DEDICATION

Ordinarily, issues of Encounter are dedicated only to retiring Presidents of Christian Theological Seminary. However, this special double issue is dedicated by present and former colleagues to Clark M. Williamson, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Indiana Professor of Christian Thought, because he served as Editor of this journal longer than any other person – from 1968 to 1998.

Clark Williamson was born in Memphis, Tennessee in 1935 and graduated from Transylvania University (magna cum laude) in 1957. His theological and graduate work took place at the University of Chicago (B.D., 1961; M.A., 1963; Ph.D., 1969), where he was teaching assistant to Paul Tillich and edited the third volume of Tillich’s signal Systematic Theology (University of Chicago Press, 1963).

Ordained at University Christian (Disciples of Christ) in Chicago in 1961, Williamson was pastor of Saunemin Christian Church, Saunemin, Illinois (1962-65), Interim Minister of University Christian Church, Chicago, Illinois (1965-66), and Assistant Dean of Disciples Divinity House, University of Chicago (1964-66).

Appointed Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Christian Theological Seminary in 1966, he was quickly promoted to Full Professor and was named Indiana Professor of Christian Thought (the first endowed chair at CTS). He became Dean and Vice-President in 1998. He has also served as Visiting Professor at the Graduate School of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches (Switzerland) and at the School of Theology at Claremont (now Claremont School of Theology).

Williamson describes himself as a “conversational theologian,” a quality evident in his fourteen books, more than seventy ar-
articles, and more than 105 addresses given at colleges and seminaries and meetings of the church. He has a profound commitment to “church theology,” that is, theology to strengthen the credibility, integrity, and vitality of the witness of the church to the gospel. His Way of Blessing, Way of Life: A Christian Theology (Chalice Press, 1999) is the first complete systematic theology by a theologian in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since Robert Milligan’s An Exposition and Defense of the Scheme of Redemption (1868). This epic work, representing Williamson’s far-ranging interests, re-thinks Christian theology in conversation with process metaphysics, post-Shoaah theology, feminist and narrative theologies, and the work of Paul Tillich.


These essays not only honor a lifetime of leadership in theological education, they express the love of a community for Clark Williamson and his passion for the gospel.

Ronald J. Allen
Editor