

A Profile

Ernestine C. Flemister

I was born and raised in Liberia, West Africa. I grew up in a family of cradle Episcopalians. My grandfather was a priest and my parents and other family members were active in the church and its organizations. Their example was the seed for my growth in the life of the church. I lived, worked, married, had children and expected to spend the rest of my life in Liberia. That was my future until one fateful day in April 1980. The military overthrew the Government of Liberia and took control of the country.

I arrived in the United States in May of 1980 with family members expecting our stay to be a short one. That was not to be. Liberia exploded in brutality and violence that led to a complete disruption of the country and ultimately resulted in a civil war. This upheaval lasted for close to twenty years. Many families were forced to resettle in many countries all around the world. It has been devastating. No family remained untouched by the situation in Liberia. Many lives were lost, including my brother, other family and many friends. I became a widow in 1994. Although he was not killed in the war, he was a casualty of the war. It has been a very hard thing to experience and live through.

Faith sustained and strengthened me through these losses. The seed that was planted so long ago began to sprout and grow. Initially, I did not recognize this growth. I attended church and became involved in the life of the church. I became a member of the Altar and Layreader's Guild. I joined the choir.



I volunteered with the food pantry, and helped cook meals for the homeless shelter. I also served as co-leader for the training of the acolytes.

All these activities were enriching and nourishing but it was not enough. I was recruited to participate in SOLLI, the Southern Ohio Lay Leadership Initiative. This is a

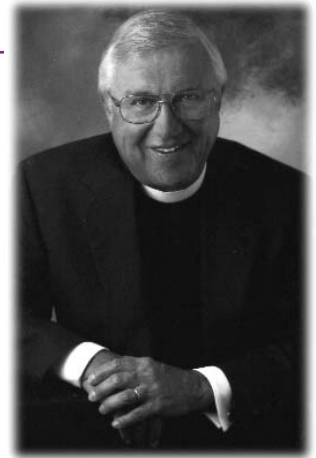
three-year program within the Diocese of Southern Ohio to raise up and develop lay leadership. It was a wonderfully nurturing experience for me.

It was during this time that I began to take seriously the feeling that I was to go further to the ordained ministry. I was hesitant but I continued to pray about it. I discussed it with my kids and they were supportive. I talked to several friends and they were very encouraging and helpful. I talked to Deacon Brenda Taylor at St. Philip's, my home church, and she was also encouraging. I finally got up the courage and attended an explorers meeting with my Rector, Fr. Jerome Burns. That got the ball rolling. During the whole process, I was uncertain, expecting at any moment to be told to go home. That did not happen. Everything went smoothly. I was given the green light from my discernment committee and received support from the vestry. I was told to call and set-up an appointment to meet with the bishop.

I met with the bishop and was sure that I would not be granted postulancy. I was granted postulancy in August of 2004.

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From the Executive Director's Desk



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

At a meeting here in the SIM office, Canon Jerry Carroon, director of SIM's scholarship programs and an historian, quoted Abraham Lincoln:

"The struggle of today, is not altogether for today – it is for a vast future also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have devolved upon us." – From a message to Congress in 1861.

While it is indeed dangerous to impute to ourselves similarities with the great events and people of the past, there is much in Lincoln's words which rings true in the life and ministry of the Society in 2006. Here we are, a small but historic society, about to embark upon a great undertaking, **Funding Future Leaders: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians**. In this effort we are responding to what the Fund for Theological Education has termed "The Gathering Storm" of seminarian debt, in which the heavy burden of accumulated debt of those called to ordained ministry threatens both the vocation to parish ministry and the financial stability of the family life of the newly ordained. Currently, while some funding for tuition, room, board and other seminary education expenses come from sponsoring parishes and dioceses, and while seminaries work very hard to raise adequate funds for scholarships, we have a system of funding seminarians which is woefully inadequate — a faulty patchwork with no coherent plan. Over one-third of those ordained to the transitional diaconate in the last four years are not currently engaged in what we would call traditional, ordained ministry, e.g., in parishes, dioceses or chaplaincies. The debilitating burden of educational debt is one of the important reasons that we are losing some of the best ordained leaders of the future.

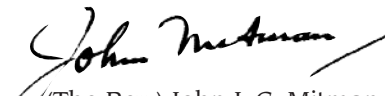
Yes, events have devolved upon the Society for the Increase of the Ministry the task of raising a very large endowment, \$200 million over the next twenty years, to ensure that our seminarians will no longer add to their indebtedness in order to say "Yes" to God's call to ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. This will be the largest single fund raising effort in the history of the Episcopal Church. And the struggle is not simply for today, but for the vast future of the ministries of this Church we love so much.

Abraham Lincoln called upon the Congress and the American people in 1861 to rely upon divine Providence. Lincoln was no Deist as was Washington. He quoted scripture often and with ease, never reticent to call upon God. He knew where the strength resided and whose help he and this nation needed. So also do we, here in the Society.

We have a great task ahead of us. We thank you most earnestly for your past support. As we have called upon you, our friends and supporters, in the past, so also now, we ask for your prayers and your assistance in spreading the news of **Funding Future Leaders**.

"The struggle of today, is not altogether for today – it is for a vast future also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have devolved upon us."

Gratefully,


(The Rev.) John L.C. Mitman,
Executive Director

"Vocation is what's left when all the games of self-deception have ceased."
Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury



Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest:
Front row: Stacy Walker-Frontjes, Cara Spaccarelli,
Jennie Anderson, Kate Wesch, Lori Johnson, Carissa
Baldwin, Leslie Burkhardt. Back row: Ralph Joseph
Behen, Bill Kindel, Denson Freeman, Shelley Adams.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Dear Friends in Christ,

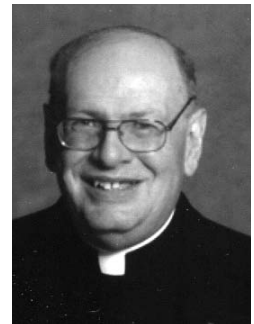
As I complete the Spring visits to our seminarians I am experiencing a new phenomena — saying good bye to the graduating seniors. As you meet with these women and men over the course of their years of study it is only natural that you get to know them and appreciate what they mean to the Church and the future of the ordained ministry. Listening to their stories, their hopes, aspirations and, yes, trepidations, it is easy to become caught up in their life. Their tales of their experiences in clinical pastoral education (CPE) or the trauma of the General Ordination Examinations or how a new baby has affected their lives in ways they never expected all allow me to offer in your name the encouragement and support of the Society which means so much to them.

For the seniors, also, it is a time of looking forward to graduation, ordination, and answering the first call to parish ministry. For those who know what their assignment will be it is a time of joy and expectation—for those not yet placed it is still a period of concern. They are so appreciative of our prayers and support as they become SIM alumni and move into the wider Church from their seminary life.

My trips about the country are sometimes fraught with adventure—from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California where rain was continuous, or so it seemed, to The Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest where it was a welcome 80 degrees and the air conditioning was on. And there are, of course, the inevitable flight delays, the longest this time was two and a half hours at O'Hare because of weather, and another opportunity to catch up on my reading.

At one seminary it was a privilege to listen to a presentation by three of our scholarship students, all middlers, who had spent their January term (a one month program of concentrated study in a particular area) in very diverse projects. One studied Christian education in Kenya, another worked in a food kitchen and homeless shelter in Atlanta, and yet another worked in cleaning up and construction in the gulf coast area which had been the victim of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Each was part of a team and gave a power point presentation of their experience. It was both moving and inspiring and each one showed signs of real growth in their understanding of ministry.

The Scholarship Committee is in the midst of processing the new applications for the 2006-2007 academic year and soon it will be time for us to add a brand new group of seminarians to our prayer list. I hope you will continue to keep the work of the Society in your prayers and know how much it means to so many as they study for the ordained ministry. As a clerical deputy from the Diocese of Connecticut to the General Convention in Columbus, Ohio, I hope to see many of our seminarians and alumni as they attend this very important event.



Robert G. Carroon

The Rev. Canon Robert Girard Carroon
Director of Scholarship Program

A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY NOVEMBER 9, 2005

At the Annual Meeting of the Society, following the pattern of modern colleges, universities and other non-profit institutions, the transition was effected from the 19th Century model of charitable organizations in which those who contribute to the organization vote for members of an Executive Committee to a more modern system of governance with a self-perpetuating Board of Directors. With unanimous consent from those present, the change was made through the acceptance of new By-laws which were developed in a painstaking process over the previous year.

One major change in the Society going forward will be the election of a Board which better represents the whole of the Episcopal Church, including better geographical representation and with sensitivity to the racial and ethnic diversity of our church. Also, three members of the Board, one in each class, will be

jointly appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies of the General Convention, better assuring both communication with and accountability to the larger church.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be moved to May to better coincide with our fiscal year, September 1st through August 31st. At November's meeting, no new members of the Board were elected. The next Annual Meeting will be in May of 2007, providing eighteen months in which to recruit new, more representative members to the Board.

The membership gave hearty thanks to Mrs. Mary Stoughton who retired as head of the Scholarship Committee following about 25 years of laudable service in that capacity. Our thanks to Mary! With some sadness, the meeting also received the news of the retirement of the Rev. Dr. William Penfield from the Executive Committee. Fr. Penfield has served

on the Executive Committee since his retirement as SIM's Executive Director in the autumn of 2001.

Those present in November were treated to a new format for our financial reports. With a goal of greater transparency, the report provided much more information than in the past and in a quite user-friendly design. The new budgeting process and budget presentation format is the result of very hard work on the part of our new treasurer and assistant treasurer, Judith Radasch and Richard Wenner.

We were delighted to welcome as our speaker the Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler. Dr. Lemler is the former Dean of the Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois and currently heads the Office of Mission at the Episcopal Church Center in New York. He is a long time friend and supporter of the Society and an engaging speaker.

"While I am grateful for your financial support, I am extremely grateful you are keeping us in your thoughts and prayers. That in itself is a great sense of assurance and support. Know that I keep you all in my prayers as well."

C.W.M. – BDS

"Thank you very much for your support. The efforts taken by you and SIM to provide financial support to me and other seminarians is most appreciated. In particular, the funds I have just been given will help to pay for my rent and health insurance this month and next. Your support allows me to continue focusing on worship and study."

K.S. – VTS



*The Rev. Canon James B. Lemler,
Speaker at the Annual Meeting.*



*The Rev. Dr. Borden W. Painter,
former President of the SIM
Board, and former President
of Trinity College, Hartford CT,
whose faculty were prime
founders of the Society in 1857,
presents the report of the
Governance Committee and
introduces the new By-Laws
of the Society.*



*Dr. Marnie Mueller,
President of the SIM
Board, chairs the meeting.*



*The Rev. Canon Robert G. Carroon,
Director of Scholarship Programs,
delivers his report.*



*The Rev. Earl G. Purnell, Chair of the
Development Committee, delivers his report.*



*Joseph Batkiewicz, Financial Secretary of the Society,
and Ruth McElraevy, Administrative Assistant of the Society.*

Have you remembered SIM in your will?

Funding Future Leaders: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians Awareness Campaign Begins Across the Country

The big news here at the Society is the launch this spring of our new fund raising campaign, ***Funding Future Leaders: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians ("FFL")***. Over the coming months, materials will be shared with every bishop, every rector, priest-in-charge and senior warden of every diocese and parish in the Episcopal Church. Each congregation will receive a series of three inserts for their Sunday bulletins which tell the story of the need to support our seminarians and how ***FFL*** is designed to meet this need. In addition, we are making available a full case statement for this effort and a comprehensive ***FFL*** Power

Point presentation, designed to be used in every congregation across the land. All participants in this summer's General Convention will receive these materials as well as members of the national Executive Council and the staff of the Episcopal Church Center in New York. Our new and comprehensive website (FundingFutureLeaders.org) is complete and will go on line in a few weeks. We are up and running!

It is our hope that these comprehensive and easily accessible resource materials will be used by parishes nationally.

But we need your help. As time goes on, we ask you to become an advocate for the Society and the students we support by urging all the powers that be in your parish and your diocese to make use of these ***Funding Future Leaders*** resources. For instance, the Power Point presentation can be used in adult forums, with vestries, outreach committees, at meetings of the Episcopal Church Women, at diocesan conventions and in other venues as well. This presentation speaks for itself and requires little expertise or preparation.

The roll-out of ***FFL*** is timed to precede this summer's General Convention in Columbus, Ohio.



Trinity School for Ministry:

Patrick Duddy, Brain McVey, Deke Miller, Ben Phillips.

SIM AT GENERAL CONVENTION 2006

The Society will have a presence at the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church which will be held this summer in Columbus, Ohio. The Rev. John Mitman, our Executive Director, and Bill Lerchen, our Associate Director, will manage a booth [#120] in the exhibit area, adjacent to the booths of our seminaries. Canon Jerry Carroon, our Director of Scholarship Programs for the Society, is a Clerical Deputy from Connecticut and will help us out when he is not needed on the floor of the House of Deputies. This will be a very important opportunity to share our ***FFL*** materials with members of the House of Bishops, Clerical and Lay Deputies and the thousands of visitors who attend this unique gathering. If you will be attending, please stop by our booth and make yourself known to us. If you have an hour or two, you might want to help us out at the booth, sharing the news of the ministry of the Society and ***Funding Future Leaders: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians.***

"I am writing to thank you and all who make the scholarship program at SIM possible. Your decision to support my seminary education through scholarship money, personal interest, and prayer is most appreciated and will help ease the burden financially. It is encouraging to know that you and the others at SIM are committed to each and every one of the seminarians you support and want to maintain a personal relationship."

T.E.O.– Nashtoah

How Often Are You Able to Leave a Legacy?

With a gift to the Society for the Increase of the Ministry you can help ensure that the future leadership of our Church will be well-trained and prepared for its future challenges!

Some recent surveys have suggested that almost 89% of American households contribute to charity, yet only about 8% make a charitable bequest. Perhaps the primary reason more people do not make bequests has to do with planning.

A good estate plan, including a well-designed last will and testament, will preserve assets for designated loved ones, will protect your estate from unnecessary taxes and can create a legacy that survives well beyond your lifetime.

Sometimes we tend to have an "all or nothing" attitude about estate planning – we plan on leaving everything to an heir or everything to a charity. Good financial planning can do both. You can arrange to help both those you love while also helping SIM.

A bequest through a will is the simplest and most common planned gift. It can be an outright monetary bequest, a percentage of your estate, a percentage of what remains of your estate after a number of other bequests have been fulfilled, or a specific asset such as personal or real property.

You can help SIM while you help those you love. Remember SIM in your will today.

For more information, please contact the Society's office.

Thank you!

"I greatly appreciate the receipt of the second installment of my scholarship. It's amazing how God's timing is always just right. That is surely the case with these funds. Thank you."

D.J. – Sewanee

SIM APPOINTS AN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

On February 1, 2006, the Society for the Increase of the Ministry appointed William G. Lerchen III as Associate Director.

A lifelong Episcopalian, Bill grew up in the Detroit area where he and his family worshipped at Christ Church, Cranbrook. Bill was confirmed while a student at Kenyon College.

He and his wife Margaret have three sons. Their oldest son, Andrew, is married and lives in Chicago. He and Melanie are moving to Seattle where Andrew will attend law school. Two younger sons, Alex and Peter, are in their final years of college in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

Having professional experience as a Trust and Private Banker as well as a Development Officer at The Salisbury School and Yale University, Bill declares, "I am very pleased to join with SIM's dedicated Board, Friends and Staff to work on the vital mission of supporting the future leaders of the Episcopal Church. I look forward very much to working with the SIM community."



SOCIETY ANNOUNCES NEW ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The Society is pleased to announce a new opportunity to support Episcopal Seminarians in need — Annual Scholarships.

With a gift of \$3,000 or more, a donor (an individual, family or congregation) will be matched with a worthy and appropriate seminarian chosen by the Scholarship Committee and our staff. The donor will be provided with a profile of the recipient who, in turn, would correspond with the donor. It is hoped that donors will wish to commit to this program for at least two years in the anticipation that a more meaningful relationship may then develop between recipients and donors.

Annual Scholarships may be given in memory of a loved one, in thanksgiving for God's many gifts or to commemorate a significant event in the life of a person, family or donor parish.

Annual Scholarships are distinguished from our Named Scholarships in that the funds contributed to the Society are given directly to the student, while contributions for Named Scholarships are placed in the Society's endowment and only the income from the endowment is used to support the scholarship.

Wouldn't you and your family value the rewards and satisfaction of an Annual Scholarship through the Society, knowing that you have made a difference in providing for the future ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church?

Vance Family Scholarship Announced

We are very pleased to announce the **Vance Family Named Scholarship**. Various members of the Vance family have been extraordinary supporters of the Society and its ministry over these last several years. Our thanks to each and every member of the family for this most gracious gift.

The Society's Named Scholarship Program provides opportunities for individuals, families and congregations to contribute a minimum of \$100,000 to establish scholarships which then bear the name of a person, family or congregation, according to the donor's wishes. Named Scholarships may be given in memory of a loved one, in honor of a person, in thanksgiving to God for grace received at God's hands or, as in the case of congregations, as an extension of ministry.

Gifts to the Named Scholarship Fund are placed in the Endowment Fund of the Society, the proceeds of which are then used to provide scholarship support to seminary students in need.

It is hoped that donors and recipients will establish personal and ongoing relationships, thus both our seminarian recipients and members of the church at large may come to know one another and to share in one another's ministries.

The Vance Scholarship joins the Jones, Kaman and Cunningham Scholarships established over the last many years.

The Executive Director would welcome the opportunity to discuss the possibility of creating Named Scholarships with any interested persons. Participation in this program is of direct, dramatic and immediate assistance to the work and ministry of SIM.

"The grant is most welcome. It came at the perfect time in this year's studies. Seminary can be a fiscal nightmare, especially for those of us who are on the downhill side of 50. The grant will most definitely make a huge difference in my life this year!"

D.L.D. – Sewanee

"Thank you so much for your support and faith in my husband. It means so much to us as a family and you can never know how much you have helped us."

B.R. – spouse – VTS



Church Divinity School of the Pacific:
*Jason Alexander, Sabeth Fitzgibbons, Michael Reid,
 Canon Carroon, Karen Johanns*

October 2, 2007 marks the 150th Anniversary of the Society

On this date SIM will mark its one hundred and fiftieth year of service to seminarians in financial need and the future leadership of the Episcopal Church.

We look ahead to a joyful celebration of this important milestone in our history. Plans are underway for a celebratory service which will include special prayers for graduates, family members and friends as well as thanksgiving for this vital ministry. Plans also include a festive dinner.

The Rev. Dr. Borden W. Painter, Jr., former President of SIM and of Trinity College, Hartford, has begun research on a new history of the Society for this occasion.

This is also a special time to look forward as we work with the Episcopal community in the realization of ***Funding Future Leaders: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians.***

Something to Think About

I am frequently asked, “Why is seminarian debt increasing so rapidly?” While this is a complex question, three thoughts come to mind. The first two are from my own observation as I visit the seminaries and the second comes from a national study on these matters.

1. When I was a student at the Berkeley Divinity School, Class of ‘65, many of the functions or jobs at the school were done by the students themselves, thus providing income to the seminarians and their families. While there was a cook, all other jobs in the kitchen and dining room were handled by seminarians. While there was a Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, the lawn mowing and gardening, interior and external painting and basic maintenance were done by students. At many of our seminaries, many of these jobs have been outsourced and some require union membership. Result: the income is no longer available to our students.

2. Again, in years past, the summer between the first and second year of seminary was dedicated to a course in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) while the second summer was available for gainful employment. At many of our seminaries and in many dioceses required programs have been added during that second summer. While not all students are required to take part in such programs, many students are strongly encouraged to take part in programs, internships and seminars during this period. For instance, there is now a program at Canterbury Cathedral for seminarians from all across the Anglican Communion. This is a wonderful program and the limited number of openings prompts fierce competition from students across the country. While in the past the second summer was a time to make money to help pay one’s fees, many of these opportunities actually cost significant sums, thus the second summer often actually adds to the debt load of our students.

3. Related to the above, the Center for Economic and Policy Research published a study in September of 2005 by Heather Boushey, “Student Debt: Bigger and Better”. She writes: “To put this in perspective, in 1981, a student could work the entire summer at a minimum wage job, save all their money, and pay two-thirds of their school expenses at a public, four-year institution. They would need to find another \$2,000 (in 2004 dollars) from working during the school year, or from grants or aid from their parents. Today, a student would have to work full-time at a minimum wage job for an entire year, saving every penny, and would still be a couple hundred dollars short of being able to pay one full year of their expenses.”

The times change and the pressure rises.

— The Rev. John L.C. Mitman



Will our parishes
have priests?

Support the
education and
training of future
Episcopal clergy.

www.FundingFutureLeaders.org
860.233.1732

 **FUNDING FUTURE
LEADERS**
A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians

*This **Funding Future Leaders** poster which will be used nationally over the next two years.*



**University of the South
at Sewanee:**

*Jonathan French, Joseph Smith,
Bob Corley, Deborah Jackson,
Ted Clarkson, Kimberly Still,
Kingsley Ubabukoh*

**2005-2006
GRANT YEAR
STATISTICS**

37 Women

Average Age 37.9
12 under age 30 = 32.4%
Youngest woman 24
Oldest woman 58

25 single women
12 married women

5 women with dep. Children

47 Men

Average age 34.5
19 under age 30 = 40.4 %
Youngest man 23
Oldest man 58

21 single men
26 married men

24 men with dep. Children

Overall age of men
and women = 36 years

84 students

54 Dioceses represented

Ernestein C. Flemister *continued from page 1*

Wow, it was a whirlwind. Once the ball got rolling, everything went very quickly. I applied to and was accepted at Bexley Hall Seminary's Columbus site. I thought that I would have to wait until the following September because I had no money and it was too late to apply for grants and scholarships. I prayed for guidance. The ball was in God's court. If this was where God wanted me to be, financial provisions would be forthcoming. They were. I am now in my middler at Bexley Hall Seminary. Most days, I know with a certainty that I am on the right path. I was able to apply for grants and scholarships this year. Gratefully, I received assistance from The Society for the Increase of the Ministry. Without their help, I would not be able to attend Bexley Hall and prepare for the work that God has for me. I thank God for the progress thus far and pray that he will continue to strengthen and sustain me on my journey. I am also grateful for the network of family and friends who have been supportive. They feed me in all the ways that I need feeding. They hold me up in prayer and carry me when I am too tired to carry myself. They are truly a blessing from God.

I feel that my accumulated experiences have led me to this place. It has been a challenge and a blessing but I am enjoying it immensely. I feel drawn to work for peace and reconciliation. I believe this is necessary work. The church has to model behaviors that foster peace and reconciliation. The church has to be hospitable and welcome all to the Table of the Lord. I pray that I will continue to be open to the possibilities that God is putting before me to witness to His love, mercy, and grace in the world.



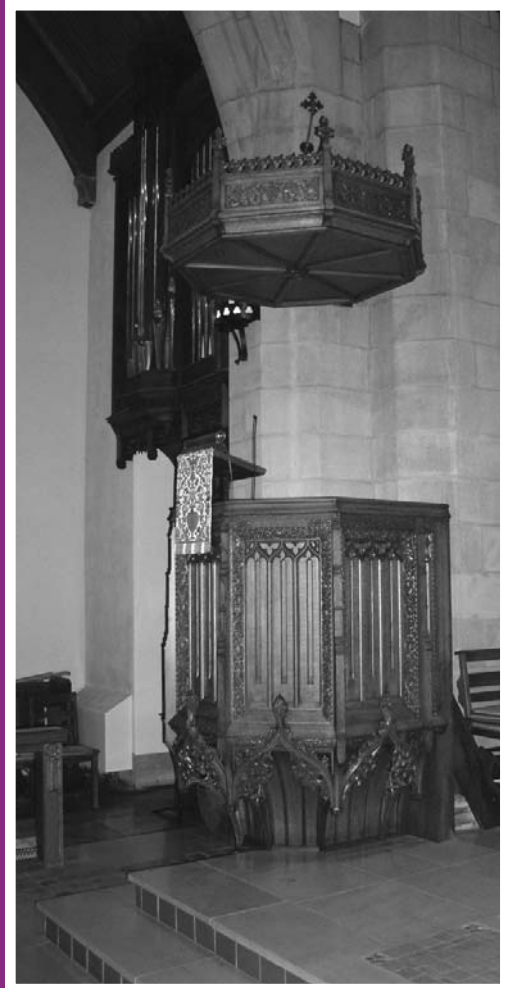
924 Farmington Avenue, #100
West Hartford, CT 06107

860-233-1732 • Fax 860-233-2644

simministry@earthlink.net

www.simministry.org

www.FundingFutureLeaders.org



*Lest our pulpits be empty or
our preachers and pastors
poorly educated and trained, we
ask your generous support
of the Society for the
Increase of the Ministry.*