

# The Spiritual Caregiver

A Newsletter of the Ecumenical Institute for Pastoral Care

## ACCREDITATION AFFIRMED

The Ecumenical Institute for CPE received an affirmation for renewed accreditation with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.

On August 14, a national site team visited the Ecumenical Institute offices in Cherokee after having evaluated the updated Student Handbook and the EI ten year Self Study presentation. At

the end of the meeting the site team affirmed to the Board of Directors that they found EI in compliance

with all accreditation issues. The team also affirmed the mission of EI to bring pastoral care education to rural areas. They were delighted to see the development of the 'video-



conferencing' modality that makes CPE even more accessible for people in rural areas. The team also affirmed the vision that comes from Fr. Gene Sitzmann that is the core driving force for the Ecumenical Institute.

The site team wrote:

*It has been a pleasure and an honor to participate in the Accreditation process for Ecumenical Institute. Clearly, this is a center of excellent leadership and opportunity, set to make a difference in the provision of spiritual care for the people of rural North West Iowa. We recommend continued accreditation as a CPE Center, with final decision coming from Accreditation Commission.*

The process of accreditation mentioned is that this

recommendation is without any notations to the APCE national Accreditation Commission which meets in November for final action. We should receive the official notification after the November meeting.

The strengths that the site team noted included the skill, creativity, and passion of the Certified Educator, the design to meet needs of rural needs

in the area, parish nurse, Ecumenical Institute's endowment fund, gorgeous brochure, effective newsletters, a deep history, video conferencing reaches students who would otherwise be unable to complete CPE, variety of settings: acute care, community, parish, distance learning opportunities, and the unique partnership with St. Luke's UnityPoint Health.

The challenges noted included recruitment of board members, the future recruitment of a Certified Educator, and continued fundraising.

The site team and Board talked through the strengths and challenges together. The Ecumenical Institute Board responded with renewed energy for the future as the Ecumenical Institute finds a unique place in the training and education of spiritual caregivers.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bob Baschke

Elaine Doorenbos

Amber Good

Mary Herbst

Kris Meylor

Joel Johnson

Marcia Young

Shelly Rock

Denise Green—CMHI Liaison

Roger Cauthon—CPE Educator

Fr. Gene Sitzmann, Founder &  
Emeritus Supervisor

## EMERITUS BOARD MEMBERS

† Robert C. Alexander (1993-2003)

Earl Pickens (1993-1996)

† Howard Marty (1993-1997)

David Harmelink (1993-1999)

† Fred Davenport, Jr. (1993-2001)

Tom Deiker (1993-1997)

Joyce Bettin (1993-2001)

Rich Cook (????-2017)

## Leaving a Legacy for Your Community

**Times are  
definitely changing.**

**Our nation's future  
is unknown.**

**Our future  
with God is known.**

Is there something you can do  
for EI to continue our legacy of  
faith based training?

The value of some assets  
like farm land is high. What  
planning can you do this year  
to optimize your taxes and also  
help your favorite  
charities including EI?

**Contact Denise for more  
information at 712-225-6945 or  
dgreen@dhs.state.ia.us**

## FALL START FOR CPE UNITS

The Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 CPE units begin on September 26 and 27. A local unit that will hold the group meetings at the Ecumenical Institute office in Cherokee begins on Thursday, September 26. There will be three students in this unit; one chaplain, one local pastor and one lay person.

The “video conferencing” unit will begin on Friday, September 27, with an in-person meeting at St. Luke’s UnityPoint Medical Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The seven people in this group come from across eastern Iowa, north central Iowa, and one person from North Carolina. They include three chaplains and four parish ministers. Cedar Rapids is a most central and convenient point for the group to meet in person for its first session. The other sessions, other than the last one, will be online.

A CPE unit consists of students presenting verbatim of their pastoral interactions with patients and parishioners. Each student will do five verbatim over the course of the unit. The student receives feedback from the peers in the group to evaluation the pastoral interaction. The student also receives individual supervision from the Certified Educator for his or her own

growth process during the unit. Another part of the CPE unit are didactics (teachings) presented by the Certified Educator or another faculty member that address the learning needs of the students and direct the theme of the unit. Finally, a CPE unit includes group life which is the time for all the students and Certified Educator to process what is happening as a group and as individuals in the pastoral formation process.

The theme of these units will be “The Chaplain Role: Religious, Social Worker, Therapist, Spiritual Director”. The unit will explore the various roles that a spiritual care giver uses in his or her ministry and seek to affirm that deep spirituality in each of these roles. We will examine the spirituality of direct religious interactions such as prayer as well as those indirect spiritual actions such as “a cup of cold water in my Name”. A key definition will be the idea that spiritual care is “speaking the inner meaning of the Gospel to people at their point of need.” This is our challenge for the fall unit.

Through Ecumenical Institute, applications for next year are currently being received. We anticipate full units for the fall 2020 start as we have this fall.

## Did you know...

**...you can make monthly direct deposits  
to the Ecumenical Institute?**

*It's a convenient way to make your contribution.*

**Check out our webpage at:  
[www.ecumenicalinstitute.org](http://www.ecumenicalinstitute.org)**

Christ brings hope and changed lives.  
Help us continue transforming lives through our ministry.

# Ecumenical Institute's Influence

In the fall of 1978 I met Fr. Gene Sitzmann and Rev. Bob Alexander while I was a young pastor in rural Albert City just out of the seminary, new to parish life. They were providing CPE training at the Cherokee Mental Health Institute. The participants in our cohort were also clergy from the surrounding area. The CPE quarter I spent with Gene and Bob has continued to be a lasting resource and inspiration for what it means to provide Spiritual Care to patients, family members, and staff.

They inspired me to listen with empathy, to pay attention to the details...language--verbal and non-verbal—emotions, environment, and support system...to be a non-anxious presence, to bring a compassionate curiosity without judgment in every congregation where I have been a pastor and in my work as a hospital chaplain. They created a hospitable and affirming space for me to deepen my understanding of myself and of those with whom I live and work in daily life.

For 31 years I continued in parish ministry throughout the Midwest and

eventually, Paradise Valley, Arizona, in a variety of roles as associate, interim, and senior pastor. Gradually, I began to sense a calling to work in the world instead of in the institutional church. At about that time I was taking a Doctor of Ministry course at Luther Seminary that revolved around the two questions: 1) What is God up to in the world? and 2) How can we participate with God in what God is doing for the sake of the world. 12 years ago, because I had the clinical training from a quarter of CPE in Rochester, Minnesota, at St. Mary's hospital and the quarter of CPE with Gene and Bob, I was able to transition into a new career as a clinically trained hospital chaplain. I am passionate about the profession of hospital chaplaincy and am grateful each day for the privilege of working as Chaplain Coordinator at the Honor Health Scottsdale Osborn Medical Center, a level one trauma

center, providing Spiritual Care to patients, families, and staff.

Today, board certification is the gold standard for professional chaplains and best practice healthcare. A few months ago I decided to become a board certified chaplain. Imagine my joy and delight in reconnecting with Fr. Gene Sitzmann after all these years—to hear his voice, his love, and experience his passion. What a gift to discover that Gene continues to be actively involved with and an advocate for the Ecumenical Institute providing CPE training for faith based caregivers! With deep gratitude I wish Gene and all of you at the Ecumenical Institute the very best in the difference you are making as you participate with God in what God is doing for the sake of the world!

Randall Olson, DMin, MDiv  
Chaplain Coordinator  
Spiritual Care/Chaplain Services

## Training Faith Based Caregivers



## Donating

None of this work is possible without the generous support of donors. Since the inception of the Pastoral Education Center in the late 1960's, the number of students participating has now grown well past a thousand. Imagine the countless lives these students have touched with the skills they've learned. With your assistance the number of students will continue to grow.

Please consider supporting the work of the Ecumenical Institute for Clinical Pastoral Education.

- New Gift for Ecumenical Institute
- Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- I pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
- Please send information about a stock transfer.
- Memorial Gift in the name of \_\_\_\_\_

Please note personal prayer concern below.

## Thank You Recent Donors of Ecumenical Institute

Jim Adamson  
Joan Ballantyne  
Bob Baschke  
Sue Behrens - Scholarship Fund  
Karen Borchers  
Roger Cauthon  
Mary Estelle Cole  
Micky Conley  
Rich & Andrea Cook

Mike Cronin  
Cherokee State Bank  
Elaine Doorenbos  
Frank & MaryAnn Dunn  
Denise Green  
Rev. Al Grendler  
Filmore & Darlene Gustafson  
James Haritage  
Chad Hebrink

Mary Herbst  
John & Patricia Jensen  
Joel Johnson  
Janice Klein  
Father Francis Makwinja  
James McGuire  
Helen Mendt  
Dr. Wayne & Kris Meylor  
Lila Murray  
Susan Ortman  
Harold & Marilee Peterson  
Steven Pohlman  
Anthony/Carol Reuter  
Imelda Rupp  
Mr. & Mrs. Royden Rupp  
Clare Shull  
Father Gene Sitzmann  
Rev. Mark J. Stoll  
Richard & Kristine Weber  
Mary Lou Wiemold  
Ivan & Darlene Wiersma  
Larry & Linda Winkelbauer  
William & Marcia Young

## Help Wanted!!

### INTERESTED IN A PART-TIME POSITION?

El is looking for someone interested in promoting El.  
If interested, please contact Roger or Denise for further details.

## Legacy Honor Roll

Mark & Karen Borchers	Tony & Carol Reuter
Fr. John Cain	Fr. Gene Sitzmann
Mike & Pam Cronin	Larry & Linda Winkelbauer
Dr. Daryl & Elaine Doorenbos	† Ralph Harwig
Helen Mendt	† David Patterson
Earl Pickens Family Trust	† Adrian Rupp

Thanks to those who have helped plan for the longevity of Ecumenical Institute. These fine individuals have given; and their gift will continue after they are gone. If your name was inadvertently missed or you would like to be added, please contact Denise Green.

## Thank You!

The Ecumenical Board would like to thank Norman Prather for his work with the Ecumenical Institute. We wish him the best as he pursues full-time employment.

## Thank You

Special thanks to the Erlandson Foundation for their continued support.



Ecumenical Institute  
1251 West Cedar Loop • Cherokee, IA 51012  
dgreen@dhs.state.ia.us • 712-225-6945

Ecumenical Institute is Accredited to Conduct  
Programs of Level I and Level II CPE by:  
The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education  
One West Court Square, Suite 325 • Decatur, GA 30033  
404-320-1472 www.acpe.edu