



# The Global Notebook

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## Accomplishments are Blooming at GMU!

### Conference Meetings Planned for GMU Students



There have been a number of GMU students who have expressed an interest in having some kind of interaction with their 'classmates.' As a result, we staged a trial meeting in

March using Zoom, an audio/visual tool to conduct conference calls, and it went so well that we have decided to gather via Zoom on a regular basis. The meetings will be 45 minutes in length and will take place on the first Thursday every other month at 5 p.m. PDSD. This time was selected in an effort to accommodate the most students from all four time zones. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**, which will be facilitated by Provost Dr. Michael Conley, who will offer a thought-provoking history of the Ten Commandments and then initiate a discussion. Students will be receiving an email with the information needed to connect and are encouraged to participate in this new and innovative endeavor.

### GMU President and Wife Invited to Speak at GTU

Dr. Gerald Grudzen and wife, Marita Grudzen, were invited to the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology of the Graduate Theological



Union in Berkeley recently to speak about their peace-building project in Africa, [Paths to Peace Kenya](#). This project brings together Christian and Muslim teachers from the coastal region of Kenya for an interfaith leadership training conference. Each year they recruit an equal number of Christian and Muslim teachers to take part in a three or four-day training program in Mombasa, Kenya. Dr. Grudzen and Marita Grudzen work closely with leaders in the Muslim community in Kenya and one of their Muslim faculty members, Fatih Akdogan, is the Director of the largest Muslim private school in Mombasa with over 1,000 students.

Dr. Grudzen and Marita Grudzen were invited to speak at the Graduate Theological Union by Professor Marianne Farina, a Roman Catholic nun and who is also an expert on Islamic theology and culture. She is a member of the faculty of Islamic Studies at the GTU. She worked for many years as an educator in Bangladesh before taking her position at the GTU. It so happens that Dr. Grudzen and Marita Grudzen began their international work by founding Milk for Bangladesh in 1975 during the time of famine in Bangladesh. They also have had a decade-long relationship with the Muslim nation of Turkey through international conferences that they have attended there and work with the Pacifica Institute in the Bay Area.

### GMU Student Composes Poem for Assignment



Margie Schneider is an ordained Interfaith Minister and Animal Chaplain, who has completed the Doctor of Theology degree program. One of her

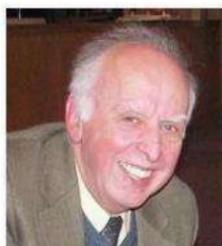
courses in her program was Creation Spirituality and this poem was the submission for one of her assignments.

#### Ode to Creation Spirituality

The Earth is our Mother  
We are her kin  
Our Father who loves us  
Dwells there within  
Thru Science and Creation they say we are one  
with the trees, the stars and even the sun  
They say life is a blessing  
not just about sin  
That the child inside us  
needs to come out and win  
If we take heed of their wisdom  
We will be changed and be healed  
And that is when our gifts are revealed  
For when we are reborn into the truth of it all  
we know it's about compassion not about the fall  
And when we can trust what we have been told  
We give birth to a power that is more valuable than gold.

This poem not only shows the caliber of work our students produce, but it also reflects the creativity that the GMU method of study promotes.

### President's Column



*This past week we remembered the momentous events of 1968 with the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968. 2018 also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Federation of Christian Ministries. Global Ministries University grew out of the reform movements*

*taking place within Roman Catholicism following Vatican Council II from 1963 to 1965. One of the hallmarks of this era was the understanding that all religious traditions of the world have a role in creating a just and peaceful world. Martin Luther King and those who followed his nonviolent example played a key role in bringing to an end the Vietnam War. Other peace-building religious leaders in the Vietnam were Thomas Merton who also died in 1968 while visiting Buddhist leaders in Thailand and Thich Nhat Hanh who led the peace movement in Vietnam and continues his peace mission to this day in the US and France. Next week I will travel to Pennsylvania to meet with Mr. Fathullah Gulen, the founder and spiritual leader of the Hizmet movement, a Sufi oriented educational organization with schools in over 100 countries around the world. The Hizmet movement stresses interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding as key principles of its spirituality. I also have sponsored a Turkish visiting professor at San Jose City College to facilitate the United Nations affiliate dialogue project with the Middle East called Soliya Connect. He joined us in speaking at the GTU this past Thursday about the role of Africa and the Middle East in the Peacebuilding process. We have been invited to explore a possible affiliation with the GTU for GMU and plan to meet with GTU officials in the coming months. My wife, Marita, and I will also attend the pre-Parliament of World Religions conference in Chicago April 23-25. I plan to report on the Parliament meeting in a future Global Notebook column.*

### Calling All GMU Graduates

All GMU graduates are cordially invited to participate in the Global Ministries University Graduation Ceremony to be held during the Federation of Christian Ministries Assembly at the Doubletree Hilton Hotel in Philadelphia. The ceremony will take place on Saturday, July 21, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. There are three options to participate: 1) attend the [Assembly](#) and participate in the entire weekend; 2) attend the ceremony only from 4:30-5:30 p.m.; 3) participate from your home via conference call. If you are planning to attend using any of these options, please contact our [Central Office](#) as soon as possible so that we can give you the necessary information you will need.



### Celebrant Training Program is Thriving



*Celebrant Training Instructor  
Antoinette Marold*

The GMU Celebrant Training Program is more and more in demand as the general public becomes aware of its existence. For those who are not familiar

with its purpose, the program is designed to train individuals who wish to become celebrants or who are already in a ministry or profession in which they are asked to conduct either weddings or funerals or both but do not have the formal training to do so. The program can actually be custom-designed to train students to be the type of celebrant they are or intend to become.

In addition to offering personalized training, a certificate from GMU is earned upon completion of the program which validates the credibility of the celebrant.

Lay women and men are being asked to conduct ceremonies and services more frequently because there are an increasing number of people who are not affiliated with a church but wish to have a spiritual ceremony or service.

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*Martin Luther King: "I have a dream..."*

