

YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL News Release

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Harold Attridge to begin second five-year term as dean of Yale Divinity School

NEW HAVEN, CT—Harold W. Attridge, dean of Yale Divinity School and Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament, will begin a second five-year term as dean effective July 1, 2007.

In a May 8 letter to the Divinity School community announcing the reappointment of Attridge, Yale President Richard C. Levin said, “The Divinity School and the University are fortunate to have the services of such an outstanding leader.

“In response to my request for an assessment of the Dean's performance during his first term,” Levin noted, “I received numerous letters strongly recommending his reappointment. In these helpful letters, as well as in my meetings with many of you, it became evident that the Dean is viewed with great admiration and respect.

“Known for being a good listener, colleagues pointed with approval to Dean Attridge's fairness, sensitivity, and intellectual leadership. Students also enjoy their interactions with the Dean, who has clearly demonstrated a commitment to excellence for the School. I was gratified to find my own admiration for Harry Attridge's work echoed so enthusiastically.”

Attridge's first term began during a difficult time at the Divinity School, when the school was still emerging from a time of intense controversy related to plans – eventually aborted – to abandon the Sterling Divinity Quadrangle and relocate the School nearer the central campus. At the end of his first year as dean, work was completed on the School's multi-million dollar renovation, and Attridge spearheaded an effort to intensify the engagement of YDS beyond the Quadrangle.

Among the major outward-reaching initiatives during his first term was creation of the Yale Center for Faith & Culture, which in just a few short years has become a significant point of contact between the Divinity School and congregations, pastors, and lay religious leaders throughout the country. Other such initiatives included: the launch of an innovative community-based summer internship program for students called “Public Leadership in Ministry” based on theories of leadership drawn from community organizing; full-time staffing of the School's Office of Communications; creation of an Office of Career Counseling; resurrection of YDS's journal of opinion, *Reflections*; and establishment of the “Summer Term at Sterling Divinity Quadrangle” for clergy and laity.

In other areas, Attridge has encouraged fuller participation of the School's Board of Advisors; recruited several highly regarded senior faculty; realized ahead of schedule a plan to provide significantly increased levels of financial aid for students; created, as part of the renovation of the Quad, electronic classrooms featuring the latest audio-visual and technological enhancements; and strengthened the School's program in ministerial studies, which engages students in the practical aspects of ministry. He has also strengthened ties with the Institute of Sacred Music and the affiliated Berkeley Divinity Schools, close partners with the Divinity School in theological education.

Attridge is a highly regarded New Testament scholar. But just as he has encouraged the Divinity School as a whole to be more outward looking, so, too, has he taken his own scholarship beyond the academy. On numerous occasions over the past two years, he has spoken around the country and overseas to local congregations, Yale club gatherings or national television and newspaper audiences on subjects such as *The DaVinci Code*, trust in the Scriptures, the selection of a new Pope, and the emerging shape of religion in the twenty-first century.

Attridge has made scholarly contributions to New Testament exegesis and to the study of Hellenistic Judaism and the history of the early Church. His publications include *Hebrews: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, *First-Century Cynicism in the Epistles of Heraclitus*, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus*, and *Nag Hammadi Codex I: the Jung Codex*, as well as numerous book chapters and articles in scholarly journals.

He has edited eleven books, most recently, with the Institute of Sacred Music's Margot Fassler, *Psalms in Community*. He has been an editorial board member of *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, the *Harvard Theological Review*, the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and the *Hermeneia Commentary Series*. He has been active in the Society of Biblical Literature and served as president of the society in 2001.

He holds an A.B. from Boston College; a B.A. an M.A. from Cambridge University (Marshall Scholar); and a Ph.D. from Harvard University (Junior Fellow, Society of Fellows).

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