

It's all in the Book: Pasadena's Fuller Theological Seminary Goes

by Barbara Crane

Fuller Theological Seminary has long been a moral touchstone in Pasadena. Today, in addition to educating 5,000 students a year in psychology and intercultural studies at its seven regional campuses, Pasadena institution contributes in both philosophy and action to making Pasadena a green city.

Evangelical Christian in its outlook, Fuller professors view God as the creator of the universe—the creator of both the earth and human beings. Recently the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) placed climate change and the environment on its agenda. The act is controversial evidence of a growing trend among evangelicals, says Dr. William Dyrness, Fuller Seminary Professor of Theology and Culture. He attributes the burgeoning interest in environmentalism to a younger generation of the NAE and insisting that we look at it” and as a result of our current crisis of global warming.

Sustainability is a key word in our work to care for the environment. Glen Stassen, the Lewis B. Smedes Professor of Christian Ethics at Fuller Seminary. Sustainability means that we should not destroy the earth to keep thriving. For example, we are using up oil, leaving the next generation, while at the same time creating global warming. “We were given the right to use up all the oil in this generation, so that we can have any?”

Although some see “permission” to exploit the earth as derived from these views are losing ground. Institutions like Fuller Seminary are the mainstream of change. The school was founded 60 years ago, blending traditional evangelicalism with a wider concern for social issues. Highly revered Fuller Seminary leaders, such as its fourth president, Dr. Hubbard, taught that God’s concern for the environment and justice is based in scripture. Dr. Dyrness attributes his own interest in environmentalism to hearing a chapel address when he was a Fuller theology student. “I vividly recall Dr. Hubbard telling us we needed to think of the earth as God’s creation and the way God is concerned about the whole of creation, not just humans,” he says.

Two LEED-Certified Buildings Mark Campus Entrance

Fuller Seminary is doing more than talking about the responsibilities to tread lightly on the earth. It is also taking action. When it decided to build two buildings that would bookend the south Pasadena campus, it enlisted the aid of William McDonough & the preeminent green architecture and community design firm McDonough is author of the seminal book CRADLE TO CRADLE (Greenleaf Press 2002), winner of three Presidential Awards and has been named "Hero of the Planet" by Time Magazine.

"We're very conscious of living in a desert in Southern California," says Wilson, executive vice president of administration at Fuller. His design and construction of a 51,000-square-foot addition to the existing building and a planned new worship center. Both will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. "We wanted to build a building that makes a statement about preservation of resources—that you can still have beauty and aesthetics," he says.

The dual project also was inspired by – and the new library is named after – David Allan Hubbard, who guided Fuller Seminary as president. "He was a man of unrestricted peripheral vision. He could take you around him," Wilson says. As well as being a landmark building in Pasadena, environmentally and aesthetically, "as people walk through the building they will celebrate Hubbard's vision and experience the shared mission of this institution of both learning and worship."

McDonough's design architect Michelle Amt provided the vision, which is being carried out by executive architect Tom Williams of Pasadena-based House & Robertson Architects. The LEED-certified library is the first project to be permitted by Pasadena under the city's green building municipal code requirement. The pre-cast concrete structure features large windows and closed steel canopies to create a façade that filters light into the plaza and resembles a book that has been opened to the sun. To maximize use of natural light, the building was sited to face south. Rooms open to a green space. The design also incorporates energy efficiency. Good indoor air quality is achieved with the use of low-VOC materials. The original library, built in 1962, is being renovated for efficiency and integrated into the new building.

"The low VOC products help the hundreds of workers on site, and the people who use the building after it's constructed," says Alicia Williams, engineer for the general contractor DPR Construction, Inc. LEED also requires use of recycled materials. "We document the reuse of every permanently installed material that goes into the building and track the percentage of recycled material in the project," she says. Pasadena requires that 50% of all construction and demolition waste be diverted from landfills. At this point in time, the project is diverting 85% from landfills. The company adheres to a rigorous erosion control plan to minimize dust. "As a company, we're advising clients to go in a green direction. If you're not using the LEED rating system, there are many things you can do to be green."

The Center for Worship and the Arts will be constructed when the library is complete. It will contain even more ambitious LEED-rated features. Williams terms it "a precious jewel—very compact and efficient. The radiant floor throughout the sanctuary/performance space because of energy efficiency. The building will also have a highly refined control system."

system.

Fuller Seminary successfully inspired green action on several campus won a Rideshare Diamond Award co-awarded by Met County) and the Ventura County Transportation Commission. recently completed 179 units of student housing located near commuting. Fuller students are playing a role in organizing g Due to a student-initiated effort, paper recycling bins are nov office and around the campus.

"To care gently for the environment is ultimately an act of lov of neighbors and of future generations," says Tim Kelly, direc Policy Institute at Fuller's De Pree Leadership Center and mei Pasadena Leadership Summit advisory board. "It's not enoug platitudes. You have to have your feet on the ground. And wlt the ground, there's an environment there."

"We need to understand that the earth and nature are not sir says Glen Stassen. "They are something here that God is cari we are part of it. It's not 'us' and 'them.' Our lives depend on

