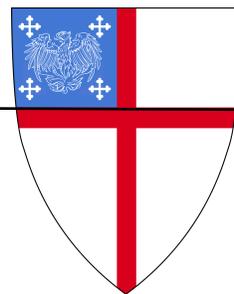


State of the Chaplaincy 2020:



Coming home, finding home

An update for alumni, friends, and supporters of Brent House



Since we were not able to celebrate our graduates as fully as usual, this year we have asked two of our graduates to share their experiences as members of the Brent House community:

Ruby Ross (College 2020)

I first came to Brent House in spring of my second year of college. I had come to UChicago excited about finding a Christian community. I joined multiple Bible studies, regularly attended a Baptist church downtown, volunteered at a high school chapter of Young Life, and even started my own Bible study for non-Christians. Unfortunately, during my second year, my happy Christian bubble started to deflate. Part of this was due to the enormous responsibility that I had as a leader in these groups. I was also troubled by certain legalistic doctrines that the group held. I finally took a step back from most of my Christian leadership roles after an unpleasant interaction with a member of my Bible study. For the first time in my life, I stopped going to church because I was so afraid of being judged for my spiritual doubts, and the messaging of my church just didn't ring true anymore.

After several months of wandering, I found myself at Brent House. My *Continued on page 3.*

Tim Clark, PhD (Classics, 2020)

My time at Brent House these past six years has been nothing less than transformative. I have been an Episcopalian my whole life and been blessed with wonderful, supportive churches that I went to with my parents. But since going off to college, I never found a true spiritual "home." Brent House has provided that home.

As I finish the sixth and final year of doctorate in Classics at UChicago, there are many aspects of my time at Brent House that I will treasure. The house provided small comforts, like always being a loving place where I could spend time, get a hot meal, and recharge my batteries. A classics doctorate can be an extremely lonely time and it was incredibly important for me to be able to unwind with fellow students every Wednesday and Sunday. These conversations spawned many great conversations and friendships.

But beyond socialization, Brent House has provided a space in which I *Continued on page 3.*

In this year's State of the Chaplaincy:

Graduate reflections:
Tim Clark, PhD, and
Ruby Ross, AB

Thanks to all of our
supporters

Introducing Kim Lewis,
our new intern

Update on our capital
campaign

*Belovedness: Finding God
(and Self) on Campus,*
with a chapter by Brent
House's chaplain!

Brent House during the
Pandemic

Make a one-time or ongoing
donation by clicking on the
donation button at our
website, brenthouse.org.

Donations through June 30, 2020

We are grateful for the support of our friends for their gifts of money, talent, time, prayer and encouragement. Without you, our work would not be possible. Thank you!

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Susanne and Jim Lenz
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The Canterbury Society - \$100-249

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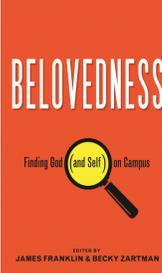
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A special thank-you to Nina Deremer and NeonOne, who have donated our donor database service.

Please let us know of any errors or omissions.

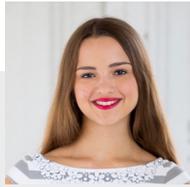


**Belovedness:
Finding God (and
Self) on Campus**

This wonderful new book written specifically for young adults in college includes a chapter on discernment (“Making Good Choices”) written by Stacy. Order it from your local bookstore today!

Ruby Ross

Continued from page 1.



best friend, who is not Christian, but had enjoyed going to the service, invited me. Brent House turned things around for me. I was shocked (and really, really thrilled) to find a Christian community that affirmed same-gender marriage and the ordination of women and LGBTQ clergy. I felt so comfortable to be in a space that allowed doubts, and that welcomed people of different religious backgrounds. I always felt like Jesus would want anyone to feel welcome in his church, to come as they are. Brent House has been the first church I have encountered that has provided that kind of space.

I so badly wanted to keep Jesus in my life despite my struggles with the church and certain Christian teachings that I grew up with, and Stacy and my peers at Brent House gave me permission to do that. I can invite my LGBTQ friends to the table, and not feel worried that people are secretly thinking they're living in habitual sin. I can invite my lovely, non-Christian boyfriend to church, and know he feels comfortable and welcomed. Brent House also has a spirit of Christ-like humility that so many churches fail to emulate. People do not judge you on appearances, or have any sort of expectations of who you should be. As a result, we have a diverse group of people with different backgrounds, interests, and beliefs, where the only non-negotiable is love and respect, as I think Jesus would want.

I am very grateful for my time at Brent House. It is difficult to put into words how much it has impacted me. I will really miss Stacy and her patient heart, intellectual mind, and her dedicated leadership. I will really miss my Brent House family. I know Brent House will continue to bless UChicago as it blessed me.

Ruby begins medical school at NYU this fall.

Tim Clark

Continued from page 1.



could question and develop my own relationship with God. As a person of faith in academia, I am particularly sensitive to the need to use one's spiritual and intellectual brains in tandem. Brent House gave me the tools to build those connections. With Stacy and a few other graduate students, I spent my third year engaged in Ignatian spiritual self-examination, asking God for guidance about why He had set me on the path to come to UChicago and study Greek and Roman history. I never got any firm answer to that question—except for God assuring me that I was where I belonged. But the process of investigating it forced me to critically evaluate my prayer life and how I was using it to further my relationship to God. The Examen, a prayerful reflection on one's day, is a tool I come back to again and again. Brentsday, our weekly Wednesday programming, was another venue for amazing conversations with Catholics and Lutherans about Lenten practices, examining the St. John's Bible, and the like.

Through all these experiences, Brent House has helped me to deepen my relationship with God. Aside from the Classics department, it is by far the most important community that I was a part of during my time here. I will be forever grateful for the community that Stacy has created here, the friendships I formed, and the growth those have engendered in me as a scholar and Christian.

Tim is also a member of the Brent House board and will be a postdoc here at UChicago this coming academic year.



Update on our Capital Campaign

The world has turned upside down, but we are still moving ahead! This past fall and winter we hosted seven cottage meetings in Chicago, Seattle, and New York City, as well as gathering feedback online.* As you might imagine, the pandemic has slowed things down, but the silver lining is that it has felt quite natural to connect online with our global community. Keep an eye out for more updates in future emails and mailings, and don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions or for more information.

*If you haven't seen our videos and given us your feedback, please go to TheCampaignforBrentHouse.org and watch the videos on the main page and under the tab that reads "The Need." (And yes, that is Brent House alum Ray Suarez narrating the main video. We are so grateful for his help!) Then click on "Feedback" to share your stories.



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your support.
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generously!*



Brent House during the Pandemic

Like the rest of the world, Brent House has been adjusting to life during the pandemic. In typical fashion, our community has found ways to stay connected, across long distances and time zones, and to deepen the community, with alums and other friends of Brent House joining us for worship and events. Here are some highlights:

- We found creative ways to mark the solemnities of Holy Week and Easter, and to pray for our communities.
- Weekly online worship and formation: Sunday Evening Prayer, Bible study, chanted Compline*
- Chaplaincy in Times of Pandemic: a conversation between the Rev. Dr. Sam Portaro and the Rev. Stacy Alan
- Brent House alumni conversations, “Spirituality in Quarantine,” led by alumni and students
- Roundtable on Science, Philosophy, and Religion: a conversation with faculty and religious leaders from two dozen institutions around the U.S.

Next year will include programming on discernment and sustainable spiritual practices, an exploration of evangelism informed by monastic practices, more alumni conversations, and further development of the Roundtable series.



We cannot do this work without your financial support. We invite you to give what you can. It makes a world of difference.

*All are welcome to join us for Evening Prayer and Compline. More information on our Facebook page.