

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Yale Divinity School is unique. We are the most selective divinity school in the world. We are one of the only theological institutions to provide full-tuition scholarships to all students with need. We are opening the largest living-building residence hall at any university campus, a bold statement of our commitment to living and teaching the biblical imperative to live in harmony with nature. We emphasize the arts like no other.

We are also unusual because of our commitment to remain strictly residential for those pursuing degrees. We emphasize residential education because we value community, and we form people who will lead and shape communities as they venture forth from Yale.

It is our *raison d'être* to address the most pressing issues facing humanity. We engage this challenge through scholarship of the highest caliber and through the cultivation of faith.

I believe it is this potent, unique combination – faith and intellect – that keeps our school powerfully relevant and ideally positioned to take on the challenges of the future. At YDS, we fully embrace the academic enterprise but recognize that intellect alone will not solve the world's problems; it is our faith that motivates us, our faith that moves us to act.

We are an ecumenical Christian community that welcomes all, including those of different faiths and those who claim no particular faith. We are deeply committed to being a welcoming community where all can find a home. We are committed to justice. Our students and faculty regularly engage in conversations around major issues in our world – conversations that compel many of our students to take action while they are at YDS and in their lives and careers after graduation.

From scholars and researchers to politicians, ministers, and religious luminaries, Yale Divinity School has produced some of the world's most influential leaders. Since its inception in 1822 as a distinct school within Yale University, YDS has been a leader among theological institutions in putting forward presidents and deans of colleges, universities, and seminaries, as well as heads of denominations. Yale Divinity School faculty have been – and continue to be – among the most prominent religion scholars of their time. Our ministers in the pulpit have nurtured and expanded the religious imaginations of the faithful in virtually every corner of the globe.

As much as I celebrate all that YDS has accomplished over its 200 years, I am most excited about what lies before us in this, our new century. The first two centuries are but a prelude to the third.

Gregory E. Sterling  
*The Reverend Henry L. Slack Dean, Yale Divinity School*  
*Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament*