

# AGTS Graduation 2002

## Lee gave his last sermon as academic dean and was honored at 2002 commencement.

The day had finally arrived May 4, 2002, for 89 AGTS graduates to be launched into the next phase of their lives after president Byron D. Klaus handed them their diploma, during the 29<sup>th</sup> annual commencement ceremony in Springfield, Mo.

Dr. Edgar Lee gave his last sermon as academic dean during the commencement ceremony at Praise Assembly of God. Lee retired in July and will transition to teaching classes this fall as senior professor of Spiritual Formation and Practical Theology after 14 years as academic dean. His keynote address, entitled "Spirit and Strategy" (Romans 15:23-33), provided significant theological components for the graduates to grasp. Thomas Matrone and his music ministry team led in corporate worship after George Wood, general secretary of the Assemblies of God, welcomed friends and family to this year's graduation. After Lee's address to the class of 2002, Earl Creps, director of the Doctor of Ministry program, and Lori O'Dea, 2002 D.Min. graduate, each gave a Doctor of Ministry response.

During the commencement program Klaus paid tribute to Lee for his many years of service to AGTS. Klaus presented Lee with a framed compilation of AGTS prints and a hand-scripted calligraphic message.

Acts of appreciation for Lee continued throughout graduation activities and at the president's luncheon. With Lee's children, grandchildren, and close friends in attendance, director of development Paul Martinez announced an increase in the Edgar R. Lee Double Honors Scholarship Fund, named after Dr. Edgar R. Lee. After donors from all

spectrums, including churches, alumni, and AGTS employees, increased the scholarship fund by almost 40%, the current total received for this scholarship fund is now more than \$23,000. This scholarship continues to grow as people give and will annually be awarded to specially chosen AGTS recipients who qualify for financial assistance and have strong potential for ministry. Lee was also given a handcrafted chair.

Other highlights of this year's graduation events included a public symposium on May 3, 2002, in the AGTS chapel which featured 10 Doctor of Ministry graduates conveying reports from the field research of their doctoral ministry projects. That evening graduates and their friends and family joined together at the John Q. Hammons Tower Club for the graduation banquet.

The next morning graduation activities continued as 2002 Master of Divinity graduate Rick Oliver presented the baccalaureate sermon entitled "Crossing the Jordan" (Joshua 1:1-9). He challenged his classmates to be strong and courageous as they follow the direction to which God has called them. Administration and faculty served communion to the graduates as Thomas Matrone and his music ministry team led the congregants in worship and praise.

Following the commencement ceremony that afternoon at Praise Assembly, graduates passed through a receiving line and were congratulated by the faculty and administrators. They then made their way to the reception to celebrate their accomplishments with family and friends and to rejoice in the future steps God has prepared them to take. **R**



Baccalaureate speaker Rick Oliver, 2002 Master of Divinity graduate, challenges his class to "cross the Jordan."



The presence of the Holy Spirit was evident at graduation as students sang praises to God.



2002 graduates worship the Lord and take communion in the AGTS chapel during baccalaureate.

## CLASS OF 2002

