

Report to 2014 Convention on Episcopal Studies at Brite Divinity School

Congregational Development Workgroup

The Rev. James Frederick Barber, past chair of Episcopal Studies

October 27, 2014

Brite Divinity School continues to offer the Episcopal Church at one of the leading seminaries of The Episcopal Church. In an age when many denominational seminaries have small faculties of a dozen or less, Brite has a strong faculty of over 20 full time professors and teachers, as well as others in adjunct positions. In addition there are support personnel (including several denominational directors) who offer leadership and help in the educational adventure. Brite is an inter-denominational seminary with students from Baptist, Methodist, Disciples, and numerous other faith groups. This offers Episcopal students a “real world” education where they encounter students from other denominations. There are 12 Episcopal students in various degree programs at Brite.

Brite witnesses its tradition with a Wednesday (Book of Common Prayer) noon Eucharist. The assembly is attended by a number of students from various denominational backgrounds.

This year Brite added a second faculty member, the Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney. She is an associate professor of Hebrew Bible. She brings a feminist theological perspective to the study of the Hebrew Bible. She joins the Rev. Dr. Ed Waggoner, holder of the Rt. Rev. Sam B. Hulseley Chair of Episcopal Studies, as the second full-time Episcopal faculty member. Waggoner continues as Assistant Professor of Theology at the seminary. Waggoner assumed the directorship of the Episcopal Studies program in August of 2014. Dr. Fred Barber continues to assist in the program and directs the Wednesday Eucharist. This past year Barber was engaged in an interim position in Dallas, and the Wednesday Eucharist was supervised by the Rev. ClayOla Gitane during the fall semester, and the Rev. Dr. Andrew Wright during the spring semester. We expect Wright will be assisting in teaching duties in the near future.

We were most happy to host the Rt. Rev. Dena Harrison of the Diocese of Texas this past month.