



# Move-Out Day Dinner

## A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE AND REJOICING

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# PRAXIS

Praxis is, n. The practical application of a branch of learning.

BY KATHERINE ANDREWS  
*(A&S, Religious Studies & Psychology, '06)*  
*Fourth-Year Committee Chair and*  
*2005-06 Development Intern for*  
*Student and Young Alumni Programs*

ON THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2006, the Study Center hosted its first annual Move-Out Day Dinner in Meade Hall at Christ Episcopal Church in Charlottesville. The evening drew more than 110 University of Virginia fourth-year students and Grounds ministry staff workers who came together to celebrate an official Study Center "send off" with a catered meal (served by third-years!), conversation, and a look back at God's provision over our four years as members of the believing community at UVa.

Tim Robertson (A&S, English, '77), Chairman of Bay Shore Enterprises LLC and father of recent UVa graduate Elizabeth Robertson (Politics, '06) and rising third-year Willis Robertson, served as the keynote speaker. Study Center President Drew Trotter followed and delivered a challenge to the fourth-years.

"I related to the students that no matter what else happens in their lives, the number one priority is seeking God and finding his plan for their lives," Robertson said recently. "Regardless of all the training they've received here and all of the wonderful experiences they've had at UVa, everything else pales in comparison to knowing exactly what God has in store for us." His talk included a seven-point discussion adapted from Christian teachings to guide students in seeking God's will.

"It was great being with the kids," Robertson said. "I've gotten to know so many of them over the years, and it was really wonderful to see them there at the dinner, and to interact with them again at graduation. What a great group of young people—and the Study Center has played a large role in making them who they are."



*Tim Robertson*  
photo by Eric Kelley



*Fourth-years, left to right: Jennifer Crutchfield, Christy Houston, Meggie McGuirk, and Gretchen Haughey*  
photo by Kelley Shepherd

In his talk, Dr. Trotter charged us to remember to live day-by-day in obedience to Christ, to take on the responsibility now of contributing to the world in which we live for the sake of Christ, and never to forget those who helped us get to the places we are now. "I just tried to think of things I wish I had heard someone tell me, when I was graduating," he said afterward, "and I hope it helped. This is such a fine class of young men and women; we have not heard the last of them."

The evening closed with student remarks and a slideshow designed by Study Center intern Eric Kelley (A&S, Studio Art, '06) that highlighted our four years together.

Wes Zell, who serves with his wife, Amy, as Study Center undergraduate staff, emceed the evening. "This was a beautiful chance for us to mark the end of four years with these students," Wes said, "as well as look with them toward all the ways in which they have been called to love God and follow Him into the world. We are so very proud of them and grateful that our lives have intersected theirs."

Many of the fourth-years vividly remembered meeting one another at the Move-In Day Lunch after going to our first-year dormitories. Over the years, we spent countless hours at the Study Center, working in the library, attending meetings or public lectures, baking in the kitchen or taking a Faith & Life Course.

*Continued on last inside page*

# God, Books, and All of Life

BY BYRON & RIE HARRIS  
*Owners, Splintered Light Bookstore*

**WOULD YOU READ** a novel about love, literature, illness, the Cable News Network, prayer, and fasting? The plot might sound far-fetched, but it makes for an interesting life! Just ask us, the new owners of Splintered Light Bookstore, on the first floor of the Center for Christian Study building.

Fourteen years ago, a friend unable to come to our wedding offered a gift of prayer and fasting for us on our wedding day. “Pray that God would show us how He would use us as a couple,” we asked. Over the years, the dream of owning a bookstore and coffeehouse with a Christian worldview surfaced repeatedly, but never seemed a feasible reality. As an illness of Rie’s lingered eight long years, as a job for Byron at CNN turned into a successful career, and as children joined our family, thoughts of a vocational call for us were overshadowed by the struggle of day-to-day existence: how do we balance illness, work, marriage, and a family life? Over time, the question of how God would use us as a couple became that of what Byron could do while Rie stayed at home with our children.

Eventually, God brought healing to Rie (we are ever grateful), and Byron left the world of news-gathering to pursue two master’s degrees, in English and theology. Early last year, a late-night e-mail from Splintered Light Bookstore revealed that the owner had been praying for months for a buyer for the store. The years-long wait for our calling as a couple quickly became clear, as we fasted and prayed, asked others to pray, and heard God speak through family, friends, and scripture. We became the bookstore’s new owners in August 2005, comforted in knowing God had led us here.

Coming to the store, we had a vision: to be a witness to the fact that no subject is uninteresting or unrelated to God, and to encourage Christians to let God transform all areas of their lives, especially those close to our own hearts: art and social justice. We have hopes to start an Artists Group and bring in artists of all kinds to speak—even those that have nothing to do with selling books.

Since arriving, we’ve had meaningful conversations with customers, offered “free-to-students” books, promoted the store through Mars Hill Audio inserts, provided book tables for events at churches and other places, filled the shelves with good books, and held four public author



*Byron and Rie with their children Ben and Isabella*  
photo by Eric Kelley

presentations this year. Our location in the Center for Christian Study is particularly advantageous in regard to ministering to students, in that they do not have to travel into town to find us. Several students are regular customers, many drop in occasionally, and a few work part-time at the store.

Perhaps the greatest joy we’ve received has been the discussion following the signing for *Wicca’s Charm: Understanding the Spiritual Hunger Behind the Rise of Modern Witchcraft and Pagan Spirituality* (Shaw, 2006), by Catherine Edwards Sanders. This book by a Christian journalist is about the growth of neo-pagan spirituality, one that helps us as Christians find a starting point for spiritual dialogue. After the talk, Christians and Wiccans lingered in conversation about spiritual matters! God showed us what had never occurred to us—our bookstore, one with a Christian worldview, can attract non-believers and share with them the same rich fare God has shared with us. This, we know, must be a part of God’s vision for the store.

We’d appreciate your prayers for our family’s adjustment, for the business itself, and for all those in Charlottesville and the world of the Web who might somehow be touched by God Himself through good books. 🙏

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*Visit Splintered Light Bookstore at the website [www.splinteredlightbooks.com](http://www.splinteredlightbooks.com). The site will be displaying additional inventory every month. The store carries books of all types: theology, history, philosophy, biography, film, poetry, literature, the Inklings, children’s titles, social justice, cultural criticism, science, prayer, marriage, and parenting, among others.*

*Phone: (800) 979-3310 / (434) 296-3977.*

*Store Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.*

*E-mail: [info@splinteredlightbooks.com](mailto:info@splinteredlightbooks.com).*

# UVa Faculty, Alumni, and Parents Host Regional Gatherings

BY SHELLY PELLISH  
*Director of Development, Alumni &  
Parent Relations*


**T**HROUGH THE SUPPORT of our Board of Directors and regional volunteers, the Center for Christian Study sponsored four events this spring as part of its continued outreach to alumni, parents, and friends. On February 4, David and Barbara Andrukonis (Parents, '06, '09) hosted a regional dessert in Northern Virginia for University of Virginia parents with the help of Judy Hill (Parent, '08) and Nancy Skancke (Parent, '09). The evening featured president Drew Trotter, undergraduate ministry directors Wes and Amy Zell, and their Grounds ministry partners Paul and Christi Walker of Anglican College Ministry.

In March, Study Center board member and University Professor Ken Elzinga and his wife Terry (Architecture, '77) hosted a regional dessert in San Antonio, Tex., with the help of Leslie Kingman (Parent, '05, '06). At the event, Professor Elzinga delivered remarks about the believing community at the University and led a discussion with alumni, parents and prospective parents.



*Richmond event*

In April, Study Center board members and local alumni hosted two events where Dr. Trotter spoke on *College and Culture: The Spiritual State of the American University Today*. The first event was hosted April 18 by Board Member Bob Curtis (Commerce, '88) and his wife Laurie in their home in Tampa, Fla. Twenty-two parents, alumni, and friends of the Center discussed the talk and the Center's role at UVa. On April 30, the Study Center co-sponsored an event with Third Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Va., for 122 UVa alumni, current and prospective parents, and high school students considering college. Wes and Amy Zell described their ministry and

helped lead a discussion following Dr. Trotter's talk. The event also featured Study Center intern Katherine Andrews (A&S, '06), who spoke about the Christian community at the University and her time at the Study Center. Elizabeth Massie (Engineering, '80; Parent, '08) and David Carroll (A&S, '73, Darden & Law, '85) chaired the Richmond event committee that also included Linda Newsome (Parent, '09), Cathy Tullidge (Darden, '84; Parent, '09), and Janet Andrews (Parent, '06). 

## SEMINARY IN THE SUMMER

### July 2006 Schedule

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Bill Wilder

*A Story in Search of an Ending:  
Interpreting the Old Testament Within  
History and Scripture*

*Dates: July 17 - 22, 2006  
Time: 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Monday -  
Thursday; 9:00 - 4:00 p.m., Friday  
and Saturday  
Location: Center for Christian Study*

*From Crisis to Christ: Interpreting the  
New Testament as Good News in the  
Real World*

*Dates: July 24 - 29, 2006  
Time: 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Monday -  
Thursday; 9:00 - 4:00 p.m., Friday  
and Saturday  
Location: Center for Christian Study*

Register at [www.studycenter.net](http://www.studycenter.net). Seminary credit is available.

Look here for  
summer course  
information -->

"I can hardly express how grateful I am for all the relationships that began that day," my classmate Kelley Shepherd (A&S, Religious Studies, '06) recalled. "The staff and students here provided me with hours of mentoring; office, library, and computer space; and even a little food every now and again."

The dinner was more than a year in the making, initiated by Heather Flow (A&S, History & Religious Studies, '05) and Shelly Pellish, the Study Center's Director of Development, Alumni & Parent Relations, as a follow-up to the annual Move-In Day Lunch for incoming first-year students and their parents. When the Study Center fourth-year internship program began last fall, we saw this as the right time to launch this dinner, which we hope will become an annual event. We recruited a committee of our peers to help organize and host the evening: Jim Broyles (A&S, Religious Studies & Economics, '06), Liz Edrington (Education, Sports Medicine, '06), Jordan Forbes (A&S, Government, '06), Rebecca Giles (A&S, Religious Studies, '06), Kristina Hereford (A&S, Biology, '06), Liz Kasper (A&S, English & Religious Studies, '06), Ashley Lawson, (A&S, Religious Studies & History, '06), Katie Parkerson (A&S, Psychology & Sociology, '06), Kelley Shepherd, and Kristin Wyatt (Education, Sports Medicine, '06).

As students, we have been the beneficiaries of numerous alumni, parents, and friends whose donations keep the Study Center running. As a thank you to the Study Center and a gift to the students coming after us, we are raising money to replace the heavily used and outdated printer in the Study Center's library. I am so glad we can contribute in this small way to the ministry the Center can and will have in coming years, and I look forward to visits in the future when I can see new students finding out the truth and learning to live it in their walks with God in this place. 🏠

### *UVa Move-In Day Lunch*

For incoming first-year students and their parents  
Saturday, August 19, 2006, 12:30 p.m.  
Center for Christian Study

Come meet fellow believers, visit with UVa professors, Grounds ministry staff and student leaders, and learn more about churches in Charlottesville.

To register for this free event, please contact Shelly Pellish at 434.817.1050 or [shelly@studycenter.net](mailto:shelly@studycenter.net).

*Sponsored by parents of University of Virginia students and led by undergraduates*

## THE STAFF & CENTER . . .

**Bill Wilder** spoke April 4 on *The Da Vinci Code*, and on Anglican clergyman N.T. Wright, with interviewer Gregg Strawbridge; the podcast is at *WordMp3.com*. Another presentation is at *cvillepodcast.com* . . . Bill presented "Facts and Fictions in *The Da Vinci Code*" throughout May at: **Reformed University Fellowship** at **Virginia Commonwealth University**, Richmond; the **Darden Graduate School of Business Administration** at the **University of Virginia**, to students and guests of **Darden Christian Fellowship**; the **Wade Center**, Bluefield, W.Va.; **First Presbyterian Church**, Augusta, Ga.; **Trinity Presbyterian Church**, Charlottesville; **Western Albemarle High School**, Va., in three English classes; and **Meadows Presbyterian Church**, Charlottesville . . . **Justin Holcomb** preached in the Charlottesville area March 19 at **Mt. Olivet United Church of Christ**, and at **Christ Episcopal Church** April 23 and May 14. He lectured April 4 at **Georgian Court University** in Lakeland, N.J., on genocide in Sudan. . . Justin traveled to **Sudan** May 16 to teach chaplains in the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army. He also was ordained a priest in the ECS (Episcopal Church in Sudan), and returned to the United States in early June. . . Justin taught *Systematic Theology IV* at **Reformed Theological Seminary - Washington, D.C.**, July 10-12, and will preach July 30 at **Christ Episcopal Church** . . . **Wes Zell** traveled with the eight students in the **Undergraduate Men's Residential Program** to Washington, D.C., April 21-22. They saw the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** and also heard noted author Os Guinness address globalism, evil, and Christian responsibility. . . Wes and Amy traveled to the Outer Banks of North Carolina with about 100 undergraduate students May 13-19 for a week of rest and conversation after final exams at UVa . . . **Drew Trotter** played the role of a U.S. Congressman May 26 as an "extra" on the movie set of **Evan Almighty** in Richmond, Va. . . He lectured June 6 to the **Presbytery of the Potomac** on *The Christians and the Movies*, and preached on *The Spirit as Our Helper* in McLean, Va. He served on the **Committee of Commissioners** of the **PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) General Assembly for North American Missions** in Atlanta, Ga., June 19-22, and spoke June 21 in Atlanta to parents, students, and friends of the Center on *College and Culture: The Spiritual State of the University in America Today*. . . Drew will preach at **Trinity Presbyterian Church**, Charlottesville, July 23 and July 30 on *Saying Goodbye* (John 16:5-28). He will present his *Faith & Life Weekend Seminar* on *Show & Tell: The Christian & the Movies in Contemporary America* Sept. 16 at **First Presbyterian Church** in Winston-Salem, N.C. He will baptize his grandson Jack at **Peachtree Presbyterian Church** in Atlanta Sept. 17.

THE REAL PROBLEM WITH *THE DA VINCI CODE*

SOMETIMES a movie will not let you alone, even if you wish it would just go away. *The Da Vinci Code* is such a film. Founded on such silly, unbelievable premises, and carrying such offensive content to one who cares about Christ and the Church that decorum at its mention is a real issue of discipline, this movie shows the worst elements of cultural disrespect by the Hollywood community. But the movie's offensive story line is not the thing that concerns me most about the discussion that has surrounded its plot.

Christians have suffered through movies for years, while the Church, particularly through its ordained clergy, is represented as sexually perverse (*Mystic River*), culturally murderous (*The Mission*), or even just personally insensitive (*Million Dollar Baby*). There are significant exceptions to this rule—the films of M. Night Shyamalan come to mind—but rule it generally is: Hollywood has not been kind to believing Christians for years.

Admittedly, the Church is made up of sinners, and so enough examples present themselves to justify non-Christians shooting at an easy target. We are easy targets because, after all, we are instructed by our Lord to turn the other cheek and pray for those who "despitefully use us" (Mt. 5:44). The Christian must also ask the question: "What do you expect from those who do not understand the things of Christ?"

This lack of expectation of reverential treatment from those outside the faith is what makes me unconcerned about *The Da Vinci Code* and its cultural impact. Movies like this are nothing new, and, if we are accomplishing the mission Christ assigned us to be salt and light in the world, we should expect some not to like that very much, and to react against the truth and goodness we try to bring to our society.

No, the bigger problem is this: I am finding more and more Christians who are asking questions like, "Well, how do we know Jesus wasn't married? How do you know Constantine didn't make up a new Bible and suppress the real one that told of Jesus marrying Mary Magdalene? How do you know that it is not all just a conspiracy—invented, secured, and continued by the Catholic Church?" A better question, though one that still concerns me, is, given that *The Da Vinci Code* is nonsense, what would be the consequences of Jesus having gotten married?

Each of these questions has a simple straightforward answer, but the questions themselves are not the problem, as I see it. The fact that the questions have to be asked points to a problem in the Church, which too few have admitted for too long: we Christians are simply too ignorant of the faith we profess to believe, and so are unable to defend it with the respect, gentleness, and information needed to answer the questions people might ask about it (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Let's answer the questions posed earlier. How do we know Jesus wasn't married? We don't. We also don't know whether he ever ate a Snickers bar, drove a Pontiac, or visited South America either, since one can never prove a negative, especially when it deals with an all-powerful God. But what evidence is there that He did marry? None; at least none that has any reasonable measure of credibility.

This assessment is based on the Gospel records being the earliest and best referents to the historical Jesus, but how do we know Constantine didn't make up a new set of Gospels and suppress the real ones that told of Jesus marrying Mary Magdalene? Again, we can't know such a thing, but those who would dispute it can't either. All we can do is compare evidence, and the evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of Jesus not being married, the Gospels telling the truth about the historical Jesus, and Constantine having virtually nothing to do with the canonization of the Scripture.

Was the Council of Nicea political? Yes. Were there huge debates about the divinity of Christ in the early church? Absolutely. But there is no plausible evidence for the grand conspiracy, spawned by power-hungry church officials, which Dan Brown has propounded. All the best evidence about the early church points toward a group of people struggling prayerfully to understand what God was doing in the person of Jesus, and what that meant for the world. And in the two thousand years since, most of the evidence still points toward a sinful group of people, Catholic and Protestant alike, continuing in exactly the same vein.

Lastly, what would be the implications for us, if Jesus were married? As far as I can tell, none. He was fully human, so he could have gotten married, and since sexual intercourse within marriage is a good thing, he could have had children. They would have been normal, completely human children—only Jesus ever has been, or ever will be, the God-man—but there seems no good reason to deny this possibility.

But to speculate about what could have been misses the point. What the church needs is a loving and thoughtful community of people who are not afraid to examine any challenge thrown out to it because they know the facts about their faith. If you have never studied church history; if your personal or group "Bible study" consists of reading the latest Christian self-help book; in short, if you read or saw *The Da Vinci Code* and had no idea how to answer the questions it raises, schedule an appointment with your pastor, and ask for suggestions about reading that will help you to grow up into a person who is able "to give a defense for the hope that is within you." The church of Christ needs you in these desperately ignorant times.

— Drew Trotter

# PRAXIS

Praxis, n. The practical application of a branch of learning.

Visit the Center's Web Site at: [www.studycenter.net](http://www.studycenter.net)

The Center for Christian Study is a non-profit education and outreach ministry serving the University of Virginia and Charlottesville-Albemarle region since 1968. Through programs, ministries, and partnerships, we provide opportunities and resources for the corporate and individual investigation of the truths of the historic Christian faith. Some of the ways we do this include courses, lectures, seminars, student-run fellowships, internships, mentoring opportunities, discussion groups, and special events. We proceed believing that men and women will be transformed by the Truth, which will be reflected in their thoughts and actions, both in their private lives before God and in their public lives as members of society, the family, and the Church.



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PRAXIS is published quarterly for our friends and supporters.

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University Christian Ministries, Inc. (dba Center for Christian Study) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation EIN 51-0192618.

The Center for Christian Study pledges financial accountability through our membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).



## PASSAGE

BY SHELLY PELLISH  
*Director of Development, Alumni &  
Parent Relations*

**A**PRIL AND MAY are bitter-sweet months at the Study Center. Each spring, our email inboxes swell with notes about the arrival of University of Virginia first-year students, whom we will welcome with our Move-In Day Lunch and various fellowship picnics in a few short months. At the same time, though, we say goodbye, albeit temporarily, to graduating students whom we have had the privilege to care for and serve during their time at the University. Even this cloud has its silver lining, though. In spite of the transience we feel as temporary hosts, we also see a growing Study Center family of alumni, parents, and friends at work who stay connected and help prepare for those coming behind them, just as those who came before them have likewise done.

This practice of serving others hit home several weeks ago when I attended a photography exhibit on UVa Grounds showing the fourth-year project of one of our interns, Eric Kelley (A&S, Studio Art, '06). His project, entitled *Passing*, was a series of photographs of people he had passed as he walked through the streets of New York City. As he shows his subjects in mid-step or in a world of their own, the viewer is struck by the lack of connectivity among his subjects as they walk or stand without heed for one another.

As followers of Jesus at the University and the wider world, we at the Study Center seek to step into this world of isolation and disconnection by treating students not just as guests or visitors but as fellow believers living out their roles as members of society, the family, and the Church. May God help us as we seek to keep people connected in the one body of Christ no matter where they journey after leaving Charlottesville. 