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Boonstra Speaks at Annual Graduate Students Consecration Service

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‘Marching On ... Together’ themed weekend commemorates Martin Luther King Jr.

The long weekend of Jan. 17–21 was dedicated to the theme “Marching On ... Together” for the University’s celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. The weekend events included activist and author Shane Claiborne as a guest speaker for University Forum and Seminary Chapel. Students had a chance to chat one-on-one with Claiborne at a luncheon held for leadership students. Other events included a screening of the documentary “The Barber of Birmingham” and a Day of Service coordinated by Service Learning, Student Life and AUSA officers. The Day of Service was geared toward children living in University Apartments and included a short viewing of King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Andrews students provided worship, games, crafts and other activities for nearly 90 children.

On Sabbath, Jan. 19, during the New Life Fellowship church service, this year’s Legacy of Freedom Award was presented posthumously to Joseph W. Warren Sr., professor of English. Warren passed away in October 2012. Two of his children, Camille and Joseph Warren II, accepted the award in honor of their father. “What an honor and privilege to be a part of presenting this award to Joseph and Camille,” said Debbie Weithers, chair of the MLK Planning Committee. “Their father was such an important part of our campus and the guiding force behind the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at Andrews. He was sorely missed in the planning and implementation of this year’s festivities. His positive and significant impact on his children was evident as they presented the Dr. King oration at New Life Fellowship, [which] was a blessing to all in attendance.”

Camille and Joseph II then presented King’s speech, “But If Not.” The sermon was originally delivered by King at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga., on Nov. 5, 1967. The topic was civil disobedience using the biblical Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as examples.

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The School of Graduate Studies & Research teamed up with the Office of Campus Ministries for a joint University vespers and Graduate Students Consecration Service on Friday, Jan. 18, featuring special guest speaker, Shawn Boonstra.

Boonstra currently serves as associate ministerial director for the Seventh-day Adventists in North America and formerly served as speaker/director for It Is Written. His sermon was titled “This Incredible Moment,” and focused upon the lessons found in Philippians 2:5–8.

Held at Pioneer Memorial Church, this event is designed to recognize the graduate student population and to consecrate their pursuit of higher education. “Philosophically, Seventh-day Adventist education is holistic. Therefore, our students should experience intellectual stimulation, social interaction, emotional well-being and spiritual renewal,” says Christon Arthur, dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research. “The Graduate Students Consecration Service calls students to holiness, spiritual connectedness and consecration. This year, we included undergraduate students in the service. We want them to know that spirituality is experienced in community and that when we come to God in worship, we are no longer faculty or staff; we are no longer graduate or undergraduate students; we are equal before God in community worship.”

Niels-Erik Andreasen, president, and Andrea Luxton, provost, each addressed students during the service. Each graduate student was presented with a copy of My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers. Previously, at Graduate Student Orientation held at the beginning of the academic year, each graduate student received a copy of the Andrews Study Bible.