträge einer internationalen Konferenz vom 4. bis 6. November 2019 in Berlin*. Edited by Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum and Thomas L. Gertzen. *Investigatio Orientis* 6. Münster: Zaphon, 2021. Pg. 45-61.

–“Deuteronomy’s Book and Hammurapi’s Stela: The Referent of ‘this sēper’ in Deuteronomy 28:58,” *Vetus Testamentum* 71 (2021): 1-18.

Thomas W. Dilbeck | “The Speech of Anchises and Arguments for Monotheism in Minucius Felix and Lactantius,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 29/3 (2021). Pg. 397-414.

Nancy Erickson | “Dressing Up: Role-Playing in the *wpt r* Ritual and a Contextualized View of the Biblical Priesthood,” *Advances in Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research* 1, no. 3 (Autumn, 2021): 11–27.

Edmon L. Gallagher | *Translation of the Seventy: History, Reception, and Contemporary Uses of the Septuagint*. Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2021.

Kristine Garroway | “Moses’s Slow Speech: Hybrid Identity, Language Acquisition, and the Meaning of Exodus 4:10,” *Biblical Interpretation* 28 (2020): 635–657.

–“Ending Wrong Convictions: A Divine Imperative.” In *The Social Justice Torah Commentary*. Edited by Barry H. Block. New York: CCAR Press, forthcoming.

Seymour (Sy) Gitin | *The Road Taken: An Archaeologist’s Journey to the Land of the Bible*. University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns/Penn State University Press and the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, 2021.

Kyle Greenwood | *Dictionary of English Grammar for Students of Biblical Languages*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

–“Abandoned Ships: A Syntactic and Lexical Reconsideration of Job 40:31,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 47/2 (2021), forthcoming.

Charles Halton | *A Human-Shaped God: Theology of An Embodied God*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2021.

Bernard H. Mehlman | Co-translator, with Gabriel E. Padawer, of “Individuum Ineffabile” by Leo Baeck, *Hebrew Union College Annual* 91, forthcoming.

David Musgrave | Published transliterations of two cuneiform tablets on <https://cdli.ucla.edu>.

Kerry M. Olitzky | Co-author, with Inas Younis, *The Adventures of Leila and Ilana*. Austin, TX: White Bird Publications, 2021.

–*Waiting for El Colibri*. San Francisco: Floricanto Press, 2021. Spanish edition also available.

–*The Candy Man Mystery*. Moosic, PA: Kalaniot Books, 2021. Available and more at: <https://kerryolitzky.com> and <https://www.etsy.com/shop/OlitzkyArtStudio>.

Brian Webster | Reading Biblical Hebrew: Introduction to Grammar: Chinese simplified. Or 阅读圣经希伯来文: 入门语法 Belmont, MI: DigiScroll Press, 2021, as well as the accompanying workbook and TekScroll Study Sheets. Chinese and Korean editions to come. TekScroll.com has Chinese data in simplified characters.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Ari Ballaban was recently appointed chair of the Study of Judaism section of the Midwest American Academy of Religion.

Kristine Garroway is the new co-chair of the Hebrew Bible, History, and Archaeology program unit of the Society of Biblical Literature.

Charles Halton has accepted a new position as associate rector of Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal) in Lexington, KY.

Dean Nicholas was recently appointed the Head of School of Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy.

BIRTHS

Kellie and **Cameron Sapaugh** announce the birth of their son, Caleb Clement Sapaugh, on July 24, 2021.



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