



COMMENCEMENT

*ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIRST YEAR
ACADEMIC EXERCISES*

THE FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER
MAY 15, 2020
4 P.M.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS

THE OPENING HYMN

Thy Strong Word (LSB 578)

A virtual choir of voices will sing stanzas 1, 2, 5 and 6 in unison, and stanzas 3-4 in harmony. The online assembly is invited to sing along.



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as
3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
4 From the cross Thy wis - dom shin - ing Break - eth



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed
night and deep as death, Broke the light of
Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
forth in con - qu'ring might; From the cross for -



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.
press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
ev - er beam - eth All Thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

5 Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia!
May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias,
Alleluias without end!

6 God the Father, light-creator,
To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten,
Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever
Praise the holy Trinity!

THE INVOCATION

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

Liturgist: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

THE LITANY FOR THE WORLD

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

L: O Father of all, who is Wisdom and Beauty and Goodness, whose Spirit ever strives to renew all people, we pray for the welfare of the earth, for all humanity journeying with us in this world and for all joined to us by the ties of common life.

Silence

L: For the vision of Yourself in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and for Your leadership to this hour:

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

L: For the radiance, mystery and surprise of this dear world, and for Your wisdom and beauty revealed in it:

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

L: Because through suffering and weakness You have taught us patience and dependence upon You; because in health and strength You allow us to share Your joy in being together and active:

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

L: Because through the turmoil of life we find Your peace; because for the challenge of life we need Your strength; and because in the adventure of death we have Your blessed hope:

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

L: That all those in authority throughout the world may have a pure motive and a right judgment in all things:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: That a wise and humble spirit may prevail within and among all governments; that all may be delivered from unscrupulous ambitions, selfish rivalries and mistaken policies:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: That the nations may live together in peace and charity:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: That physicians, nurses, medical personnel and researchers, all who are engaged in works of mercy and all laboring on the front lines in this pandemic, may be sustained by You and guided by Your counsel:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: That all who are worn by illness, all who are wronged and oppressed, the weary and heavy laden, the aged and the dying may be strengthened by Your love and fatherly pity:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: That Your church may be zealous in laboring for the removal of oppression and injustice and that it may take its full share in all efforts for the healing of the sick, the clothing of the naked and the feeding of the hungry, responding to every call to sacrifice and service:

C: Hear us, O God.

L: Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

THE SCRIPTURE READING

John 21:1-17

THE MESSAGE

“Feed My Sheep”

The Rev. Prof. Glenn A. Nielsen, *M.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.*

Director of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships

Director of Placement

THE CHORAL REFLECTION

Grant Peace, We Pray, in Mercy, Lord (LSB 778)

THE CONFERRING OF THEOLOGICAL DIPLOMAS

The Rev. Prof. David I.M. Lewis, *M.Div., S.T.M.*
Director of Certification

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

THE RITE OF CERTIFICATION FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY AND THE DIACONATE

THE CHARGE TO THE DEFERRED PASTORAL AND DEACONESS CANDIDATES

THE CHARGE TO THE DEFERRED VICAR, RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATE ROUTE VICARS AND DEACONESS INTERN

THE LITANY FOR THE SERVANTS OF THE WORD

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

- L: O God the Father in heaven,
C: Have mercy on us.
- L: O God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
C: Have mercy on us.
- L: O God the Holy Spirit,
C: Help us, good Lord.
- L: For thankful hearts to discern Your will,
For special measure of Your Spirit,
For mindfulness of the prayers of the church for us,
For a clear vision of Christ crucified and risen:
C: We ask You to hear us, good Lord.
- L: To find joy in being small followers of a great Lord,
To find excitement in Your working among people
through Your Word and Sacraments,
To find purpose in serving You and Your people in the church,
To find peace in the five wounds and the open tomb:
C: We ask for Your grace, heavenly Father.

L: O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
C: We ask You to hear us.
L: O Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
C: Have mercy on us.
L: O Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
C: Have mercy on us.
L: O Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
C: Grant us Your peace.

L: O Christ,
C: Hear us.
L: O Lord,
C: Have mercy on us.
L: O Christ,
C: Have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us. Amen.

THE CHORAL REFLECTION

Ride On, King Jesus

THE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

The Rev. Mark Kiessling, *M.Div.*
Director of Youth Ministry for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)

THE CONFERRING OF CERTIFICATES

The Rev. Prof. Douglas L. Rutt, *M.Div., Ph.D.*
Provost

THE CONFERRING OF EARNED DEGREES

The Rev. Prof. Douglas L. Rutt, *M.Div., Ph.D.*
Provost

THE CONFERRING OF HONORARY AWARDS AND DEGREES

The Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*
Dean of Faculty

THE RECOGNITION OF RETIRING PROFESSORS

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

The Rev. Todd A. Peperkorn, *B.A., M.Div., S.T.M.*
Board of Regents Chairman

THE GREETING FROM THE BOARD OF REGENTS

The Rev. Todd A. Peperkorn, *B.A., M.Div., S.T.M.*
Board of Regents Chairman

A REFLECTION AND THE CLOSING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

- L: As we look for the coming of the Kingdom, let us pray as Christ has taught us:
C: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

The Rev. Prof. Dale A. Meyer, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., D.D.*
President

- L: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

THE CLOSING HYMN

Te Deum: We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O God (LSB 941)

We praise You and acknowledge You, O God, to be the Lord,
The Father everlasting, by all the earth adored.
To You all angel powers cry aloud, the heavens sing,
The cherubim and seraphim their praises to You bring:
“O holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth;
Your majesty and glory fill the heavens and the earth!”

The band of the apostles in glory sing Your praise;
The fellowship of prophets their deathless voices raise.
The martyrs of Your kingdom, a great and noble throng,
Sing with the holy church throughout all the world this song:
“O all-majestic Father, Your true and only Son,
And Holy Spirit, Comforter — forever Three in One!”

You, Christ, are King of glory, the everlasting Son,
Yet You, with boundless love, sought to rescue ev'ryone:
You laid aside Your glory, were born of virgin's womb,
Were crucified for us and were placed into a tomb;
Then by Your resurrection You won for us reprieve —
You opened heaven's kingdom to all who would believe.

You sit in splendid glory, enthroned at God's right hand,
Upholding earth and heaven by forces You command.
We know that You will come as our Judge that final day,
So help Your servants You have redeemed by blood, we pray;
May we with saints be numbered where praises never end,
In glory everlasting. Amen, O Lord, amen!
Alleluia! Amen!

VIDEO TRIBUTES FROM FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS AND OTHERS

Soli Deo Gloria

THE MUSICIANS

Organist

Dr. James F. Marriott
Director of Music Arts
Kreft Chair for Music Arts

Laudamus

Pro Musica Sacra

Quartet

Bob Bernhardt
Sarah Bernhardt
Matthew Bohlmann
Christina Schempf

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE CANDIDATES FOR THEOLOGICAL DIPLOMAS

The Theological Diploma recognizes the candidate's certification as an individual who is prepared for service in the church.

CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY MINISTRY

Fall 2019

Jeffrey Coble
Tyler Cronkright
Joseph Glombicki
Henry Greenfield
Steven Headley
Steven Holtman
Daniel Keah
Peter LeBorious

William Murphy
James Pevy
William Pierce
LeRoy Raynor
Adam Schoepflin
Micah Steiner
Jeffrey Sutherlin
Justin Wixon

CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY MINISTRY

Spring 2020

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Gregory Barto	Nils Niemeier
Kevin Bender	Nelson Ortega Jr.
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Chad Biar	Sam Reinhard
Nathanael Biberdorf	Ahren Reiter
Matthew Bohlmann	Brady Retzlaff
Joshua Brakhage	Timothy Roggow
Robert Brown	Jonathon Rusche
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Devin Burmeister	Nicholas Schram
Paul Dickerson	Kevin Scott
Brian Doel	John (Alex) Slotter
James Dorner	Benjamin Spaulding
Kevin Dykstra	Eric Stacy
Maxx Fisher	Michael Stein
Michael Fox	Jeremy Steinke
Joshua Gremminger	Muluneh Taye
Joshua Hileman	Jared Townley
Paul Horstmeyer	Jacob Tuma
Jonathan Jahnke	Jordan Voges
David Jander	Tanner Wade
Teklu Ketema	Kyle Weeks
Albino Kong	Craig Wehmeyer
John Kyle	Austin Wellhousen
James Marriott	Tyler Werner
Richard McCafferty	Kyle Will
Colin Moon	Adam Wolfe
Joshua Mork	Dwight Wyeth

CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS

Michele (Musegades) Doel

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OF THE HOLY MINISTRY**

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Joseph Highley

John Karolus
Joshua Otterman

DEFERRED CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS

Rachell Highley
Rebekah Lukas

Bridgette Sharp
Jennifer Wientge

DEFERRED VICAR

Andrew Simpson

RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATE ROUTE VICARS

Justin Bangert
Bruce Elliott
Eric Gradberg

Bryce Rosche
Nathan Speerbrecker
Andrew Wrasman

DEACONESS INTERN

Alexandria Shick

THE CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATES AND ACADEMIC DIPLOMAS

CANDIDATES FOR THE ALTERNATE ROUTE CERTIFICATE

Derek John Broten †

James Foster Marriott †

These students have completed academic residency and will be eligible for certification and ordination upon completion of a one-year vicarage.

Justin Richard Bangert
Bruce H. Elliott
Eric Thomas Gradberg

Bryce S. Rosche
Nathan David Speerbrecker
Andrew Joseph Wrasman

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

David Blas ³
Andrew Philip Bloch ¹
Anthony Michael Celia ²
Jerome August DeBeir
Michele Lynn Musegades Doel §
Rachell Marie Highley § ¹
Luis Alberto Jasinto
Edward Momoh Kollie

Rebekah L. Lukas ‡
Abdiel Orozco Aguirre
Elry Plinio Orozco Aguirre
Leticia Sánchez Herrera
Nokukhanya Pearl Shabalala
Bridgette Dreier Sharp §
Stephen John Wagner ²
Jennifer Lee Wientge ‡

† Pending completion of vicarage, internship or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

¹ Degree granted Aug. 9, 2019

² Degree granted Dec. 13, 2019

³ Degree granted Jan. 17, 2020

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

Benjamin Michael Akers
Gregory Scott Barto
Kevin James Bender
Chad Alexander Biar
Nathanael Richard Biberdorf
Matthew Harold Bohlmann
Joshua Brakhage
Robert Matthew Brown
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Devin John Burmeister
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Joshua David Mork
Nils Paul Niemeier
Joshua Kent Otterman
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Jonathon Henry Rusche
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J. Alex Sloter
Benjamin Allen Spaulding
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Michael Lee Stein
Jeremy Allen Steinke
Jared Christopher Townley
Jacob Brian Tuma
Tanner Samuel Wade
Craig Benjamin Wehmeyer
Tyler Cody Werner
Kyle J. Will †
Adam Steven Wolfe
Dwight D. Wyeth †

† Pending completion of vicarage, internship or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

1 Degree granted Aug. 9, 2019

2 Degree granted Dec. 13, 2019

3 Degree granted Jan. 17, 2020

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Timothy Carl Bourman

Major Applied Project: Deep as the Sea: A Lutheran Devotional Bringing Gospel to Trauma

Carl Benjamin Muehler ¹

*Major Applied Project: Overcoming Barriers:
Helping Navy Chaplains Understand the Need and Implementation of Self-Care*

Rance Alan Settle

*Major Applied Project: Deepening Our Welcome:
Embracing Relational Hospitality in Our Homes*

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

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Aaron Michael Bell ²

Eric Steven Black ¹

Mark Douglas Femmel

Alexander Robert Fisher ¹

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Aaron Jacob Kuehn

Stephen William Rutherford ²

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James John Stefanic

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James Michael Wilshusen

† Pending completion of vicarage, internship or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

¹ Degree granted Aug. 9, 2019

² Degree granted Dec. 13, 2019

³ Degree granted Jan. 17, 2020

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Roberto Enrique Bustamante

*Dissertation: Contemporary Confessional Commitment: A Models-based Approach
with a Particular Focus on Global South Lutheranism*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. Leopoldo A. Sánchez M., M.Div., Ph.D.

Samuel Reduss Fuhrmann

*Dissertation: Mission in the Margins: An Emplaced Missional Ecclesiology
for the Brazilian Church in Urban Environments*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. David R. Schmitt, M.A., M.Div., Ph.D.

Jon Carl Furgeson

Dissertation: The Sword & the Mask:

Toward a Confessional Lutheran Account of Spiritual Warfare

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. Leopoldo A. Sánchez M., M.Div., Ph.D.

David Issac Melvin Lewis

*Dissertation: Purity/Impurity and the Lordship of Jesus
in the Gospel According to Mark*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. James W. Voelz, M.Div., Ph.D.

Ruth Ericka Hooper McDonnell

*Dissertation: Whither the Body: Using the Church's Hymnody
to Reassert the Hope of the Bodily Resurrection*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. Glenn A. Nielsen, M.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.

William Daniel Miller ²

*Dissertation: Lived Kardecism: A Phenomenological Approach
to Understanding Brazilian Spiritism*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. David R. Schmitt, M.A., M.Div., Ph.D.

Maximiliano Wolfgramm Silva

*Dissertation: Giftive Dialogue: An Analysis of the Use of the Giftive Metaphor
in the Pluralist Context of the Lutheran University of Brazil*

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. Glenn A. Nielsen, M.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.

Bill J. Tackmier

Dissertation: Life with Yahweh After Death:

How the Psalter's References to Life After Death Cohere

Adviser: The Rev. Prof. Timothy E. Saleska, M.Div., M.Phil., Ph.D.

† Pending completion of vicarage, internship or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

¹ Degree granted Aug. 9, 2019

² Degree granted Dec. 13, 2019

³ Degree granted Jan. 17, 2020

THE *CHRISTUS VIVIT* AWARD

Awarded to pastors, teachers, professors, officials of the Synod and laypeople who demonstrate faithful and fruitful service to the church in their respective callings.

Dr. LeRoy Wilke

Born and raised in Minnesota, Dr. LeRoy Wilke graduated from business school and worked in banking before serving as a chaplain's assistant in the U.S. Army, from which he received both the Army Good Conduct Medal and Army Commendation Medal. He went on to graduate from Golden Valley Lutheran College, Minneapolis, Minn., and Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn. (CSP), where he was certified as a Director of Christian Education (DCE). He received his master's degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato, Minn. In 1999, he was awarded the honorary Doctor of Letters degree from CSP.

Wilke's exemplary service to the church includes serving as parish administrator and DCE at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Columbia Heights, Minn.; associate professor of education and coordinator of the DCE Training Program at CSP; associate director and, later, executive director for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's (LCMS) former Board for Youth Services in St. Louis, Mo.; and executive director for the LCMS' former Board for District and Congregational Services, the position from which he retired in 2005.

Wilke also has filled numerous youth ministry leadership positions, including president of the LCMS Minnesota South District Walther League and member of the district's youth committee; president of Theological Educators in Associated Ministries-Lutheran Education Association (TEAM-LEA); member of the executive board for Lutheran Education Association; member of the board of directors for Camp Omega in Waterville, Minn.; committee chair for numerous district and upper Midwest regional youth gatherings; leadership positions for the All Lutheran Youth Gathering in New Orleans, La., and LCMS Youth Gatherings in Fort Collins, Colo., and San Antonio, Texas; and director for Journey Fests to former East Germany and Poland and LCMS partner churches in Brazil and Germany.

His post-retirement professional service includes serving as a member of the board of directors for Wittenberg English Ministry and on-site deputy director in Wittenberg, Germany; member of the board of directors for the Karpenko Institute for Nurturing and Developing Leadership Excellence (KINDLE); adjunct faculty for CSP and Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward; volunteer with the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul, Minn.; and member of the Board of Regents at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

Awarded to a graduate of Concordia Seminary who has rendered exceptional service in at least one of the following areas: parish ministry, mission field, preparation of church workers or Synod service.

Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Zelt

Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Zelt serves as senior pastor at Prince of Peace Church in Fremont, Calif., and first vice president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) California-Nevada-Hawaii District.

Zelt holds a bachelor's degree in education from Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward (1979), a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1984) and a Doctor of Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. (2002). His master's-level course work included studies at the American Institute of Holy Land Studies (now American Institute for Advanced Biblical Studies) in Jerusalem, Israel, with a short stint at the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem.

His research has included extensive written and video documentation on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Israeli archeological site Qumran and other Holy Land topics. He published *The Lynch Pin: Seven Reasons to Believe Jesus Rose from the Dead* in 2013. As a renowned Holy Land scholar, Zelt is a sought-after speaker throughout the LCMS.

Zelt teaches Concordia Seminary's annual course that takes students to Israel to learn how to study the Bible within the context of the Holy Land's geography and to develop new preaching and teaching skills based on their experiences. Students who take this course are thrilled for the special opportunity to study under Zelt and to gain firsthand knowledge of biblical events in the place where they occurred.

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF DIVINITY

Awarded to clergy who have rendered outstanding service in church life.

Rev. Laokouang (Kou) Seying

Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa, in memoriam

Laokouang (Kou) Seying (Nyaj Kub Thoj) was born in 1964 in Xiangkhouang, Laos. Seying and his family were among the first Christian converts in that country. Seeking refuge during the Vietnam War, his family left Laos when Seying was 12 years old. They resettled in Indianapolis, Ind., in 1976 through the co-sponsorship of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and St. Peter Lutheran Church in Indianapolis.

Seying attended Lutheran schools, earning a bachelor's degree from Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon (1987), and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Ind. (1991). He also studied systematic theology at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. (1995–98), and had completed course work for his Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in missiology at CTSFW before his death Nov. 23, 2019, after a battle with cancer.

Seying was the first ordained Hmong pastor in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Over the course of his ministry, he served as a parish pastor, missionary-at-large, mission developer and professor. His first call was as pastor of Hmong Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minn. (1991–95). He also taught religion and theology at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn. (1992–2004), and was missionary-at-large for the LCMS Minnesota South District (1995–98). In 2004, Seying was called to serve the LCMS California-Nevada-Hawaii District as a deployed mission developer/strategist of Joy of Harvest Ministries through St. Paul Lutheran Church in Merced, Calif., where he pastored the Hmong congregation. He also developed Hmong church plants at Greenhaven Lutheran Church in Sacramento, Calif., and Peace Lutheran Church in Fresno, Calif. He continued his ministry in California for more than a decade. He then joined the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 2015, where he served as the Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry, associate dean for Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry, and associate professor of Practical Theology.

Rev. Pornprom (Ted) Na Thalang
Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa

Rev. Pornprom (Ted) Na Thalang was born in Bangkok, Thailand, into a Buddhist family. In 1968, his stepfather and mother moved to Fort Wayne, Ind. Na Thalang was instructed and baptized at Concordia Lutheran Church and graduated from Lutheran elementary school and high school. He received a bachelor's degree in business from Indiana University Bloomington, Ind. (1978), and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1991).

Na Thalang received a call to serve as a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) evangelistic missionary to Thailand from 1991–96. From 1997–2002, he was an independent missionary; he started and served as a pastor for the Thai Lutheran Church and trained Thai church leaders. In 2004, he helped organize and register the Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church (TCLC) synod. He also served as adviser to the LCMS Asia area counselor in Southeast Asia from 1997–2002.

Since 2000, Na Thalang has served as director for the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) and translator in Southeast Asia and Asia. He and his wife, Gunya, translated *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* and workbooks into the Thai language. Currently, Na Thalang is translating the *Book of Concord* into Thai and is overseeing translation and publication of LHF projects such as *Luther's Small Catechism*, the *Augsburg Confession*, *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories* and *Bible Stories in Pictures*. Under his direction, 29 Small Catechisms have been translated and published in Asia, and more than 135 additional Lutheran materials have been published.

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LETTERS

Awarded to a qualified person within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) or one of its partner churches who demonstrates creativity, courage and excellence in the literary articulation of the Christian faith.

Rev. Mark Kiessling

Doctor of Letters, honoris causa

Rev. Mark Kiessling serves as director of Youth Ministry for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). In this role, he directs the planning and preparation process for the triennial LCMS Youth Gathering and supports the leadership, service, resourcing and networking functions of LCMS Youth Ministry. Through this work, LCMS Youth Ministry strives to support congregational revitalization and provides support for young people in Lutheran churches.

Kiessling directed the multi-year “LCMS Study of Young Adults,” which was published in 2018, and the 2017 “Survey of LCMS Congregations on Retention Since Confirmation.” He has produced numerous resources for youth and young-adult ministry; his articles have been published in the *Reporter* and on YouthESource.com, and he is editor of *Connected for Life: Essential Guide to Youth Ministry*. He has appeared on Concordia Seminary’s podcast “Word and Work: An Intersection.” Additionally, his sermons have been broadcast on KFYO Radio.

Kiessling holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration and management from Concordia University, Portland, Ore. (1998), and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2006).

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Awarded to a qualified person within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) or one of its partner churches who demonstrates outstanding dedication to the theology and mission of the LCMS and its international partners.

Gunya Na Thalang

Doctor of Laws, honoris causa

Gunya Na Thalang was born in Phuket, Thailand, into a Buddhist family. She earned a bachelor's degree in education at Srinakharinwirot University in Songkhla, Thailand (1978), and a master's degree in education at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand (1983). She also completed the teacher colloquy program at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn. (1989).

Since her conversion to Christianity at age 27, she has dedicated herself to the extension of Christ's kingdom, particularly through media outreach in connection with Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM). She founded the LHM media ministry in Bangkok, Thailand, known as *Journey into Light*, where she was director from 1991–2002 and became a well-known Thai radio personality. Since 2002, she has served as LHM's regional director for Asia, overseeing the expansion of LHM ministries in nine countries, and currently directs ministries in more than 11 countries.

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