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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

FALL 2016

HIS *grace*
OUR GRATITUDE



GRACE HITS HOME

SPECIAL SECTION:
REFORMATION 500

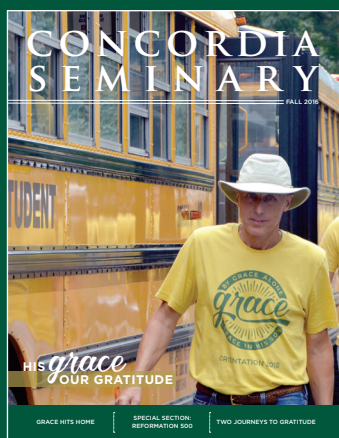
TWO JOURNEYS TO GRATITUDE

FIRST LOOK

New students along with faculty and staff fanned out across St. Louis as part of Orientation week servant events Aug. 31, 2016. Groups were shuttled on yellow school buses to serve the people of St. Louis. Their tasks included landscaping at various Gateway Greening gardens, painting and cleaning at the Peace Center, and cleaning and performing maintenance tasks at Compass Education schools. Photo: Melanie Ave







ON THE COVER

New Specific Ministry Pastor program student Mark Boriack heads to one of the waiting yellow school buses that took groups of student, faculty and staff to servant events throughout St. Louis Aug. 31, 2016, as part of Orientation week. Photo: Melanie Ave

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS

FALL 2016

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MISSION STATEMENT

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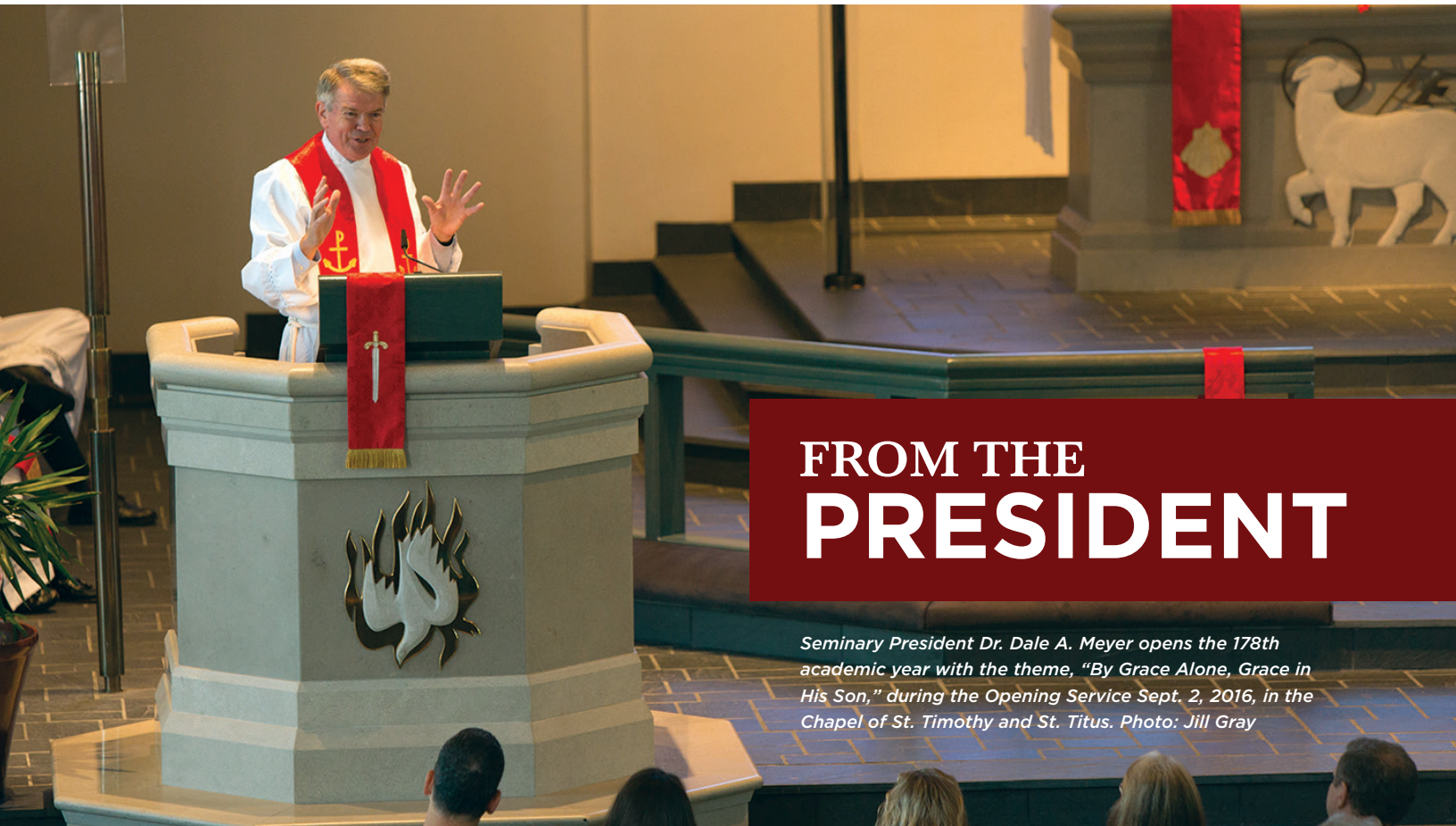
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer opens the 178th academic year with the theme, "By Grace Alone, Grace in His Son," during the Opening Service Sept. 2, 2016, in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus. Photo: Jill Gray

Straight to the bottom line: What do you have to offer God?

Our theme for the 2016-17 academic year, our 178th, is **"By Grace Alone, Grace in His Son."** The word "grace" is theological jargon; it's a precious word but loses its power by repetition without understanding. "Grace" is an admission you and I have nothing to offer God.

Your participation in the life of your congregation, your offerings for the Lord's work at home and throughout the wider church, your responsible citizenship and volunteerism in your community, your devotion to family ... Those are all good things, but if you think they give you any standing before God and His judgment, you're gutting grace. One translator of Martin Luther put it this way: "You must strike down the peacock's tail and say, 'Lord, I wish to stop thinking about works and merit in order that I may obtain grace!'" Original sin has so deeply corrupted every one of us that only grace, "God's riches at Christ's expense," can save us.

In the hymn "'Come, Follow Me,' the Savior Spake," the poet has Jesus say, "My soul with love is glowing; and *gracious* words My lips express" (*Lutheran Service Book*, 688, 3). For your future pastors and deaconesses to radiate Jesus' love and speak gracious words to us and the generations after us, they must first orient their own lives and ministries around grace. The faculty and staff of Concordia

Seminary work very intentionally so that seminarians take grace not only into their academic heads but especially into their lived-out lives. At the orientation of new students last month, I told them not to think their presence at the Seminary shows they are more sanctified than other people. Oh, they are sanctified but they also happen to have personalities that gravitate toward the nature and work of the ministry. I've met far more sanctified laypeople than clergy. We all desperately need what an old professor called the "Holy-ing Spirit" to fill us with grace through lives immersed in the words of Jesus.

I began with the bottom line question, "What do you have to offer God?" Of our own sinful selves, nothing, but by the pure gift of God we offer Him endless **gratitude for grace**. "That I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity." "What our whole faith must rest upon, is grace alone, grace in His Son" (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 373, 5).

Dale A. Meyer

Dale A. Meyer

The background image is a full-page photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, there are dark, jagged rocks partially submerged in shallow, rippling water. The middle ground shows a calm sea extending to a distant horizon. The sky is filled with layers of clouds, with a warm, orange glow from the sun just below the horizon line, creating a serene and atmospheric scene.

Grace HITS HOME



BY MARK SEIFRID

“We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part” (2 Cor. 8:1-2 ESV).

Paul wants the Corinthians to know about what happened in Macedonia. God gave the Macedonians the “grace of giving.” Paul wants the Corinthians to seek the same grace for themselves. Paul’s purpose already tells us something remarkable about the grace of God.

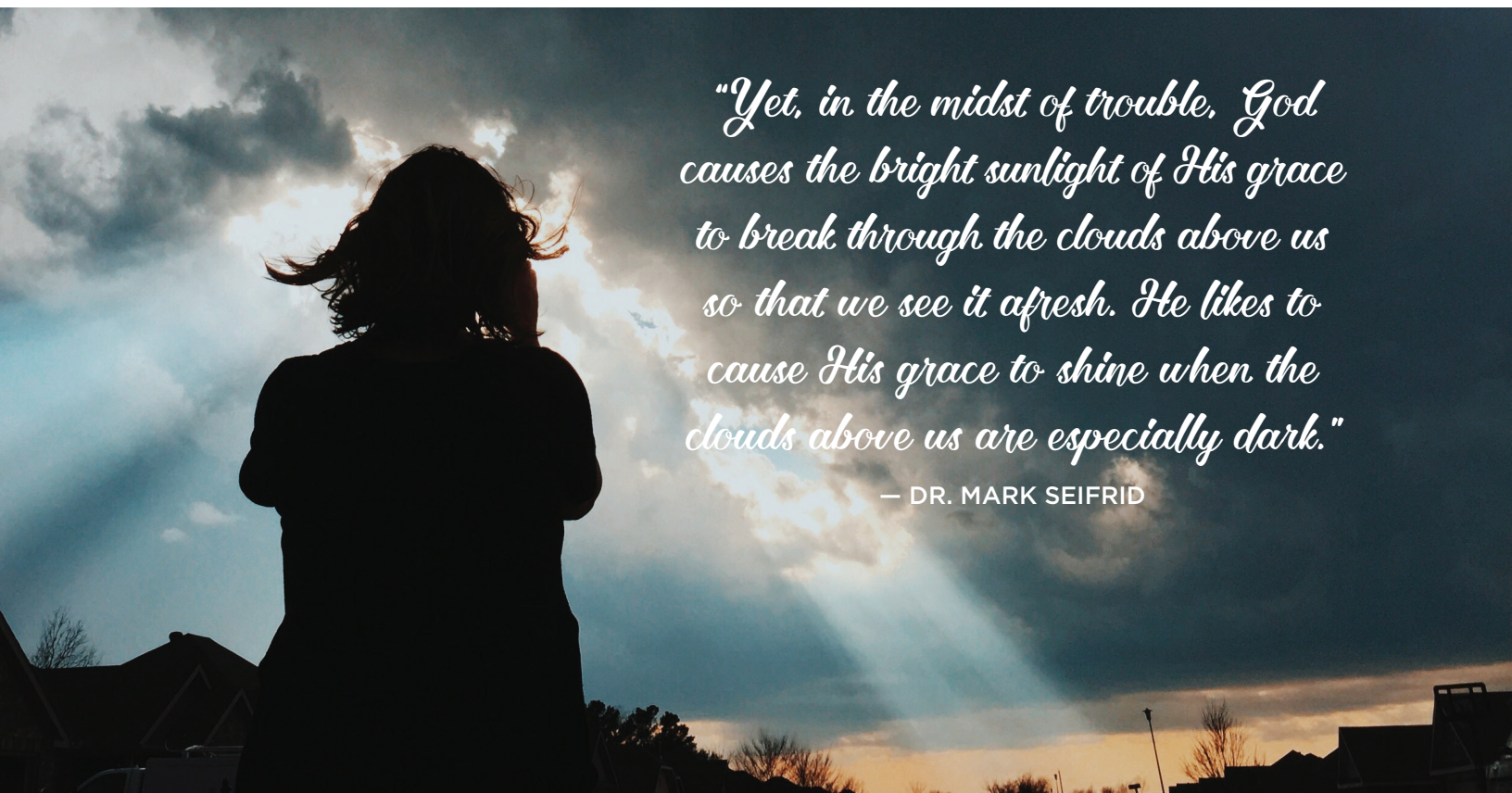
God’s grace is God’s favor, His loving acceptance of us just as we are, apart from anything that we have done or made ourselves to be. It is the welcoming arms of the waiting father, which enclose all of us prodigals who have been drawn home to Him through His unfathomable love in Jesus. That love and grace are unchanging.

But the experience of God’s grace is ever changing and always new. Sometimes our awareness of God’s grace is clear and strong. Mostly, though, it is weak and dim. Yet, in the midst of trouble, God causes the bright sunlight of His grace to break through the clouds above us so that we see it afresh. He likes to cause His grace to shine when the clouds above us are especially dark. In that way we see His grace much more clearly than we do on sunny days. That is precisely what God did with the Macedonians. He “gave them His grace” right in the midst of trouble and need.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8>

In telling this story, Paul is not suggesting that God had not granted His favor to the Macedonians or that they knew nothing of God's grace in Jesus before this event. He is reporting that they came to know God's grace afresh in a dramatic, new way. In fact, he always writes in a similar way to his churches: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Even when we know God's grace, we have by no means known it fully. God's grace has depths that are to be explored throughout this life and into all eternity.

What does grace look like when it hits home? We cannot measure it. But Paul makes it clear that it does have a visible impact on our lives. God's grace as it hit home with the Macedonians manifested itself as the "grace of giving." Despite their poverty, they insisted on making a contribution for the needy Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Paul reports that "they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us" (2 Cor. 8:5 ESV). At first hearing, that sounds like a strange way of speaking about grace. Doesn't grace have to do with my receiving God's love?



"Yet, in the midst of trouble, God causes the bright sunlight of His grace to break through the clouds above us so that we see it afresh. He likes to cause His grace to shine when the clouds above us are especially dark."

— DR. MARK SEIFRID

For our part, we tend to forget what God's grace to us in Jesus really is, so that it becomes dim in our hearts, even when things are going well for us outwardly. God wants us to know, taste and experience His grace in Jesus ever afresh. God wants His grace to hit home in our hearts again and again. As Paul later exclaims, "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift" (2 Cor. 9:15 ESV). God's grace in Christ never can be fully told. It is there to be experienced and known again and again.

Isn't God the giver? The answer to both of these questions is "Yes!" Paul, in fact, reminds the Corinthians that they know "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9 ESV).

There you have it! We are the recipients of the grace of Christ and the grace of God. But how, then, can God's grace have to do with my giving? The answer lies in the depths of God's grace. God's grace is expressed in

God's gift of Himself to us in Jesus Christ. That gift, as Paul reminds us, is so wonderful that it is beyond all telling. It includes our coming to know and experience who God is not merely in our heads, but in our hearts and lives. Coming to know God as giver means that we ourselves come to know the grace of giving.

Sometimes when human beings give gifts, they use the gifts to make those who receive them feel small and inferior. They don't so much give a gift as they use a gift to make the other person feel permanently indebted. God is not like that. In His grace, God gives us Himself. He wants us to know Him and be like Him. He does not push us down, but raises us up to be givers, just as He is a giver. That is not to say that God then ceases to be the one and only Giver! He is the source of all giving and remains fully and wholly Giver to us.

But He makes us givers, or as Luther would say, little "Christs" to our neighbors. In becoming givers in this way, we remain entirely receivers, objects of God's grace in Christ. This is where God's grace hits home with us in its fullness. It is a bit like when children themselves become parents. Suddenly they begin to see and understand their parents' love and giving toward them. Their parents' love and gifts were always there. But when they entered into a similar experience of giving, that love and those gifts hit home in a new way. They then received that love and those gifts more fully than they ever could before. That is the grace, says Paul, that God gave to the Macedonians. They entered more fully into sharing in Christ as they became "Christs" to their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. They did not thereby earn their salvation or somehow deserve it more fully. But they did enter more fully into the experience of the salvation already given to them in Christ.

Paul has a concrete reason for telling the Corinthians about this "grace of God" given to the Macedonians. He wants them to complete their promised contribution for Jerusalem. He wants them to know and experience God's grace in Christ in the very same way that the Macedonians had done. In fact, he wants them to



*"God's grace has depths that
are to be explored throughout
this life and into all eternity."*

— DR. MARK SEIFRID

seek this grace of God, just as they already had received many other gifts of God's grace (2 Cor. 8:7).

Grace remains unconditioned. The Corinthians already know the "grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ" and already had received many gifts of Christ's grace. But Paul wants them to experience in a new way the "grace of giving." He wants grace to hit home with them afresh. He wants them to seek this grace for themselves.

What Paul wrote for the Corinthians also was written by the Holy Spirit for us. God wants us to know and experience His grace. He wants us to have fresh stories of His grace toward us in Christ, His "gift beyond all telling." He wants us to know the "grace of giving." He wants His grace to hit home in our hearts in ever new ways. Lord, grant in Your grace that we may know Your grace afresh!

Dr. Mark Seifrid is professor of exegetical theology.

HIS GRACE

TWO JOURNEYS TO GRATITUDE

BY KIM PLUMMER KRULL

They grew up at different times in different hometowns, but Luke Edwards and Jeff Jenkins share this same certainty: No one they knew back then looked their way and saw a future Concordia Seminary student, much less a future pastor.

Edwards was known “as either a project – someone who had a lot going for him but was throwing it all away – or a lost cause, completely hopeless.” “As it turns out, those people were more right than they ever knew,” said Edwards, a 2009 Concordia Seminary graduate and pastor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Rapid City, S.D.

Throughout high school and into college, Jenkins struggled with alcohol abuse. Today, he is studying for his Master of Divinity at the Seminary after leaving a career in architectural design.

Both men shared their journey over rocky paths toward pastoral ministry with one caveat – the understanding that throughout their traumatic stumbles, they did nothing to pick themselves up. It was His grace and His grace alone that brought them through.



HAMMERING THROUGH ROCK TO SHARE JESUS

Luke Edwards was struck by words he'd never before heard: Jesus has a decided preference for sinners. "With a background like mine, I certainly fit in the camp for sinners," Edwards said about being a Black Hills State University student who reluctantly visited St. Paul Lutheran Church in Spearfish, S.D. He had flunked out of another school and sunk to "the other end of the spectrum – a place I knew I didn't want to end up in again."

He could count the times he'd stepped inside a church. "We'd go to an Easter service or a Christmas Eve service here or there," Edwards said of his family in Sundance, Wyo. That changed when he needed a tutor to pass a philosophy class. Those study sessions led Edwards to ask "all kinds of questions about the mysteries of the universe" – and an invitation from the tutor (also a student) to the Bible class for college kids at St. Paul.

"It was the first time my hopelessness was affirmed," said Edwards, who was captivated by the message at St. Paul. "Yeah, I am hopeless, but there was Good News: Jesus was the Savior of the hopeless, of sinners."

THIRST FOR GOD'S GRACE

Confirmed at 23, Edwards joined St. Paul – and began "bugging" the pastor, Rev. Gene Bauman. "The thirst he had for God's grace – to know about this God who would love him when (Edwards) didn't see much to love," said Bauman, a 1979 Seminary graduate, who encouraged Edwards toward a seminary education, even driving him to visit the St. Louis campus.

Opportunities for daily worship and to study Greek and Latin initially drew Edwards. But through his professors, he began "to imagine myself in the trenches – preaching, teaching, administering the Sacraments and being a servant."

That's been the focus of Edward's ministry since his first call in 2012 – plus, he said, a lot of "hammering," a nod to a recent

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**"IT'S JESUS WHO
INTEGRATES MY PAST
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OUT WITH SINNERS AND
TAX COLLECTORS AND
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TABLE. HE IS THE ONLY
HOPE ANY OF US HAS
AND, SUBSEQUENTLY,
IS THE SOURCE OF OUR
JOY AND GRATITUDE."**

— REV. LUKE EDWARDS ('09)

< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Gospel lesson. "Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:29 ESV).

While serving a three-church parish in central South Dakota and now in Rapid City, Edwards said he "spends quite a bit of time hammering through rock to get to issues so that finally I can give people Jesus." He knows firsthand how big and hard those rocks can be.

INTEGRATING PAST, PRESENT

Only in recent years has this once hopeless "lost cause" opened to sharing his past. "God doesn't erase our past, but He gives us the grace to live with it," Edwards said, paraphrasing Christian theologian Stanley Hauerwas.

"It's Jesus who integrates my past and present," he said. "He hangs out with sinners and tax collectors and welcomes them to the table. He is the only hope any of us has and, subsequently, is our source of joy and gratitude.

"I love being a pastor," said Edwards, who has two children with his wife, Gina. "I'm thankful that God, for whatever reason, has chosen me in Christ, not only to be His own but also to serve His people."

JEFF JENKINS

'DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE'

Jeff Jenkins said despite being "stumbling drunk" several nights a week, he was a top architecture student at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Stillwater in the 1980s.

So imagine his shock when professors could find "nothing good" about an important project Jenkins, then a sophomore, presented before an academic jury and fellow students.

Furious, he left campus, intent on ending his life. Instead, he "broke down and started talking to God." "I'll go wherever You want me to go and say whatever You want me to say," he prayed. "Just don't leave me alone."

Now more than 30 years later, Jenkins' voice cracks with emotion as he talks about that life-changing autumn – the same semester he overheard classmates laughing about drunken antics he didn't even remember. "If I had a dime for every time I tried to quit drinking and started again. ... But this time was different," said Jenkins, who felt he "needed to go to church."

For the next six weeks, this young man who grew up “angry and bitter” in a broken Edmond, Okla., home “could not sit through a sermon without being cut to the heart by God’s Word.”

After that humiliating failure in front of “the whole architecture school,” Jenkins said, God gave him “a new life, a new heart. I could breathe again. A weight lifted, and I felt free of the rage that I’d felt all my life.”

FROM DRAFTING TABLE TO PULPIT

For years, Jenkins – who has a Bachelor of Arts in history from OSU and a Master of Architectural Design from the University of Texas in Arlington – “felt called and loved by Christ to be an architect but also to serve the church.”

He enjoyed occasional opportunities to tackle a design for a congregation. “It was so cool to research how the architecture related to different parts of the liturgy, which related to different parts of the Gospel story,” Jenkins said.

Back in Edmond, Jenkins was confirmed and, with his wife, Fadia, joined St. Mark Lutheran Church. When his pastor took another call in 2002, Jenkins, an elder, helped the congregation however he could.

Congregants said the architect had missed his calling, but Jenkins insisted that “if God wants me in the pulpit, He will take away my business and change my heart.” Six years later as the U.S. economy – and his architecture business – tumbled toward recession, Jenkins remembered those words.

‘STILL HE WANTED ME’

Now in his second year at Concordia Seminary, Jenkins – the father of a recent college graduate – travels a pace “faster than anything I ever imagined.” He faces challenges he compares to “trying to drink from a fire hose.”

From being a hurting and humiliated college student through facing a dramatic midlife career change, Jenkins said “all along the way, I have to trust that whatever I’m going through is going to be for the best for the church – that I’m going to learn something or experience something that can be used in ministry to someone else.

“I didn’t do anything to deserve what’s been done for me,” he said. “I was trying to kill myself and still He wanted me.”

Kim Plummer Krull is a St. Louis-based freelance writer.



Jeff Jenkins



LUTHER AS REFORMER OF PASTORAL CARE

BY ERIK HERRMANN

Reformation Day. Each year the day gives us occasion to reflect on the significance of the upheavals of the 16th century — upheavals that changed the religious, social and cultural landscape of the West, especially the Western church. What was at stake? What was it all about? Was it worth it? As we close in on the 500th Reformation Day in 2017 such questions will even begin to interest those who have no religious commitment to what took place then.

Of course the Reformation is too complex a time and movement to be only about one thing. Its causes and effects touch on a wide range of social and political factors, theological ideas, unique personalities and churchly pressures. Some would even argue that it is better to speak of reformations rather than a single, unified movement.

**“LUTHER WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN MATTERS
THAT TOUCHED ON THE HEART OF EVERYTHING
— THE WHOLE OF THEOLOGY AND THE
SALVATION OF ALL WAS AT STAKE.”**

— DR. ERIK HERRMANN

Yet in spite of the complexity of the Reformation, Oct. 31 — Reformation Day — marks a very specific event with a relatively narrow scope: Martin Luther’s posting of the 95 Theses Against Indulgences. Admittedly, it is a match that sets off a firestorm, but the nature of this event is often obscured by the tumult that follows rather than its original intent. In short, Luther’s 95 Theses were written as a protest against bad pastoral care, and it is from this perspective that we should try to understand what Luther was up to in those early years of the Reformation.

Luther was only interested in matters that touched on the heart of everything — the whole of theology and the salvation of all was at stake. When Luther began to change things in the university curriculum at Wittenberg, he did so because of how it would affect the weekly preaching, teaching and pastoral care on the parish level. That was the goal of reformation for Luther.

But what was pastoral care on the eve of the Reformation? Of what did it consist? The formal, ecclesiastical, that is priestly aspects of pastoral care, could be largely subsumed under the following: the sacrament of penance, the selling and buying of indulgences, and private Mass.

It is more customary to think of Luther as a reformer of doctrine (perhaps a specific doctrine like justification or the Lord’s Supper) and as an ardent opponent of papal authority. But questions of doctrine and theological authority arose for Luther as means to a greater end: the pastoral care that nurtures a genuine Christian life. Beginning with his own personal search for consolation and hope, Luther urged practices that would saturate one’s life with the Word of Christ. Only in this deep connection to Christ did Luther find freedom and strength to live in a world shaped by the contradiction of God’s providence and the continual presence of sin and suffering.

Dr. Erik Herrmann is chairman of the department of historical theology and director of the Center for Reformation Research at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.





EVENTS

Final Reformation500 Speaker Series Annual Lecture

Dr. Robert Kolb
*Concordia Seminary Professor Emeritus
of Historical Theology*
7 p.m. Tuesday, April 18, 2017
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Theological Symposium: 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Sept. 19-20, 2017
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis
www.csl.edu/symposium

500th Anniversary of the Reformation Service

Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2017
Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

RESOURCES

***Concordia Seminary* magazine**

The Reformation's impact on ...
Religion — Winter 2017
Politics — Spring 2017
Society — Summer 2017
Life Today — Fall 2017

Concordia Journal

Special Reformation-focused double
Winter/Spring 2017 issue
www.concordiatheology.org

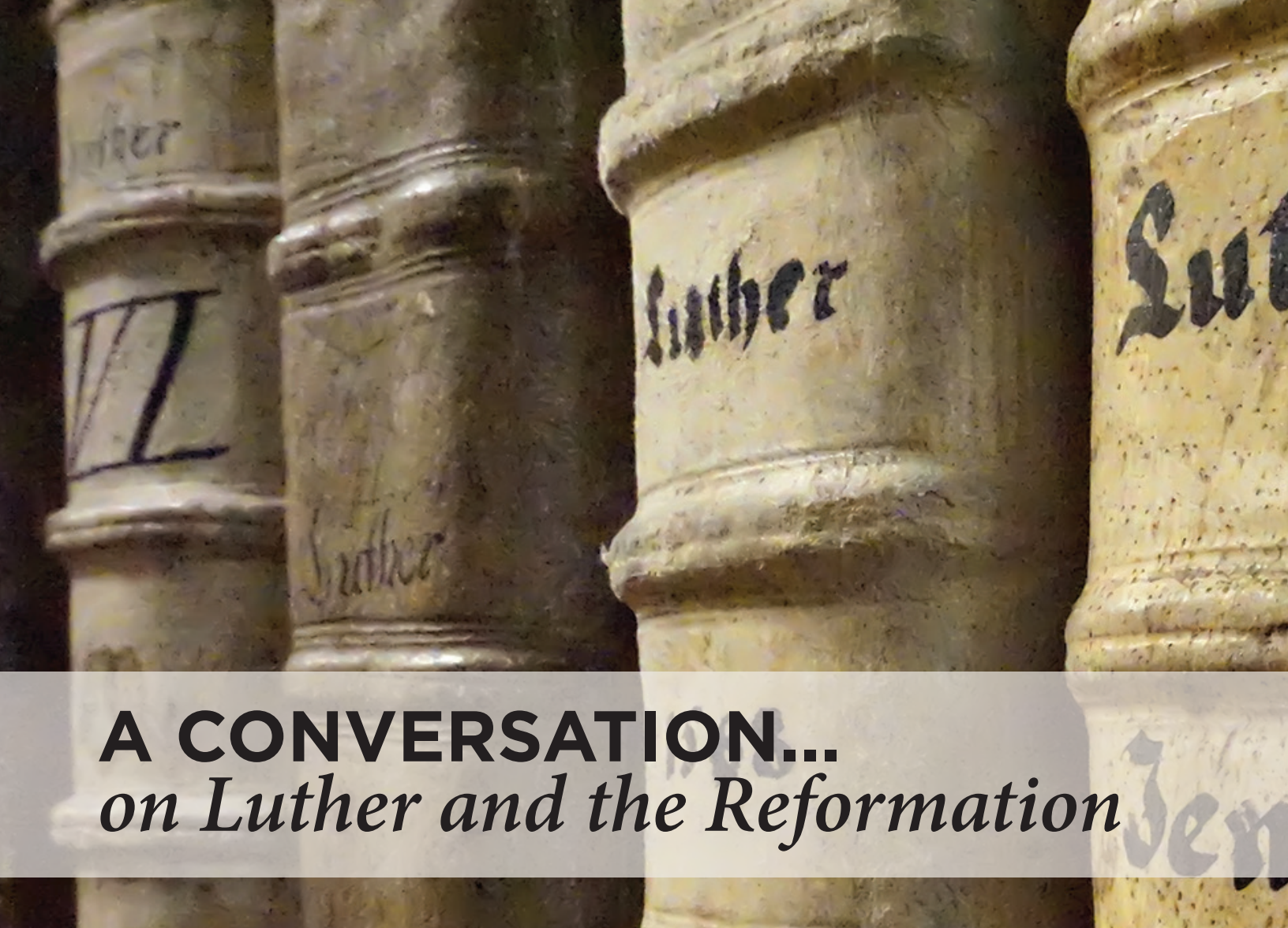
500 Years: The Impact of the Reformation Today

Free video series for laity, congregations and students interested in learning more about the background and significance of the events of the Reformation and the impact they continue to have on the world 500 years later. Videos will be posted at reformation500.csl.edu/ in early 2017.

LEARN MORE

Find more resources from the Seminary's Center for Reformation Research, including annual lectures, at reformation500.csl.edu/.





A CONVERSATION... *on Luther and the Reformation*

Seminary professors Drs. Erik Herrmann and Paul Robinson recently sat down and discussed Martin Luther and the Reformation. Read a few excerpts from their conversation to help put the Reformation in perspective and learn more about Luther, his world and why the Reformation still matters — nearly 500 years later.

Q WHAT WAS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH LIKE AT THE TIME OF LUTHER?

ROBINSON

“Many people were critical of the church in the late Middle Ages. Luther was not the first to criticize church practices. The dominant theology of the day taught that people had to amass good works in order to receive grace from God. You put your good works in, you got grace out. As a result, people looked for opportunities to do good works. Going to Mass became very important. Going to Mass did not necessarily mean receiving Communion. Parishioners received Communion only once a year. The Mass was about watching the priest celebrate the Mass and having that count as a good work. They were taught that the sacrifice was the important thing and by being there you could gain grace from God. It wasn’t necessarily to receive the elements.”

HERRMANN

“It was a common phrase: ‘I went to see my Maker today.’”



Q *MANY PEOPLE WERE CALLING FOR CHURCH REFORM. WHAT MADE LUTHER'S APPEAL SO MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT AND LASTING?*

ROBINSON

"Luther was one of the few people who went beyond criticizing the superstitions of the church and the piety to get at the roots of church teaching that led to these kinds of practices. He was the only one who went about it in this thoroughgoing and persuasive way."

HERRMANN

"For example, while everyone denounced priests and monks for fooling around and not keeping their vows of celibacy, Luther criticized the notion of celibacy as a pre-eminent state. He defined marriage as being more faithful to God. He critiqued the whole notion of monasticism and its vows. He went to the root of the thing. He didn't just try to fix the practical problems."

ROBINSON

"He did the same thing with Mass. Instead of just being critical of people's practices of the Mass, he went to the heart of the matter and said 'you people have turned the Mass into a sacrifice, into something we are doing for God when in fact it's something God is doing for us and it needs to be completely re-understood in the light of the New Testament.'"

HERRMANN

"Luther took the pieces that he found helpful throughout the tradition and connected them in a way that reformed what it means to be a Christian. Luther was the catalyst who set the agenda for all other reform movements in the 16th century including the Catholic church. He said the true treasure of the church is the Gospel. True religion is faith not works."

Q *SOME HISTORIANS SAY LUTHER DIDN'T NAIL THE 95 THESES TO THE CASTLE CHURCH DOORS IN WITTENBERG, GERMANY, BUT RATHER MAILED THEM. YOUR THOUGHTS?*

ROBINSON

"We don't have a definitive answer. The first time it's mentioned is many years after the fact in Philip Melanchthon's funeral oration for Luther. That doesn't necessarily mean that it really didn't happen. But if it did happen and Luther meant it is a gesture of some sort, I think he would have written about it the way he did the burning of the papal bull excommunicating him. What we do know is that he sent the theses out to others."

HERRMANN

I suppose you could safely say, 'Whether he nailed it or mailed it, he definitely posted it.'"



ROBINSON

Dr. Paul Robinson is professor of historical theology and the dean of the faculty at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



HERRMANN

Dr. Erik Herrmann is chairman of the department of historical theology and director of the Center for Reformation Research at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

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Q WHAT WAS LUTHER'S GOAL IN POSTING THE 95 THESES?

HERRMANN “It was modest. His goal was to reform the practice of a kind of preaching that kept people from reflecting on their sins and trying to be better. He wanted people to think about true repentance and what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be a sinner before God. An indulgence short-circuited the whole thing: You don't have to feel bad about your sins; you just pay a little fee and then you're done.”



Q HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE PRINTING PRESS TO THE REFORMATION?

ROBINSON

“Luther's ideas spread rapidly and far because of the printing press. He purposely embraced this technology for his cause.”

HERRMANN

“Suddenly, for Luther, the printing press led to enormous industry. The amount he wrote in three or four years was enormous. Something like a third of all the printings in Germany by 1520 were written by Luther.”

Q WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 95 THESES?

HERRMANN

“They are not some Lutheran manifesto. If people want that, they have to read something from later in Luther's life. What they are is a very traditional criticism of the preaching of indulgences without really attacking the fundamentals of indulgences directly. They suggested that the pope didn't have the authority to extend indulgences to people in purgatory, for example.”

ROBINSON

“Maybe the one thesis [of the 95 Theses] that people should know is the first one: ‘When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said repent, He meant that the entire life of the believer should be one of repentance.’”

HERRMANN

Luther's whole theology can be seen in light of that: a life of repentance. From Luther's thinking, if you want to reform the church, you have to reform the way theology is taught and that will trickle down into preaching.”

Q IF LUTHER WERE ALIVE TODAY, WHAT WOULD HE THINK ABOUT THE REFORMATION'S IMPACT ON CHRISTIANITY?

ROBINSON

“I think he would be very happy to see all of the different versions of the Bible in different languages. At the same time, he'd be upset that more people don't actually read it, which was always the problem. But I also don't think he would expect to come into a 21st century world and see a church that is exactly like it was in 16th century Germany.”

HERRMANN

“If you viewed church the way Luther viewed it — God's people around His Word — there's a certain expectation that Christianity will look different from place to place. It wasn't a goal to have one formal church that looks exactly alike. He did not define church that way.”

ROBINSON

“Luther essentially asked Christians to do a very difficult thing; to live as church in a way that keeps the Gospel at the center and demonstrates freedom in the Gospel.”



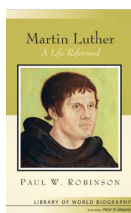
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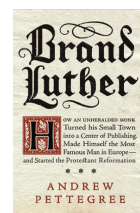
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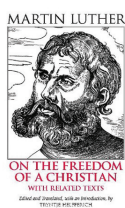
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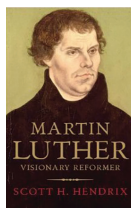
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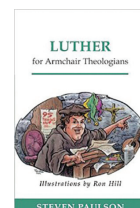
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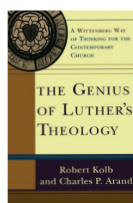
**ON THE FREEDOM
OF A CHRISTIAN**
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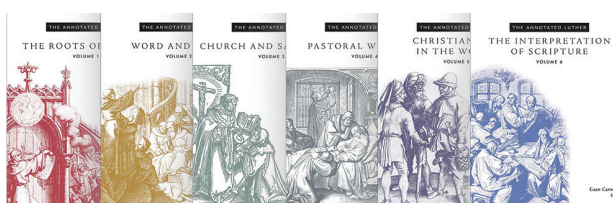
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Formation for church leadership in Ethiopia

BY KENDRA WHITTLE



Tamrat Debessa stands on Mount Tabor, which overlooks his hometown of Hawassa, Ethiopia. Just below him is Tabor Evangelical College where he will teach after he earns his Ph.D. from Concordia Seminary. Photo: Courtesy Tamrat Debessa

The chance to study in America was an opportunity Tamrat Debessa did not think was possible. The teacher from Ethiopia had returned to his hometown of Hawassa a few years before to work at Tabor Evangelical College, with plans of pursuing his Ph.D. and putting his newly acquired knowledge to work back home.

He applied to several European colleges, but was floored when the chance to study at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis came his way. “This is a life-changing opportunity,” Debessa said. “I am learning so much from the Seminary, not only from an academic side, but also from a spiritual side.”

Debessa is in St. Louis on a scholarship through the Global Seminary Initiative, a partnership between The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and churches around the world. Debessa is a member of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, a church body with more than 7 million members and growing fast.

The Seminary’s Dean of Advanced Studies Dr. Gerhard Bode said through the initiative, international students identified by their

**“WHEN YOU ARE TRAINED AT
A HIGH LEVEL AT THIS KIND OF
SEMINARY, YOU WILL HAVE A GREAT
IMPACT IN YOUR COUNTRY.”**

– TAMRAT DEBESSA

church bodies as future leaders can attend Concordia Seminary. “I’m really excited about this partnership,” Bode said. “It makes it possible for students to come here who probably wouldn’t be able to do so otherwise.”

Debessa arrived in the United States in 2015 and plans to complete his Ph.D. in 2019. He said going back to Ethiopia with an advanced degree will help his church body better prepare pastors, teachers and evangelists to serve their congregations.

“There is a high need,” Debessa said. “There are more than 3,800 congregations in South Ethiopia where I am serving and we don’t have enough training centers. Most of our churches are served by lay ministers because they don’t have pastors. We are doing our best to prepare those pastors, but we’ve only trained around 500 in the past eight years.”

He said Tabor Evangelical College, where he eventually will teach biblical studies and cross-cultural communications courses, has an ambitious plan to implement a master’s degree program in the next several years. Right now, only missionary teachers from Norway and Denmark have doctorates, but the hope is for more Ethiopian teachers like Debessa to earn their doctorates and to someday offer that level of education at the school.

Debessa said not only does Concordia Seminary provide top-notch theological education, it also is providing practical training for him



Tamrat Debessa delivers the opening message at a missiology workshop in Ethiopia. Photo: Courtesy Tamrat Debessa

as a leader, skills he will be able to use in Ethiopia. “I am learning how to deal with students, how to deal with the faculty, how to deal with financials,” he said. “There are some things I learned about Western culture that are different from the African culture. This knowledge will help me address many issues.”

Kendra Whittle is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary.



124 new students welcomed at Opening Service as 2016-17 academic year begins

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis began its 178th academic year Sept. 2, 2016, with a worship service in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus. Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer served as preacher and officially opened the new school year under the theme, “By Grace Alone, Grace in His Son.”

“Grace means we have nothing of our own that gives us standing before God,” Meyer said in his sermon. “Grace means ‘nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the Thy cross I cling.’ Being totally dependent upon grace alone means that we are to be obedient, obedient to His will and obedient to His words.”

Fall quarter classes began Sept. 6. This year, the Seminary has a total enrollment of 570 students, including 95 new students in residential and distance programs: 50 residential Master of Divinity students; three alternate route students; three deaconess students; nine Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology students; 21 Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program students; and nine Center for Hispanic Studies students.

Concordia Seminary’s Graduate School also welcomed 29 new students: nine Master of Arts students; 13 Doctor of Philosophy students; three Doctor of Ministry students; and four Master of Sacred Theology students.

New students gather outside the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus following the Opening Service Sept. 2, 2016. Photo: Harold Rau

Twenty-one new SMP students also received vicarage assignments during the Opening Service:

- Stanley Allen Jr., Redeemer Lutheran Church, Stuart, Fla.
- Andrew Apple, First Lutheran Church and School, Clearwater, Fla.
- Terry Baughman, St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Waterford, Mich.
- Ricky Black, Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Amarillo, Texas
- Joseph Bluege, Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball, Texas
- Mark Boriack, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va.
- James Cleland, SoulThirst Lutheran Church, The Colony, Texas
- Gene Dassow, Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, Roscoe, Ill.
- Gary Dittmar, St. John Lutheran Church, South Euclid, Ohio
- Anthony Forgione, Our Saviour, Rego Park, N.Y.
- Christopher Futch, Our Savior Lutheran Church, St. Petersburg, Fla.
- James Hahn, Cross & Resurrection Lutheran Church, Ypsilanti, Mich.
- Jason Hamre, SoulThirst Lutheran Church, The Colony, Texas
- George Holleway, Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball, Texas
- Steven Holtman, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va.
- (Thomas) Nathan Huse, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Tempe, Ariz.
- DeVon Lark, Word of Life Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Neb.
- John Mathis, Christ Lutheran Church, Little Rock, Ark.
- Victor Minetola, Carmel Lutheran Church, Carmel, Ind.
- Jeffrey Salomon, Trinity Lutheran Church, Fairfield, Texas
- Justin Wixon, Ascension Lutheran Church, Tucson, Ariz.

One new faculty member was installed during the service: Dr. Peter Nafzger, assistant professor of practical theology (homiletics) and former pastor of New Life Church—Lutheran in Hugo, Minn.

Dr. Joel Biermann, a faculty member since 2002, was installed as the Waldemar A. and June Schuette Professor of Systematic Theology. The Schuettes established the endowed professorship to “carry the message throughout eternity that, according to the First Commandment of our Lord and Savior, ‘Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,’ and stressing according to Matthew 4:10, ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord your God and Him only shall thou serve.’”

Dr. Mark Seifrid, professor of exegetical theology, was ordained in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) at the Opening Service. He has been on the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis faculty since 2015, after having undergone the LCMS colloquy process.

Other staff members recognized for new positions included Dr. Wallace Becker as director of placement and Rev. Jason Broge as director of curriculum design and development.

Top photo: Twenty-one new SMP students received vicarage assignments during the Opening Service. Photo: Harold Rau. Middle photo: Student Matthew Bohlmann sings during the Opening Service. Photo: Jill Gray. Bottom photo: Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer, top left, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Missouri District President Dr. Lee Hagan, top right, participate in the rite of ordination for Dr. Mark Seifrid, bottom left, and rite of installation for Dr. Peter Nafzger, bottom right. Photo: Jill Gray



Seminary receives \$50,000 matching grant



Students hold up a thank you sign in appreciation of donors who support the Seminary, its mission and its students, including the LCMS Foundation. Photo: Nikolai Gibbons ('16)

With joy and gratitude, the Seminary is pleased to announce a new endowment fund to assist students and their families as they study and prepare for life in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The endowment, established by the LCMS Foundation, was made possible through a \$50,000 matching gift from the John and Harriet Wiebe Mission Advancement Fund.

“With gratefulness to God, from whom all blessings flow, we are so thankful for the generous support the LCMS Foundation has provided,” said Vicki Biggs, senior vice

president for Seminary advancement. “This new endowment is a faithful investment in the mission of the Seminary and a tangible demonstration of the love and support our students have from across and throughout our church.”

The LCMS Foundation’s dollar-for-dollar matching gift encouraged new and lapsed donors to support the Seminary. The match challenge was met, with an additional \$79,000 raised. Currently, \$129,000 has been raised for the new endowment.

“What a blessing it is to have our seminaries preparing our men and women for a life

of service to Christ,” said David Fiedler, LCMS Foundation president. “The people of the LCMS are generous people, and through this matching gift opportunity provided by the foundation, an endowment has been created that will support in perpetuity the education and training being provided for our church workers at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.”

The funds used for the matching gift come from the Wiebe Mission Advancement Fund. The Wiebes, lifelong Lutherans with a passion for church planting and ministry outreach, left a significant estate gift and requested that the LCMS Foundation distribute funds to LCMS entities working to share the Gospel with others.

Concordia Seminary is grateful for all of its supporters, many of whom choose to make a gift that establishes a permanent endowment. The Seminary currently has more than 500 endowments. The vast majority have been established to honor esteemed pastors, faculty or family members, and to provide tuition aid and assistance for students. The Seminary also is blessed with a student aid endowment to which anyone may make a gift of any size. Collectively, these funds provide the resources for the Seminary to assist students in paying a very sizeable portion of their tuition expense.

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Dr. Charles Arand welcomes attendees to the 27th Annual Theological Symposium Sept. 20, 2016, in Werner Auditorium. Photo: Jackie Parker

27th annual symposium focuses on catechesis

The theme of the 27th annual Theological Symposium, “From Font to Grave: Catechesis for the Lifelong Disciple,” presented the opportunity to explore how now, more than ever, the church needs to recover and renew its catechetical tradition, discovering anew what it means to be Christ’s own and to live under Him in His kingdom today.

About 400 people from across the nation — a record — attended the symposium, which was held Sept. 20-21, 2016, on the Seminary’s campus.

“We live in a culture that increasingly has a negative view of Christianity and rejects Christian values,” said Dr. Charles Arand, dean of theological research and publication and the Eugene E. and Nell S. Fincke Graduate Professor of Theology. “It is also an age when biblical literacy among Christians is declining.

“For these reasons, this year’s symposium focused on the process and means by which the church forms people in the faith, namely catechesis,” Arand said. “The time is especially ripe as it took place on the eve of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the age which saw a revolution take place in teaching and forming people in the faith through the great Reformation catechisms.”

This symposium brought together some of today’s top researchers and theologians on Luther’s catechisms to explore how the church forms disciples of Christ not only during middle school confirmation but throughout their entire lives, from font to grave.

The plenaries addressed the need for catechesis in an age in which people claim to be spiritual but know next to nothing about religion. The plenary speakers included: Dr. Mary Jane Haemig, professor of church history at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.; Arand and Rev. Jason Broge, director of curriculum design and development at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and Dr. Anthony Cook, director of U.S. ministries for Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Three special tracks were offered, including “Expressing Theological Insights from Luther’s Catechism,” “Best Practices in Catechesis” and “Faith Formation: Propelling us into the Community.”

VOELZ DELIVERS SECOND ANNUAL KINGSBURY LECTURE

As a feature presentation of the 2016 Theological Symposium Dr. James W. Voelz delivered the second annual Dr. Jack Dean Kingsbury Lecture in New Testament Theology Tuesday, Sept. 20.

His lecture was titled “The Son of Man Coming to Give His Life as a $\Lambda\Upsilon\Upsilon\Upsilon\Upsilon\Upsilon\Upsilon$ (‘Ransom’) in Place of Many (Mark 10:45): What Does This Mean in the Gospel According to Mark?”

“St. Mark is good — really good — as an evangelist, and we should be prepared to drink deeply from his profound theology,” Voelz said.

Voelz is the Dr. Jack Dean Kingsbury Professor of New Testament Theology.



*Dr. James W. Voelz
Photo: Melanie Ave*

Next year’s symposium is set for Sept. 19-20, 2017, and will focus on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

All in the family for the Bostics

BY JACKIE PARKER

For Marla Bostic and her daughter, Melodie Bostic, working at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis is a natural extension of their family.

For three years, the mother and daughter have both worked at the Seminary but in different departments. Marla is a cashier in the Campus Store and Melodie is senior coordinator of alumni and congregation relations in Seminary advancement. The two

regaling each other with the latest deals they have discovered.

One recent evening after work, the two women painted signs on neon yellow poster board as they prepared for an upcoming yard sale. Sitting inside her daughter's house, Marla pointed to a burlap placemat on the kitchen floor and asked, "Where did you get that mat?"

kitchen table, which has bench seating topped with neatly arranged throw pillows in orange, gold, and geometric and floral patterns. She chooses the fabric and the mother of a work colleague makes the pillows. It's less expensive and they last longer, she said.

Some of the pillows also wind up in Marla's house. It is a close relationship indeed.

The women also discussed Melodie's new job working with Seminary alumni. Before her promotion, she worked for eight years as a support analyst in gift operations.

"I feel like God keeps opening doors," Melodie said. "Part of my new job will

**"THEY ARE BLESSED
TO HAVE EACH OTHER
AND THEY KNOW IT."**

— ERIKA BENNETT



Marla and Melodie Bostic are the only mother-daughter team who currently work at Concordia Seminary. Photo: Jackie Parker

women also live on the same block, one house apart, in the same St. Louis neighborhood.

"We have a close relationship," said Marla Bostic. Both women are natural leaders with a strong work ethic and event planning skills. They also happen to have a flair for fashion and home décor. They enjoy

"On clearance at Marshalls," Melodie said.

The burlap placemat with cute dog quotes belongs to Rocky, the family's 8-year-old Brussels Griffon.

Together the mother and daughter painted and chatted about their day at Melodie's

be building relationships at events where we hope to engage our alumni and encourage our younger alums to become more connected to their alma mater."

Years ago, Marla and her husband, Tom, a retired St. Louis firefighter, decided that their children would have a Lutheran-based education.

"We wanted to put the kids into Christian schools. I was raised Baptist," Marla said. "Then we found out about the Lutheran education system."

In 1982, the Bostics became members of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, which is now closed. In 1990, the family joined



Photo left: At the Seminary's Campus Store, Erika Bennett and Marla Bostic go over a work schedule. Photo right: Melodie Bostic presents first-year Master of Divinity student Andrew Simpson with a book certificate at the Information Fair during Orientation week in September 2016. Photos: Jackie Parker

Messiah Lutheran Church in St. Louis. Melodie and her brother, Steven, attended Central City and Messiah Lutheran schools and she graduated from Lutheran High School North.

Melodie studied psychology and pre-nursing at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Since 1998, one or both of the Bostics have worked for Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) entities. Marla worked evenings as a part-time gift-by-phone caller for Blake Wolf & Associates when the phone bank serving several LCMS institutions, such as Lutheran Hour Ministries and the Seminary, was located at Concordia Publishing House, close to the Bostics' home.

In 2000, Melodie became interested in working as part-time caller. Marla, who no longer worked at the phone bank, helped Melodie make the connection.

Previously, Marla worked for 36 years for the U.S. Postal Service, first as a letter carrier, then as a claims adjudicator in customer

service. She retired in 2012 but that didn't last long because Melodie, now working at the Seminary, heard about a part-time job at the Seminary.

"Concordia Publishing House used to have a store in Loeber Hall on campus," Melodie said. "I thought it would be a great job for her.

"I told her, 'You brought me in, now I'm bringing you in,' " Melodie said. Marla was hired in August 2013.

Erika Bennett, the Seminary's Campus Store manager and continuing education coordinator, said that in Marla's job interview, one of the first things she noticed was Marla's stylish clothes.

"I had to step up my game," Bennett said with a laugh. But it is Marla's vibrant personality and her love for the students that sets her apart.

"Marla's a treasure," Bennett said. "She's a great ambassador for the Seminary.

"She often is the first person people meet when they come to campus."

A case in point is Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) student Karl Glander. Like many students who stop by the Campus Store, he recently made a quick purchase and left with a smile thanks to Marla.

"I don't know how she remembers me. I'm not here that often," said Glander, social services director at Amigos en Cristo in Immokalee, Fla. "She makes you feel a part of the community."

The Bostics are the only mother-daughter team on staff. Though they have different roles at the Seminary, their support of one another in life and in their careers is evident to all those who know them.

Bennett said, "They are blessed to have each other and they know it."

Jackie Parker is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

New giving society builds on legacy of Walther

With thankfulness to God and to honor the Seminary's most faithful donors, the Walther Society, a new giving society, has been established. It is named after Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the Seminary's first president.

In addition to serving as the first president of Concordia Seminary from 1850 to 1887, Walther was the first president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and a beloved parish pastor. The Seminary's Walther Society honors Dr. Walther's

of God. The main thing to tell a person when you explain how to become righteous is to announce to him the free grace of God, concealing nothing, saying none other than what God says in the Gospel."

The Walther Society recognizes the annual stewardship commitment by the Seminary's most faithful donors. The Society is the cornerstone of annual giving to the Seminary. Donors making annual, cumulative gifts beginning at \$1,000 or more join together



Dr. C.F.W. Walther, President
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1850-87)



Recognition	Designation
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\$5,000+	Walther Society Benefactor
\$2,500+	Walther Society Patron
\$1,000+	Walther Society Circle

leadership and faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

It is fitting that the Walther Society begins during this academic year with its theme: "By Grace Alone, Grace in His Son." Based on the Reformation's *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone), Walther boldly preached, taught and wrote with a passionate focus on grace. In Walther's own words:

"Grace is not something for which I must look in my heart. It is in the heart

through the Walther Society in support of the mission of the Seminary.

Financial gifts support the ongoing operational needs of the Seminary, including providing resources for the recruitment and preparation of the students who will be future church leaders — those who will shepherd generations to come on the heavenward journey.

"How could we not feel excited to support this vitally important ministry that will carry the Gospel message to our children, our

grandchildren and our great-grandchildren," said Michael Van Beek, a Walther Society member from Edwardsville, Ill.

To learn more about becoming a member of the Walther Society, please call 800-822-5287, email advancement@csl.edu or visit www.csl.edu/waltthersociety.



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- Retain and develop world-class faculty
- Maintain the campus

In our own words: Changing the 'how' to better prepare our pastors to succeed

BY BOB AND RUTH ANN RAUSCHER

The Seminary's Generations Campaign has passed the 86 percent mark toward a goal that many thought could not be achieved. But, thanks to God's blessings and the inspired generosity of so many friends of the Seminary, we are well on the way to surpassing that goal. The achievement of the campaign's goal will be a giant step in strengthening the Seminary's foundation and capability to lead in the education and formation of future leaders of our church.

We would like to reflect on a meeting that Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer called in January 2013 that included pastors, lay people of many backgrounds, faculty, staff and others. The purpose was to talk candidly and openly about the Seminary, its mission, its challenges, its opportunities, its needs and anything else that might affect the future of the institution and its mission, and the success of pastors and congregations.

In short, it was the consensus of the group that we must change the "how" of what we do at the Seminary to better prepare new pastors to meet the needs of congregations in tomorrow's world.

The goal is not to change what we present doctrinally, but to augment these efforts with other skills that pastors need to be successful as pastors in a changing world.

We believe that sometimes people listen, but do not hear. Not this time. At the conclusion of the session, Dr. Meyer, in



Ruth Ann and Bob Rauscher

his own inimitable way, summarized the work into 12 different areas and assigned deadlines for progress and individuals who would be responsible for leading in each area.

This formed a framework for progress that exists to this day. This framework continues to foster improvements in the "how" of better preparing pastors to succeed in meeting the needs of congregations and community. Expanded field involvement and the curriculum update coming in 2017-18 are just two examples. Also, the Generations Campaign was a result of these considerations.

For too long, many of us have thought of the Seminary as belonging to the Synod and believing it was the Synod's "job" to take care of it. But the future requires that we adopt the commitment that Concordia Seminary belongs to each and every one of us and we all have a responsibility for its continued success. The Generations Campaign is a key step in that direction.

We are passionate about the importance of Concordia Seminary to our churches and about the Generations Campaign to our future. It is worthy of our support. We thank Dr. Meyer for his strong and inspired leadership of Concordia Seminary at this time and for the future. And, we extend a special thank you to each and every one of you for your support of Concordia Seminary.

May God bless you all.

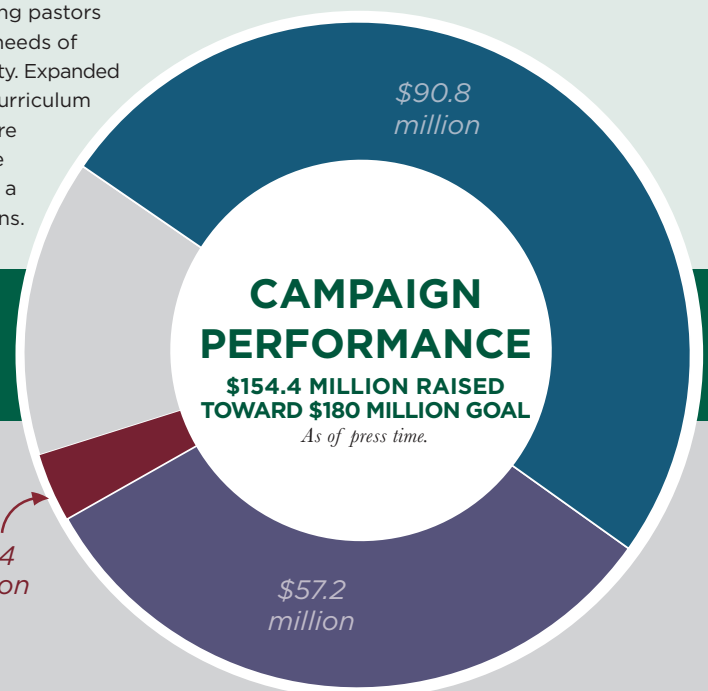
Bob and Ruth Ann Rauscher of Scottsdale, Ariz., are members of the National Campaign Council for Generations: The Campaign for Concordia Seminary.

To learn more about the Generations Campaign, visit www.csl.edu/generations

Library and Learning Technology

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Road warrior pastor supports seminarians

BY KENDRA WHITTLE

In an assembly line fashion, crate after crate of food and toiletries were unloaded off a trailer and onto the lawn outside of the family apartments on the Concordia Seminary campus in July as students and their families waited excitedly with shopping bags in hand.

Rev. Gerry Kuhnke from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Madison, Wis., had just made the 360-mile, five-and-a-half-hour journey to St. Louis with a trailer full of the donated items — specifically for Seminary students. It's a journey he has made many times before.

"There's only one rule," he told the group of waiting students. "Nothing gets left behind. Please take everything."

And by everything, he meant 20 cases of frozen foods, 10 cases of chicken, five cases of beef, three cases of pork and 100 pounds of seafood. He also brought 20 cases of household items including toilet paper, paper towels and diapers.

One of the waiting students was Jacob Roedsens, a third-year seminarian. "I'll be forever grateful to Pastor Kuhnke and the congregation for supporting us," he said as his classmates filed through the line, lifting their chosen items into bags.

The idea for the cross-country food donations began with Roedsens and Kuhnke. The two men first met at St. Paul. Kuhnke said Roedsens has been an "integral part of the congregation" since Kuhnke began there about eight years ago. Roedsens served as a deacon at St. Paul, frequently helping with worship services and leading Bible studies.

Kuhnke officiated Roedsens' wedding to his wife, Cecilia. In turn, Roedsens sought Kuhnke out when he was considering attending Concordia Seminary and becoming a pastor. Kuhnke said he was more than happy to offer his encouragement.

Roedsens said that shortly after he began his studies at the Seminary, Kuhnke and



Pastor Gerry Kuhnke from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Madison, Wis., unloads boxes of grocery items from a trailer to a waiting volunteer during his July 21, 2016, delivery to Concordia Seminary families. Photo: Kendra Whittle

the St. Paul congregation reached out to him, asking how they could be of support. "He knew we would be on a very tight budget, working and taking school seriously," Roedsens said, "and that we would need food."

"If it's a struggle to put food on the table, you take your eyes off of what you're doing at the Seminary, which is studying God's Word," Kuhnke added. As a former seminarian, Kuhnke remembers the challenges of being a married student firsthand. He would have welcomed help with groceries for him and his wife when he was a student at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Fast forward to 2014. That's when Kuhnke began delivering groceries twice a month to Seminary students with Roedsens' top

of mind. Kuhnke encouraged him to ask around the Seminary whether other families would benefit as well. Roedsens conducted an informal survey of his fellow seminarians. The response was an overwhelming yes.

Roedsens and Cecilia then used social media and word-of-mouth to spread news about Kuhnke's food deliveries. They also took requests from families for any special items or dietary needs. Kuhnke said he largely brings meat and frozen foods because those are not items typically stocked in the Seminary's Food Bank, which allows students to shop twice a month during the academic year and once a month during the summer, free of charge. A point system is used (according to size of family) to determine how much each family may receive each month.

Food Bank coordinator Cindy Bunte says Kuhnke's donations are greatly appreciated and help augment many of the staple items the students get from the Food Bank.

This academic year, Kuhnke said he plans to come once every six weeks with a truck of donated food and other items.

The mission to bring groceries from Wisconsin to the Seminary campus might seem like a daunting one for St. Paul, a small congregation made up largely of retirees. But that's not the case, Kuhnke said.

The congregation gathers food donations through "gleaners," volunteers from the congregation who contact local grocery stores and accept any available contributions. It's a process with which the congregation has become very familiar. In addition to supporting the Seminary, St. Paul is the driving force behind Bread of Life Food Pantry, the fourth largest food bank in Dane County, Wis. The food pantry gives away 900,000 pounds of food each year.

Given that experience, Kuhnke runs the Seminary food deliveries much like Bread of Life. He said Bread of Life is a "choice" food pantry, meaning recipients can select their groceries from different categories as they plan their families' meals. Roedsens said the same consideration is given for Seminary families, taking into account health conscious choices and that some students may have food allergies. Kuhnke said he tries to bring special items depending on the time of year, including turkeys in November and hams in December.

Roedsens said the Seminary's Food Bank and Kuhnke's deliveries have significantly eased his family's budget concerns. "With our two working incomes before coming to Seminary, we spent \$700 or \$800 a month on groceries," Roedsens said. "Now we are able to stretch a grocery budget of \$200 a month. It's been a huge help."

Since the St. Paul deliveries began, other seminarians also have expressed the relief they feel in knowing that they have help in feeding their families. Third-year student Greg Schaffer and his wife, Staci, have six children, including a newborn. They make sure and take advantage of Kuhnke's grocery delivery at every opportunity. "It's just been an incredible blessing," Schaffer said.

Kuhnke said every time he makes a trip to St. Louis, he can see the appreciation from the students and their families.

"They are just so thankful," Kuhnke said. "We pray before distribution. It's a joy to be able to provide this help."

Kendra Whittle is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Top photo: Fourth-year student Joseph Leech and his wife, Gayle, collect grocery items. Bottom photo: In assembly line fashion, Seminary students and their families unload boxes of meat and grocery items from Pastor Gerry Kuhnke's trailer. Photos: Kendra Whittle



"IF IT'S A STRUGGLE TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE, YOU TAKE YOUR EYES OFF OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING AT THE SEMINARY, WHICH IS STUDYING GOD'S WORD."

— REV. GERRY KUHNKE





Concordia
Seminary
ST. LOUIS

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ADMISSIONS EVENTS

AT CONCORDIA SEMINARY

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis provides a variety of on-campus visitation opportunities each year. These events give participants valuable information about formation for pastoral and diaconal ministry. There is something for everyone — including events for prospective students who are in high school, college or who are considering ministry as a second career.

for ... High School Men **TASTE OF THE SEM**

Get a sense of the Seminary! Spend a weekend on campus diving into Lutheran theology, prayer and worship. You'll talk with current students and professors, and enjoy fun and fellowship with current seminarians.

Date: Jan. 14-16, 2017

Fee: None

Register online: www.csl.edu/taste

for ... High School Men and Women **VOCATIO**

Explore God's calling and direction! This weeklong retreat includes Bible study, worship, discussion about vocation, a servant event and some St. Louis fun. A Concordia University System college fair is included.

Date: June 24-29, 2017

Fee: \$150 (travel assistance available)

Register online: www.csl.edu/vocatio

for ... Families **NEXT STEPS**

What about my family? Are you working to discern God's direction for your life and perhaps ministry? Do you wonder about the impact on your family? Bring your family and spend two days on campus connecting with current students and their families to learn about transitioning to life at the Seminary from those who have already taken this step.

Date: July 7-8, 2017

Fee: None

Register online: www.csl.edu/nextsteps

for ... College Students/Second-Career Men and Women **GREEN & GOLD DAYS**

Check us out! Spend a day on campus and see what the Seminary has to offer. You will meet current students and professors, attend classes and chapel, and end the day with dinner and discussion.

Dates: Nov. 4, 2016 | Jan. 6, 2017

April 7, 2017 | Nov. 3, 2017

Fee: None

Register online: www.csl.edu/greengold

for ... College Students/Second-Career Men and Women **CONTEMPLATE**

Learn more about the student experience. This three-day visit offers an in-depth view of the preparation that leads to service as a pastor or deaconess. You will tour the campus, meet faculty and visit classes — all aimed at providing a preview of the Seminary's world-class ministerial formation experience.

Dates: March 9-11, 2017 | Oct. 5-7, 2017

Fee: None

Register online: www.csl.edu/contemplate

for ... College Students/Second-Career Men and Women **SHEPHERDS OF GOD'S FLOCK**

The decision-making process: You are considering the possibility of "service as a shepherd" but have questions. That's right and good. At this one-day event you will explore ministry through Bible study, hear panel presentations from pastors and students, and talk with others who are asking the same questions.

Date: Jan. 5, 2017

Fee: None

Register online: www.csl.edu/shepherds