

CONCORDIA SEMINARY

SUMMER 2023

FAITH *into* ACTION

FAITH /NACTION

CALL DAY
SPECIAL SECTION

BUILDING FOR COMMUNITY
CAMPUS PLAN



FIRST LOOK

*Deaconess Studies graduates Abby Ward, left, and Sarah Rusche share their excitement after Commencement May 19.
Photo: Sid Hastings*



ON THE COVER
Master of Divinity student Noah Russell sings a hymn during a service on Call Day April 26 as he awaits to hear of his vicarage assignment. Photo: Sid Hastings



President Dr. Thomas J. Egger laughs with students after a chapel service June 29. Photo: Tyler Simmons



Dear friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

There's a lot going on at Concordia Seminary. Our students, faculty and staff have a lot on their plates. They have a lot of plates spinning. Pick your metaphor, there is a lot of activity here!

I'm sure it's the same with you. Busy, busy, busy. If only there were more hours in the day, we say to ourselves. Sometimes, all the toil and the turmoil might make us resentful toward our work and obligations.

At the end of the day, however, the work God gives us to do is a great privilege and blessing. For we who know the grace and peace of Christ, our labors flow not from a nervous compulsion to win God's favor or to "be good enough" but rather from the joy and certainty of salvation.

We are God's children, and His ways are good. We love because He first loved us. We serve because He first served us. Christian faith rejoices that God has created us (and re-created us!) for fruitful work and service.

Martin Luther put it like this: "The knowledge of and confidence in God's grace makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all creatures. And this is the work that the Holy Spirit performs in faith. Because of it, without compulsion, a person is ready and glad to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, out of love and praise to God who has shown this grace. Thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate heat and light from fire" (*Luther's Works*, AE 35:371).

The theme of this issue of *Concordia Seminary* magazine is "Faith Into Action." We thank you for your support of the Seminary's mission, and we are glad for this chance to share with you some glimpses of our work in the following pages, work that flows from God's grace and from faith in Christ Jesus.

Thanks be to God for the gift of faith and for the gift of fruitful work! And thanks be to God that He gives us the joy of sharing this faith and work together!

Dr. Thomas J. Egger, President

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OUR MISSION

Concordia Seminary serves church and world by providing theological education and leadership centered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for the formation of pastors, missionaries, deaconesses, scholars and leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

WANT TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST?

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Faith InAction

BY DR. TIMOTHY SALESKA

I must confess that whenever I hear a phrase like “faith into action,” I get a twinge of anxiety that will soon be followed by pangs of guilt. I start to imagine the Christian life (which is what I think about when I hear the phrase “faith into action”) like a daily pep talk given to used car salespeople: “All right, you all represent God. We have an unbeatable product that you can believe in. It sells itself. Now go out there and find someone to serve.”

Sometimes, sermons hit me this way. After being told all that God has done for me, it is assumed that I now have all the motivation I need to go out into the world and do something for Him, as if faith makes the hard easy or the hesitant bold. Guilt sets in because I feel like I never do enough. And often, I do grudgingly what I know I should do willingly. My love turns more inward than outward. My motivation gets weaker with age. Sigh.

But this is a bad way to think about the phrase “faith into action” and a bad way to think about the Christian life. It is to imagine the Christian life in terms of the Law and not the Gospel. This is dangerous. And it is to misunderstand both “faith” and “action.” Also, dangerous. In what follows, I am going to give you a better, certainly more relaxing, way to think about the phrase “faith into action” and thus also your Christian life.

Faith

Faith is trust in a promise, specifically, the promises that God makes us in the Gospel. Christians trust that God is faithful and will do what He promises. The faith of Christians is created and nurtured by the Holy Spirit through the promises that God gives us and in His promises themselves. Faith is not a motivating power that moves me to do certain actions (like selling my house and coming to the Seminary). Nor is faith thinking that anything I do in God’s name is God’s will.

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But when the Holy Spirit works faith, you do become a different person. For example, one day Saul (Paul) was on his way to Damascus breathing threats and murder against Christians. Suddenly, the risen Jesus Himself confronted Saul, and the confrontation left him blind. But God sent Ananias so that Saul (Paul) would regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul was baptized, and he came out a different person. Some days later, to the amazement of people who knew him, he was in the synagogues of Damascus proclaiming that Jesus was the Son of God (Acts 9). What happened? To all those who heard him, Saul had become a different person.

Although Paul's conversion seems to be a unique and dramatic experience, the way Paul tells it, when the Holy Spirit works faith in us, it is no less a miraculous work. This is why it is not uncommon for Paul to describe what happens to us when the Holy Spirit works faith in terms of a death and a resurrection. For example, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20; cf., Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 6:3-4)." To be crucified and raised with Christ is a mighty act of God.

As Paul tells it, he became a different person because the Holy Spirit put to death his old self and raised a new self in him. He was an unbeliever and he became a believer. His new self was a trusting self. That's what the Holy Spirit does. That is what faith is.

Action

So, when I realize that when the Holy Spirit works faith in people, He makes us into different persons — killing the old self and raising the new — it influences how I think about the Christian life. It makes sense for me to think about my Christian life more in terms of who I am rather than what I do. That is to say, in terms of qualities rather than actions.

Paul, who knows what he is talking about, encourages me in this way of thinking. For example, when Paul talks about the fruits of the Spirit, he doesn't use

action words, he uses words that describe qualities or characteristics. Thus, the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

No matter what the vocations of people might be, people filled with the Holy Spirit are people who are full of love. People at peace in themselves. People who are patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and moderate. As a result, because this is who they are, without calculation or even much thought, this is the way they treat others. With hearts of love, they love others. Kind and patient people treat others with patience and kindness. People at peace in themselves sow peace among others and so on.

However, as all of us are painfully aware, at the present time, we often fail to live as the kind of people we are because sin still dwells within us. We are sinners and evil qualities give rise to evil actions, the so-called works of the flesh. As Jesus says, "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander" (Matt. 15:19 ESV). Paul says that in a Christian the desires of our flesh are in an ongoing struggle against the desires of the Spirit (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:22-25; cf., Col. 3:1-10). And the Christian life is as much the one as the other.

This is the reason that I don't seem to be able to do what I know I should. I'm a selfish, lazy, unloving sinner. Even my best actions are shaded by self-interest and self-love. Some days, it seems as if I am starting from scratch, in need of God's forgiveness, in need of God's resurrecting Word. I can never get beyond that. "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:24-25 ESV).

In the first part of this verse, I sense Paul's frustration and grief, but in the second, his joy and peace. Paul's words of thanksgiving relax me. They remind me that God does all the work on me. I can't make progress overcoming my sin. I have to be pulled from it. I have to die to it. And this is all the work of the Holy Spirit. Again, He does this through the Gospel promise. As He comes to me every day in that promise, He delivers me from sin and death and raises me as a new creature.

"It makes sense for me to think about my Christian life more in terms of who I am rather than what I do."

The Christian Life

Given all of this, how should we think about our Christian lives in this world? How should the professors think about what they do here at the Seminary? And how should students think about what they do — all the papers and tests and classes and field work?

What we should not do is set up a separate category of deeds under the heading "faith into action," as if there are certain tasks that qualify and certain ones that do not, or certain vocations that qualify and certain ones that do not. And this means that we should not put "coming to the Seminary to become a deaconess or pastor" as a holier action than studying to be a doctor, carpenter, teacher or anything else. Students are not holier or closer to God by virtue of their vocation than anyone else. Neither are pastors.

A better way to think about "faith into action" is to realize that since God does all the work to save us, and since our future is utterly secure in Christ, until Jesus returns, every one of us is called to carry out the vocations in which we have been placed. And in carrying out our vocations, in the nitty-gritty details of our relationships, we ask God for strength to put off the qualities and deeds of the flesh that war against us — the anger, wrath, malice, slander and lies — that hurt those around us. And we ask Him for

strength to put on the qualities and deeds of Jesus, who lives in us — compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness (Col. 3:1-10) — that uplift and nurture those around us. In other words, we ask God for the strength to live each day and each moment as the kind of people we really are.

This is no different for students, staff and Seminary professors. We have all been put here at the Seminary to do the work that God has given us to do. And in the "nitty-gritty" of doing our work together, we pray that the Holy Spirit produce His fruits in us and in our lives, and that He gives us the strength to live as the justified and sanctified people we are because of the grace that He gives us.

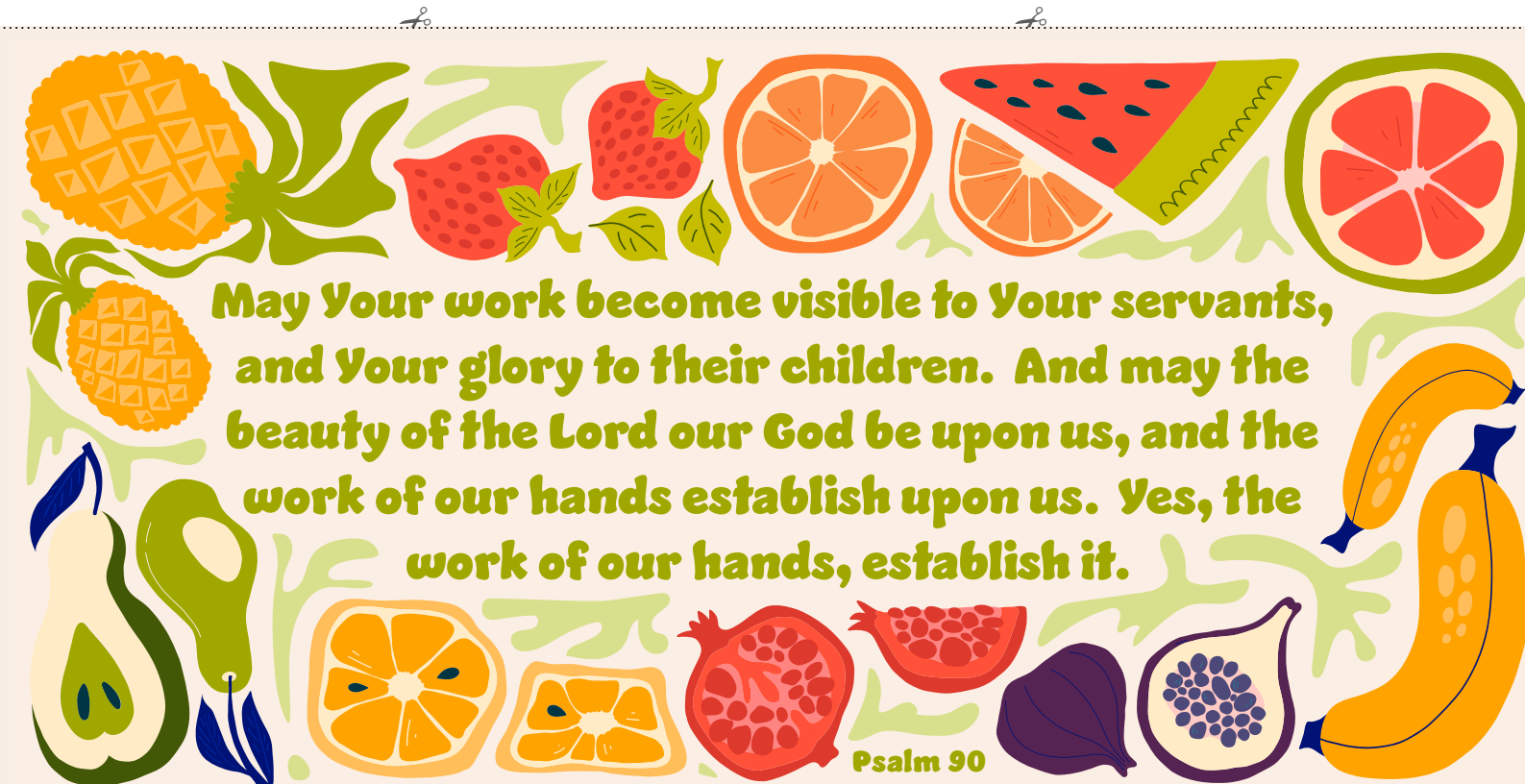
I will close with a lovely prayer that is relevant to all that I have been saying. Very relaxing:

May Your work become visible to Your servants, and Your glory to their children. And may the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and the work of our hands establish upon us. Yes, the work of our hands, establish it.

Moses, Psalm 90

Dr. Timothy Saleska is professor of Exegetical Theology, dean of Ministerial Formation, and the Gustav and Sophie Butterbach Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Cut out the design below and use it as a way to remember what faith into action is really about.





Students, families, faculty and staff gather on Chapel Plaza after vicarage and deaconess internship assignments are announced on Call Day. Photo: Harold Rau

CALL DAY 2023

Crucifer Daniel Bueckman, center, leads the recessional after the Call Day service. Photo: Harold Rau

Deaconess Studies student Erin Schulte, left, and Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology Deaconess Studies student Rebecca Jungklaus chat on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings



CALLS INTO THE PASTORAL MINISTRY

ABBREVIATION KEY
CHS: Center for Hispanic Studies
CMC: Cross-cultural Ministry Center
EIIT: Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology
ODS: Online Deaconess Studies
RAR: Residential Alternate Route
SMP: Specific Ministry Pastor

Unless otherwise noted, all calls and assignments were in the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Program or Master of Arts (M.A.) plus Deaconess Certification Program and announced on Call Day, April 26, 2023.

ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Henry Chanderdatt: St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, NY (EIIT Spring 2023)

Zaza Kandakai: Christ Assembly Lutheran Church, Staten Island, NY (EIIT Spring 2023)

Jose Pinedo Whatts: St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, NY (CHS Spring 2023)

David Santos: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Middle Island, NY (SMP Fall 2022)

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA-HAWAII DISTRICT

Jeffrey Tuft: Calvary Lutheran Church, Oroville, CA (SMP Fall 2022)

CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Jacob Moore: St. John's Lutheran Church, New Berlin, IL

Matthew Riley: St. James Lutheran Church, Quincy, IL (RAR Spring 2023)

Jonathan Sharp: Trinity Lutheran Church, Springfield, IL

EASTERN DISTRICT

Joshua Makey: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of South Hills, Pittsburgh, PA (M.Div. Fall 2022)

Jeffrey Reuter: Hope Lutheran Church, Rochester, NY

ENGLISH DISTRICT

James Bretthauer: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Medina, OH (SMP Fall 2022)

Jonathan Lackey: Grace Lutheran Church, Vine Grove, KY

INDIANA DISTRICT

Futao Liu: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Evansville, IN (CMC Summer 2023)

Soe Moe: Southwest Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN (EIIT Spring 2023)

IOWA DISTRICT EAST

Nickalaus Palmer: St. John Lutheran Church, Newhall, IA

IOWA DISTRICT WEST

Briton Nelson: Trinity Lutheran Church, and St. John's Lutheran Church, Algona/Burt, IA

MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Moses Dangba: Living Word Lutheran Church, Lansing, MI (EIIT Spring 2023)

Keith Dwyer: Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church, Brighton, MI (SMP Fall 2022)

Adam Flanick: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Gladwin, MI (M.Div. Fall 2022)

James Greenwalt: Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Birmingham, MI (SMP Fall 2022)

Joel Werner: Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, Livonia, MI

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

Jacob Childers: Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT

Chad Berg: St. Johns Lutheran Church, Park Rapids, MN

MINNESOTA SOUTH DISTRICT

Joshua Hoffman: St. John's Lutheran Church, Norwood Young America, MN (SMP Spring 2023)

Daniel Langewisch: Woodbury Lutheran Church, Woodbury, MN

Kyle Lewis: St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Winona, MN

Frederick Limmel: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Excelsior, MN (SMP Spring 2023)

Scot Missling: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Saint Paul, MN

Hunde Takele: St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN (EIIT Fall 2022)

Nicholas Wagenknecht: St. John's Lutheran Church, Stewartville, MN

MISSOURI DISTRICT

Brandon Boos: Faith Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

Timothy Evans: LCMS Board for International Mission, St. Louis, MO

Christopher Hill: Salem Lutheran Church, Affton, MO

Lewi Jermiya: Saint Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO (EIIT Summer 2023)

Timothy Koehler: St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Cape Girardeau, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

Andrew Nelson: Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church, St. Peters, MO (RAR Spring 2023)

Steven Resner: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Jefferson City, MO (RAR Spring 2023)

Brian Ryherd: Abiding Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

Jacob Sipes: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Washington, MO

Jared Tanz: St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Cape Girardeau, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

NEBRASKA DISTRICT

Andrew Greer: Messiah Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE (SMP Spring 2023)

Randall Longacre: 1C, A Mission Church of the LCMS, Columbus, NE (SMP Fall 2022)

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From left: Daniel Brummet, Daniel Bueckman and Peter Burch wait to hear where they have been assigned as vicars on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings



Torch bearers Noah Russell, left, and Jacob Moede prepare for the procession on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings



Liz Taylor is all smiles after receiving her deaconess internship assignment on Call Day. Photo: Beth Hasek

TOTAL VICARAGE AND DEACONESS INTERNSHIP ASSIGNMENTS ON CALL DAY: **49**

Stats include dual parishes.



Briton Nelson, third from left, gets a photo with loved ones on Chapel Plaza on Call Day. Photo: Harold Rau

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT

Jeffrey Campbell: Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Old Bridge, NJ (SMP Fall 2022)

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Jarod Fenske: Peace Lutheran Church, Antigo, WI

Hayden Lukas: St. Martin Lutheran Church, Clintonville, WI

NORTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Ryan Ferguson: St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hawthorn Woods, IL

William Harder: The Living Christ Lutheran Church, Arlington Heights, IL (SMP Winterim 2023)

James Kirk: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Crystal Lake, IL

Erwin Andrés Valencia Meneses: Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect, IL (CHS Fall 2022)

Alvaro Witt Duarte: St. John Lutheran Church, Wheaton, IL (M.Div. Summer 2023)

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

John Durkin: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Happy Valley, OR (SMP Fall 2022)

Joel Schuldheisz: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Tacoma, WA (SMP Fall 2022)

OHIO DISTRICT

Brandon Bettcher: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Napoleon, OH

Zachary Roll: Gethsemane Lutheran Church, North Jackson, OH

OKLAHOMA DISTRICT

James Bozarth: Trinity Lutheran Church, Blackwell, OK

Adam Ellison: Faith Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City, OK (SMP Fall 2022)

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Jean-Enock Berus: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, CA (CMC Spring 2023)

Isaac Davis: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, San Diego, CA (SMP Fall 2022)

Ryan Golden: Saving Grace Lutheran Church, Queen Creek, AZ (SMP Fall 2022)

Timothy Potthoff: Bethel Lutheran Church, Buena Park, CA (CMC Fall 2022)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

Aidan Moon: Family of Christ Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, CO

SOUTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Benjamin Leeper: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Sun Prairie, WI

Daniel Reh: Trinity Lutheran Church, Mequon, WI

Noah Strand: Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Pewaukee, WI

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

Devin Murphy: Hope Lutheran Church, Wake Forest, NC

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Joshua Kintz: Zion Lutheran Church, Belleville, IL

Oliver LaMie: St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Prairietown, IL

TEXAS DISTRICT

Jeremiah Bauer: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Carrollton, TX (SMP Spring 2023)

James Burke: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Clifton, TX

Joel (Jody) Hall: Faith Lutheran Church, Mexia, TX (SMP Fall 2022)

George Holleway: CrossRoad Lutheran Church, Katy, TX (SMP Spring 2023)

Kenneth Knippa: Concordia Lutheran Church, Garland, TX (SMP Spring 2023)

Isaac Lujang: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Worth, TX (EIIT Spring 2023)

Ryan Pennington: Fortress Lutheran Church, Harker Heights, TX (SMP Spring 2023)

PENDING

Jose Villalobos

CALLS INTO THE DIACONAL MINISTRY

MISSOURI DISTRICT

Amanda Berry: Concordia Lutheran Church, Sikeston, MO (Fall 2022)

Erin Schulte: Lutheran Bible Translators, Concordia, MO

Abigail (Abby) Ward: Calvary Lutheran High School, Jefferson City, MO

Jennifer Wientge: Lutheran Senior Services, St. Louis, MO

OHIO DISTRICT

Sarah Rusche: Luther Home of Mercy, Williston, OH (Fall 2022)

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

Grace Bergt: Island Lutheran Church, Hilton Head Island, SC

TEXAS DISTRICT

Rebecca Jungklaus: Lifebridge Community Lutheran Church, Sealy, TX (EIIT Spring 2023)

PENDING

Bridgette Sharp

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Concluding Master of Divinity student Daniel Langewisch, right, and his wife, Kali, center, pose for a photo on Call Day. Photo: Harold Rau



Deaconess Studies students Karyn Naber, left, and Ieva Russell wait to hear where they will serve as interns on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings

VICARAGES

ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Peter Burch: Resurrection Lutheran Church, Garden City, NY

Alessandro Rubino: The Life Lutheran Church, Old Westbury, NY (SMP Fall 2022)

Ajilkumar Christopher Raj: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Whitestone, NY (CMC Spring 2023)

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA-HAWAII DISTRICT

Jacob Eisinger: St. Mark Lutheran Church, Elko, NV (SMP Spring 2023)

Tou Pao Lee: St. Paul Hmong Outreach at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Merced, CA (EIIT Fall 2022)

David Singer: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Clovis, CA (SMP Spring 2023)

Steven Tomac: Faith Lutheran Church, Yerington, NV (SMP Fall 2022)

CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Ethan Hart: Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Decatur, IL

EASTERN DISTRICT

Phillip Twietmeyer: Hope Lutheran Church and School, Levittown, PA (SMP Spring 2023)

ENGLISH DISTRICT

Brett Arrasmith: Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO

FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT

Niclau Alcena: Bethlehem Haitian Lutheran Church, Immokalee, FL (EIIT Fall 2022)

Graham Barber: Christ the King Lutheran Church, Largo, FL (SMP Fall 2022)

Marvin Barrantes: San Pablo Apostol Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (CHS Fall 2022)

Mark Esser: Grace Lutheran Church, Winter Haven, FL

Deon Hull: Peace Lutheran Church, Okeechobee, FL

Jacob Scheler: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Boca Raton, FL

Sean Sheppard: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Jacksonville Beach, FL

Kenneth Sherman: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lakeland, FL (SMP Fall 2022)

Matthew Wilson: Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Warner Robins, GA

INDIANA DISTRICT

Brady Gurganious: Zion Lutheran Church, New Palestine, IN (SMP Fall 2022)

Janis Mikits: Faith/Good Shepherd Lutheran Churches, Salem/Medora, IN

Noah Russell: Cornerstone Lutheran Church, Carmel, IN

Jeremy Seger: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Evansville, IN (SMP Fall 2022)

Jason Yunker: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Evansville, IN (SMP Fall 2022)

IOWA DISTRICT EAST

Ethan Boester: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Iowa City, IA

IOWA DISTRICT WEST

Niguse Alemayo: Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, West Des Moines, IA (EIIT Fall 2022)

Matthew Martin: Christ Lutheran Church, Remsen, IA (RAR Spring 2023)

Tanner Sutcliffe: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Carroll, IA

KANSAS DISTRICT

Nathan Harkins: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS

MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Martin Banks: St. Michael Lutheran Church, Wayne, MI (SMP Spring 2023)

Daniel Bueckman: Messiah Lutheran Church, Clio, MI

Christopher Harding: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Trenton, MI (SMP Spring 2023)

Noah Pieper: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lansing, MI

Joshua Teggatz: St. Lorenz Lutheran Church, Frankenmuth, MI

Bryan Varblow: Cross and Resurrection Lutheran Church, Ypsilanti, MI (SMP Fall 2022)

MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT

Jonathan Chapa: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Moorhead, MN



From left, Deon Hull, Wesley Johnson and Alexander Kauffman await their vicarage assignments on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings



Ethan Hart waits to learn where he will be serving his vicarage on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings

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MINNESOTA SOUTH DISTRICT

Bradley Asmus: Eastern Heights Lutheran Church, Saint Paul, MN (SMP Spring 2023)

Desalegn Gamme: Trinity Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN (EIIT Fall 2022)

Joel Symmank: Woodbury Lutheran Church, Woodbury, MN (SMP Spring 2023)

MISSOURI DISTRICT

Davin Alberson: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Olivette, MO

Eric Bear: Village Lutheran Church, Ladue, MO

Michael Ewert: St. Paul Lutheran Church, St. Joseph, MO

Benjamin Heinz: Trinity Lutheran Church, Springfield, MO

Daniel Heitshusen: Hanover Lutheran Church, Cape Girardeau, MO

Walter Little: Ascension Lutheran Church, Kansas City, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

Eric Ronsick: Trinity Lutheran Church Egypt Mills, Cape Girardeau, MO (SMP Fall 2022)

Lance Schroeder: Our Savior Lutheran Church, St. Charles, MO

Molalign Sombo: Christ Lutheran Church, Platte Woods, MO (EIIT Fall 2022)

James Stockland: Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Lockwood, MO

Benjamin Wescoatt: Immanuel Lutheran Church, St. Charles, MO

NEBRASKA DISTRICT

Wesley Johnson: Zion Lutheran Church, Pierce, NE

Michael (Paul) Kasaty: Christ Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE (SMP Fall 2022)

Joel Lissy: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, LaVista, NE

Joel Ripke: Peace Lutheran Church, Columbus, NE (SMP Fall 2022)

NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT

Johniel Sam Dasiah John Edward Jeyaseelan: Our Savior Lutheran Church, South Windsor, CT (EIIT Fall 2022)

NORTH DAKOTA DISTRICT

Dylan Meyer: Zion Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Christopher Dhuse: Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School, Green Bay, WI

Joseph Eggerman: Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Aaron Tisdale: Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Green Bay, WI (SMP Spring 2023)

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Clayton Engel: Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Belvidere, IL (SMP Spring 2023)

Eric Hawley: Trinity Lutheran Church — Galewood, Lisle, IL (CMC Fall 2022)

Thaddeus (Todd) Wielgos: Fellowship of Faith Lutheran Church, McHenry, IL (SMP Spring 2023)

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Cary Hoff: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Tacoma, WA (CMC Spring 2023)

OHIO DISTRICT

Timothy Contreras: St. John Lutheran Church, Dublin, OH

Ethan Luft: Holy Cross Lutheran Church, North Canton, OH

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Ethan Berglund: St. Luke Lutheran Church, Mesa, AZ (CMC Spring 2023)

Micah Raebel: St. John's Lutheran Church of Orange, Orange, CA (CMC Fall 2022)

Justin Wood: Searchlight Ministries, Fullerton, CA

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

Benjamin Davis: Christ Our Savior/Sangre de Cristo Lutheran Churches, Angel Fire/Taos, NM (SMP Fall 2022)

Benjamin Oesch: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lakewood, CO

Timothy Onnen: Christ Lutheran Church, Montrose, CO (SMP Fall 2022)

S.E.L.C. DISTRICT

Robert (Rob) Choate: St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Oviedo, FL

SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT

Jordan Jacobsen: Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD (SMP Fall 2022)

Thomas Penrod: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, SD (SMP Fall 2022)

SOUTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Micah Brown: Brookfield Lutheran Church, Brookfield, WI

Alexander Kauffman: Divine Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Hartland, WI

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

Eugene Bostwick: Peace Lutheran Church, King George, VA (SMP Fall 2022)

Daniel Brummet: St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Hickory, NC

Zachary Bultemeier: Trinity Lutheran Church, Henrico, VA (SMP Fall 2022)

Mengesha Gella: The Lutheran Church of St. Andrew, Silver Spring, MD (CMC Spring 2023)

William Ward: St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Bel Air, MD (SMP Spring 2023)

Stephen Wareham: Living Savior Lutheran Church, Fairfax Station, VA

SOUTHERN DISTRICT

Tommy Lee: Messiah Lutheran Church, Prattville, AL (SMP Fall 2022)

Jacob Phillips: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Southaven, MS (SMP Fall 2022)

Frederick Sylvester: Bethel Lutheran Church, New Orleans, LA (SMP Fall 2022)

Matthew Vathauer: The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills, Birmingham, AL

TEXAS DISTRICT

Delbert Beideck: Grace Korean Lutheran Church, Colleyville, TX (SMP Fall 2022)

Timothy Douglas: Living Savior Lutheran Church, Montgomery, TX (SMP Spring 2023)

Francis Kelske: NewChurch Lutheran Church, Houston, TX (SMP Fall 2022)

Naresh Talathoti: House of Prayer at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX (EIIT Fall 2022)

Jonathan Zoch: St. Mark Lutheran Church, Houston, TX

DEACONESS INTERNSHIPS

CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Rachel McCloskey: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Danville, IL

FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT

Lidia Somoza: San Pablo Apostol Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (CHS Fall 2022)

Katherine Guarin Castro: Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Brandon, FL (CHS Spring 2023)

INDIANA DISTRICT

Ieva Russell: Cornerstone Lutheran Church, Carmel, IN

Yolanda Hempte: Shepherd of the City Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN (CHS Spring 2023)

KANSAS DISTRICT

Peggy Gott: Redeemer Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS (EIIT Fall 2022)

Nola Gray: Redeemer Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS (EIIT Fall 2022)

MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Terry Priestley: St. John Lutheran Church and School, Rochester, MI (ODS Fall 2022)

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

Christina Shaffer: Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

MISSOURI DISTRICT

Kimberly Bradford: Faith Lutheran Church, St. Robert, MO (ODS Fall 2022)

Karyn Naber: Lutheran Senior Services at Mason Pointe, Town and Country, MO

Elizabeth (Liz) Taylor: Lutheran Senior Services, Webster Groves, MO

NORTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Sally Roth: Fellowship of Faith Lutheran Church, McHenry, IL (ODS Fall 2022)

OHIO DISTRICT

Amy Genszler: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Oregon, OH (ODS Fall 2022)

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Karen Swift: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, San Diego, CA (ODS Fall 2022)

S.E.L.C. DISTRICT

Alyssa Choate: St. Luke's Lutheran Church and School, Oviedo, FL

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

Jessica Dennis: Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Columbia, SC (ODS Fall 2022)

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Ashley Wangerin: St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Steeleville, IL (Summer 2023)

Below: Alyssa Choate, right, snaps a photo with loved ones after receiving her deaconess internship assignment on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings

FARTHEST CALL OR ASSIGNMENT:

TACOMA, WA
2,091 MILES FROM ST. LOUIS, MO.

LCMS DISTRICT WITH MOST CALLS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

MISSOURI
28



Rob Choate celebrates after receiving his vicarage assignment on Call Day. Photo: Sid Hastings



FIND PHOTOS, LISTS AND MORE FROM CALL DAY AT
[CSL.EDU/CALLDAY](https://www.csl.edu/callday)



“You do not have to go out and look ... you’ll find lots of opportunities that God has already placed in your life.”

— Dr. Mark Rockenbach

Dr. Mark Rockenbach on the campus of Concordia Seminary where he was a student and is now a professor. Photo: Tyler Simmons

BY CHRISTIE HAMPTON

Dr. Mark Rockenbach has been a Concordia Seminary, St. Louis faculty member since 2014 and currently serves as an associate professor of Practical Theology. He also serves as the director of three key programs at the Seminary: Personal Growth and Leadership Development, the Institutional Review Board and the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) Program. He is a regular speaker at conferences, presenting on a variety of topics including conflict reconciliation, counseling and forgiveness. We recently sat down with him to learn a bit more about his experiences, his path to ministry and his advice for future pastors.

Can you tell us about your family and where you grew up?

My wife, Darlene, is a kindergarten teacher at Immanuel Lutheran School in St. Charles, Mo. We have three children: Joshua, Rachel and Andrew. My youngest, Andrew, just graduated from high school. We are originally from Nebraska and I’m still not a big city person.

When did you feel the tug to ministry?

I was always interested in helping people and I saw how the church was helping the community. Pastors and teachers in the church saw my interest in wanting to become a pastor and provided me with the opportunities to see what it was like to care for others.

After you received a Master of Divinity in 1998 from Concordia Seminary, you served as sole pastor at First Trinity Lutheran Church in the rural farm community of Beatrice, Neb., for about eight years. How did you end up becoming a counselor?

So many people came to me for counseling, but it was beyond my skills. I referred them to counseling services and later discovered the professional licensed counselors were providing contradictory advice about what I would preach on Sunday morning. So, I decided I was going to get a counseling degree.

How did you end up back at the Seminary as a faculty member?

A professor of mine said I should become a professor. So, I taught adjunct courses at Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward, and for Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon. Then I taught in Concordia, Mequon’s counseling program before coming back to the Seminary. That is one thing about ministry: You can have all kinds of ideas about where you want to go and where you want to be. But when God calls, and you think that you can contribute in a significant way in a different place, how can you say no to that?

You also have significant experience in the area of reconciliation. Tell us more.

I worked as the executive for church worker health and reconciliation for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Nebraska District. I would visit and care for the pastors in the district on a regular basis. The idea was to be preventative, to identify issues and coach both parties as the mediator.

As the director of the D.Min. Program, which is now fully online, why should pastors earn this advanced degree?

Pastors are struggling with how to engage people in the Word of God in a godly way in today’s society. The D.Min. Program gives students the skills to apply theology to contemporary issues within their ministry context. Pastors who earn this degree have the opportunity to further their education while remaining in their ministry setting.

You oversee important assessments that help students learn about their strengths and weaknesses so they can better serve in ministry once they graduate from the Seminary. Based on these assessments, students discover which type of “bird” they are — eagle, owl, dove or parrot. What do these descriptions mean and which bird are you?

We use the DiSC assessment to capitalize upon things students may not realize they are good at and identify weaknesses and how they can be improved. The bird names are assigned based on leading personality traits. Eagles are dominant and fast-paced, parrots are influencers and engaging, doves are steady and hold the status quo, and owls are detailed and analytical. I’m a dove and tend to be more introverted than others. Knowing our bird type helps us to better understand the gifts God has given us and how we can complement each other as we do ministry.

Do you have advice for those who are considering a career in ministry?

Find ways you can get involved in ministry and care for people. You do not have to go out and look for things; you’ll find lots of opportunities that God has already placed in your life.

Christie Hampton is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

MEET DR. MARK ROCKENBACH



Abby Ward, fourth from left, shares a moment of joy with her fellow 2023 Deaconess Studies graduates during Commencement May 19. From left: Erin Schulte, Jenny “Zoë” Huelzman, Grace Bergt, Ward, Sarah Rusche and Alicia Benning. Photo: Jill Gray

ABBY'S JOURNEY TO DEACONESS MINISTRY

BY SARAH MANEY

Ever since kindergarten, Abby Ward attended Lutheran schools. “Going into my undergraduate was my first experience at a public school — the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Mo. That was a culture shock,” she said.

Feeling the absence of fellowship and worship in her life, she jumped into campus ministry and got involved with CRU, formerly known as Campus Crusade.

Ward decided to lead a Bible study in the group for her fellow college students. The Bible study was an intentional way for Ward to grow in her faith and to serve others. She was constantly in God’s Word to prepare for the Bible studies, and she enjoyed discussing the Scripture and theology with others, some from

different Christian traditions. The theological differences underscored and strengthened her commitment to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) doctrine and the Lutheran Confessions. “That was a really spiritually enriching time for me,” Ward said.

As her college graduation approached, she began to consider vocational ministry with the LCMS. She asked herself, “What can a woman do in Lutheran ministry?”

She Googled it, and “deaconess” rose to the top of her search. Ward says this seems to be a common experience for women who enroll at Concordia Seminary.

Intrigued, she decided to learn more about the Seminary’s residential Deaconess Studies Program, and in the fall of 2020, she began the

program — right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One course she particularly appreciated was “Spiritual Care of Women.” Geared toward teaching how to spiritually care for women, the class provides basic training that emphasizes visitation, ministry to the elderly, ministry to people with mental health issues, addiction, ministry to women who have suffered miscarriage or infertility, and many other issues. The course also covers developing Bible studies and devotions specific to women’s concerns.

“We read a lot of good books and had constructive conversations about spiritual care, wellness and practical ways to care for people and share the Gospel with them,” Ward said.

It was the fellowship with classmates that most influenced her ministerial formation. “The bonds that I made with the other

deaconess students were so essential to everything,” she said. “Community is especially essential to ministry; having people with whom you can lament.”

Sharing Seminary life together included having deep discussions about the theological concepts they were learning. Understanding the theology of the cross and being a theologian of the cross was especially impactful for her. “I use the imagery that there is a throne of your life and whatever sits on that throne is what is ruling your life,” she said. “It’s what you value most, and all of your thoughts and all of your actions really flow from the source on that throne. Being a theologian of the cross puts Christ on the throne and that means Christ is going to impact everything you think, say and do.”

On Call Day 2023, Ward graduated with a Master of Arts (M.A.),

Spiritual Care Major with Deaconess Certification. This program forms and equips students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills required for service within congregations and other institutions of the LCMS.

“Being a theologian of the cross puts Christ on the throne and that means Christ ... impact[s] everything you think, say and do.”
— Abby Ward

She was elated to receive a call to teach at Calvary Lutheran High School in Jefferson City, Mo., where she had served her internship the previous year. Calvary also was where she went to high school, and some of her new work

colleagues taught her when she was a high school student.

At Calvary, she teaches classes in English, Old and New Testament and creative writing. In addition, she soon will begin teaching a journalism class and directing school plays. “That’s all me,” she said.

Her greatest teaching moment so far? During a lesson with students on the theology of the cross, in the context of an English class, the high schoolers debated a story they were reading. They had to decide whether the characters and themes in that story represented a theology of glory (striving to become righteous from one’s works) or a theology of the cross (righteous because of Christ’s work on the cross).

“I was just so happy,” she said.

Sarah Maney is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

LOVING GOD SERVING PEOPLE

Becoming a 'welcoming church'

BY SARAH MANEY

When Grace Lutheran Church was searching for a pastor, its members knew they wanted someone who could minister to their congregation and also reach out among the growing Hispanic community in their south-side Milwaukee, Wis., community. That person was Germán Novelli Jr.

Nearly 3,000 miles away in Venezuela, Novelli was already serving The Lutheran Church of Venezuela (ILV), helping the pastor in his home church and taking classes at nearby *Instituto Teológico Juan de Frias* in Caracas. He also completed a summer term at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wis., in 2009.

In 2011, he moved to Milwaukee, where he supported a variety of Hispanic ministries in Wisconsin, including that of Grace Lutheran. That same year, he began Concordia Seminary's Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program, a four-year distance pastoral formation program. In 2012, he officially received his SMP vicarage, which enabled him to serve at Grace Lutheran while taking classes in the four-year program. It also was during this time that he met and married the love of his life, Lucia.

His SMP training helped him to not only become a pastor, but one who could serve The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in the United States. His native language, Spanish, may have been the same language as the people he was encountering, but it was a different world in his new home. Culture, he said, always goes beyond language.

"We have the same God, we hold the same belief and we honor the same Lutheran Confessions, but the way we do church and the way we are the church is different because it responds to the culture in which we are living," Novelli said.

"Some of the things that were brought to the table as I was starting my ministry at Grace Lutheran were questions such as 'Are we becoming a Mexican church?' and 'Are we becoming a Hispanic church?' And I said, 'No, we have to become a welcoming church.'"

Numerous generations of Latinos, including 1.5 and 2.0 generations who primarily speak English, attend Grace Lutheran, as do many first-generation immigrants who only speak Spanish.

Grace Lutheran intentionally creates an environment where all feel welcome,

"It's beautiful to bring the Gospel to all nations, 'knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain' (1 Cor. 15:58 ESV)."

— Rev. Germán Novelli Jr.

regardless of a person's ability to speak English, Novelli said. The church provides devices that offer live translations of the service for those who only speak Spanish. And Novelli says the church includes Latin American hymns and Bible readings in Spanish throughout its services to create a welcoming atmosphere for all.

In addition to generations of immigrants, there also are a number of blended families in his church — presenting another unique ministry context. Novelli recalls one blended family in particular where the wife was from Mexico and the husband had a German/Irish background. He officiated their wedding and baptized their children.

"Their kids look Hispanic, but they don't speak Spanish," Novelli said. "They don't like soccer. They prefer American football."

The family caused him to reflect on the early days of the LCMS. "As a church, we have to see our own history," Novelli said. "At some point, our church was thoroughly German, and the language spoken in our worship services was German, because that was the language of our forefathers. But the kids began to speak English and that became the norm."

After completing the SMP Program in 2014, Novelli wanted to learn more about serving in Hispanic ministry in the United States, so he pursued classes through the Seminary's Center

for Hispanic Studies (CHS), which are taught in Spanish. "The professors that lead CHS have such good experience, and they know how to teach theology," Novelli said. He received his certification for general ministry through CHS in 2018, while also earning a Master of Arts (M.A.) in theology taught in Spanish.

Today, in addition to his busy pastoral duties, Novelli serves as a Student Recruitment Ambassador (SRA) for the Seminary, building relationships with prospective students and helping them discern whether ministry and the Seminary could be part of their future.

"Sometimes we see ministry as a sacrifice, as a burden," he said. "And yes, it's filled with challenges. Sometimes it breaks

your heart to see your people, your flock, suffering and dealing with sin and dealing with the cause of sin or the results of this fallen world. But it is beautiful to bring the balm of the Gospel to people. It's beautiful to bring the Gospel to all nations, 'knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain' (1 Cor. 15:58 ESV)."

The commission to bring the Gospel to the world belongs to us, the church, Novelli said. "If you love people and if you want to serve people, there's nothing more powerful than being or becoming a full-time church worker. God can do great things through us, His servants!"

Sarah Maney is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

SHARING A LOVE OF GOD THROUGH WORDS

BY MELANIE AVE



Linda Koch. Photo: Courtney Koll

Linda Koch met her husband, Bill — the love of her life — while working on her English degree at Iowa Wesleyan University in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, in 1970. She was in her senior year and about to start student teaching. He was home for a few months, awaiting word on a draft letter for the Vietnam War. His father was Rev. Alton Koch, who was pastor of a Lutheran church across from the student union and a 1937 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. “It was a real God thing as we were in the same place at the same time for all of about three months,” she recalls. “That was sufficient. I then learned what it was to be a Lutheran.”

Linda and Bill’s love for one another grew and they married a few months later. Fast forward in time. The couple began their life together in San Diego where Bill had begun his career as a financial planner with General Dynamics. They had two sons, and Linda became a stay-at-home mom. They enjoyed life together as a family and later as a retired couple as they remained committed to their church family at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Poway, Calif.

After Bill’s death in 2022, Linda — in honor of her father-in-law and the faithful Lutheran pastors she has had through the years — established an

endowment to support student scholarships at the Seminary and an endowment to help the Seminary create a future faculty pipeline. “What an exciting thing to be a part of,” she says. “It was a real gift ... and so uplifting to be in a position to do that.”

As a special treat to our readers, enjoy this excerpt of a devotional she wrote, which is included in a collection of devotions that were published this summer by Lutheran Women in Mission, *Life After ... Devotions for Widows*.

“I love words. I love God’s Word and they go together very well,” she says.

‘Found, Not Lost’ by Linda Koch

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). In the eyes of the world, April 4, 2022, was the day I lost my husband. Bill went to sleep as always Sunday night, April 3, after a completely normal day of

worship with Holy Communion, reading the paper, taking a walk, enjoying a supper of homemade chicken noodle soup with me and watching some television. At 7 a.m. Monday, April 4, I discovered that he had completed his

days here on earth (Ps. 139:16) and had awakened in heaven. Although this was a total shock to me and our family, we knew without a doubt where he was, as we — and he — trusted God’s promises to welcome His faithful servant home.

Bill was not lost, but enjoying eternity with His Savior and all the saints in heaven (Rom. 6:23). In my grief, however, I did feel a bit lost, although I certainly felt the power of the prayers being lifted for me and my family, and often felt that I was being carried on them as I and my family planned the memorial service, wrote Bill’s obituary and dealt with banks, insurance, our attorney and other seemingly endless tasks. But I still struggled with the new and unwanted title of widow. I felt like a juggler trying to take care of all the details that required my attention ... and also have time to come to grips with this surreal but all too real death of my husband and partner of nearly 52 years.

I looked to other widows in our congregation. One practice I noticed was the wearing of their husband’s wedding ring as a necklace — a simple way to keep his memory close. So I found a silver chain, put Bill’s ring on it and determined to wear it day and night. It was a comfort. A few weeks later, a friend invited me to lunch after church on Sunday. She had been widowed for some years. After lunch, I was horrified to notice that the chain holding Bill’s ring had broken and the ring was gone! My friend, Marilyn, and I searched the restaurant and the area around the car in the parking lot

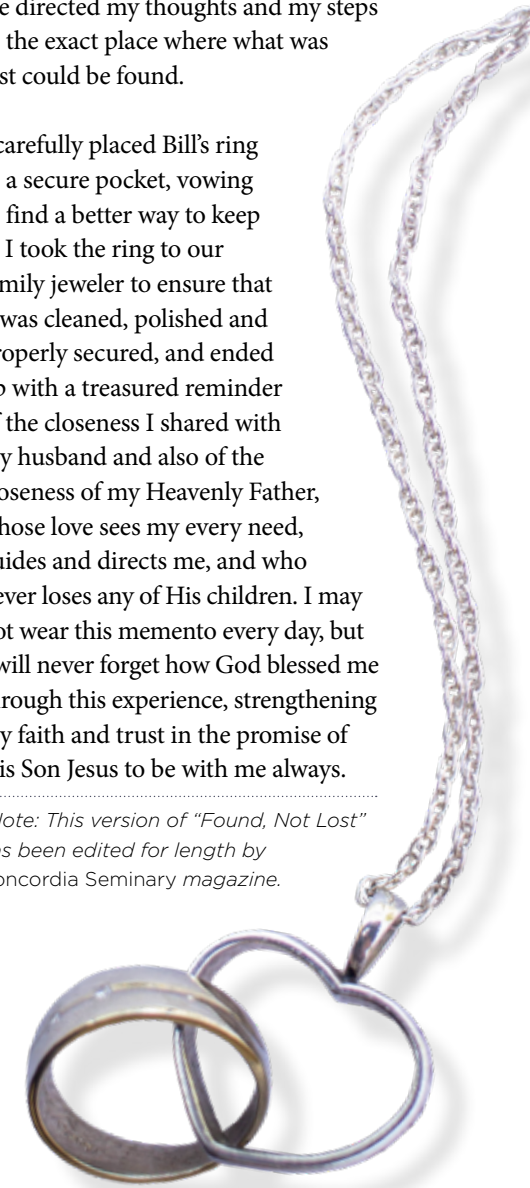
but found nothing. We looked again in the church parking lot where she had left her car, but again came up empty. With a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach, I realized that it was lost, and I had very little chance of finding this memento that helped me feel a connection with my husband.

I grieved that loss, praying to God to help me either find the ring or accept the loss. Another week went by, then another couple of days with no sign of the lost ring. Life went on with all the usual activities. On Tuesday, I visited a dear friend and on the way home had a thought that I should stop at the restaurant where I had discovered the loss to see if they had found it. No, they had not. I bought lunch to go, and had another thought that the parking lot where I had met Marilyn was also on my way home. When I pulled in ... I half-heartedly looked around, but saw no ring. Again, a thought popped up in my head, reminding me that I had first parked at the other end of the lot. I started looking in the area and had yet another thought — almost like a voice — saying, “Things don’t roll uphill. Turn around!” I turned, took two steps, and there was Bill’s ring! Weeping tears of joy, my knees nearly buckling at this gift from God, I retrieved it from its dusty resting place and thanked God through my tears

for this wonderful reminder of His grace-filled love for me, a love so personal that He directed my thoughts and my steps to the exact place where what was lost could be found.

I carefully placed Bill’s ring in a secure pocket, vowing to find a better way to keep it. I took the ring to our family jeweler to ensure that it was cleaned, polished and properly secured, and ended up with a treasured reminder of the closeness I shared with my husband and also of the closeness of my Heavenly Father, whose love sees my every need, guides and directs me, and who never loses any of His children. I may not wear this memento every day, but I will never forget how God blessed me through this experience, strengthening my faith and trust in the promise of His Son Jesus to be with me always.

**Note: This version of “Found, Not Lost” has been edited for length by Concordia Seminary magazine.*



DISCOVER PLANNED GIVING

Like many people, you may be wondering what planned giving is. Planned giving is a way to integrate your personal, financial and estate planning goals. The right planned gift may provide you with tax and income benefits while helping Concordia Seminary, St. Louis further our mission of preparing church leaders. Here are some of the most common planned gifts you can make:



CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES AND CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

These plans can provide you with lifetime income and a charitable income tax deduction and leave a nice gift to the Seminary.



BEQUEST

Your will or trust may include a gift of a specific asset, a dollar amount or a percentage of your estate to our ministry.



ENDOWMENTS

You can establish an endowment to the Seminary and achieve the impact you desire as well as realize an income tax deduction.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU MAY BENEFIT FROM PLANNED GIVING. CONTACT US: 📞 800-822-5287 ✉️ PLANNEDGIVING@CSL.EDU

WHAT'S HAPPENING



Commencement caps academic year

Concordia Seminary closed its 184th academic year May 19, recognizing 65 graduates and five honorees during Commencement. Rear Adm. Gregory N. Todd ('88), the 28th chief of U.S. Navy chaplains, delivered the Commencement address. "Through a rigorous and faithful education, you have received the tools to deliver the precious, pure Gospel to a world so needing it," Todd said. "This duty is to be carried out thoughtfully and deliberately, always mindful that the ones to whom you are delivering this Gospel are so precious that God would send His only begotten Son to die for them." Find more details at csl.edu/commencement.

Director of the Master of Divinity and Residential Alternate Route Programs Dr. David Lewis, left, congratulates Matthew Gerzevske on receiving his M.Div. during Commencement May 19. Photo: Sid Hastings



New lectionary podcast debuts

A new podcast from the Seminary faculty, "Lectionary Kick-start," debuted this spring. Each 20-minute episode features Practical Theology professors Dr. David Schmitt and Dr. Peter Nafzger discussing their initial impressions of the upcoming lectionary texts. The podcast follows the three-year lectionary and is intended to help pastors and teachers of the Word as they prepare to teach each week. "Preparing to preach is hard work especially when you do it alone," Nafzger explained. "Hearing other voices reflect on thoughts and ideas about a text can help spark your own imagination for what your hearers need next Sunday." "Lectionary Kick-start" can be found on most podcast platforms and on the Concordia Theology website at concordiatheology.org/podcasts.

Dr. David Schmitt, left, and Dr. Peter Nafzger serve as the hosts of the new podcast, "Lectionary Kick-start." Photo: Tyler Simmons



Give STL Day sets record

Nearly 300 donors gave \$51,445 to Concordia Seminary during Give STL Day May 10, an online giving event organized by the St. Louis Community Foundation for nonprofits headquartered in the St. Louis area. The amount raised, a record, more than doubled the \$25,000 goal. "We are humbled at the generosity of our donors, and we marvel at the depth of their love and support for our students and the mission of Concordia Seminary," said Vicki Biggs, senior vice president of Seminary Advancement and chief communications officer. "Thank you to everyone for giving so generously on Give STL Day. You make our mission possible."

To learn more about the Seminary's annual giving days, visit csl.edu/giving-days.

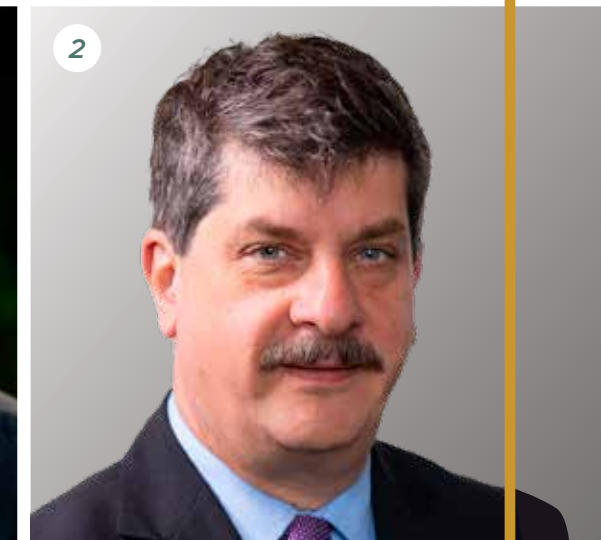
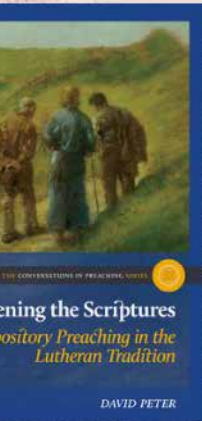
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis raises a record \$51k on Give STL Day!



High schoolers visit campus

A record 65 high school students attended the Seminary's annual week-long visitation event, *Vocatio: High School*, this summer and learned a bit about what Seminary life is all about. "Each year we look forward to the opportunity to build relationships with our young brothers and sisters in Christ during *Vocatio*, and we thank God for the occasion to show them how they are a much needed part of the church," said Director of Recruitment Rev. Micah Glenn. Next summer's *Vocatio: High School* is set for June 22-29, 2024. Learn more at csl.edu/vocatio-high-school.

About 65 students visit campus during this summer's Vocatio: High School. Photo: Tyler Simmons



Sem receives communications awards

The Seminary received 12 awards for exceptional communications work completed in 2022 from the Associated Church Press (ACP) and the Evangelical Press Association (EPA) during the organizations' award ceremonies this spring. The Seminary received awards in nine different categories, including a first-place Award of Excellence for its Christmas video produced by Lifetime Media. Find the full list of awards at csl.edu/newsroom.

A few examples of the Communications Department's exemplary work.

Celebrating generations

Some 270 people attended the 2023 Multiethnic Symposium, held May 2-3 on campus with the theme "Hope for the Church, Hope for the Future: 1.5 and 2.0 Generation Immigrants." Participants explored the challenges of 1.5 and 2.0 generation neighbors and embraced their contributions to the life of the church today — and for generations to come. "Immigration is an ongoing reality in the United States. The children of immigrants, who have either been raised or born here, think of themselves as Americans even though they may struggle with the new culture," said Dr. Ely Prieto, associate professor of Practical Theology, associate dean of urban and cross-cultural ministry, and the Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry. "What are the challenges and opportunities in terms of mission to these unique generations? How can we reach them with the message of the Gospel and Lutheran theology? These were some of the questions explored at the Multiethnic Symposium." Save the date! The 2024 Multiethnic Symposium is set for April 30-May 1.

Members of the choir from Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St. Louis sing in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus during the Multiethnic Symposium. Photo: Jill Gray

New faculty named

Two new faculty members have been called to the Seminary. Rev. Joel Fritsche, who has served The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a pastor, church planter, missionary and theological educator in the United States and in the Dominican Republic, has accepted a call to serve as director of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships and assistant professor of Exegetical Theology beginning this summer. Dr. Stephen Pietsch, a respected scholar with expertise in pastoral care and counseling from the Australian Lutheran College, has accepted a call to serve as associate professor of Practical Theology beginning this fall.

- 1 *Rev. Joel Fritsche will serve as director of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships and assistant professor of Exegetical Theology.*
- 2 *Dr. Stephen Pietsch will serve as associate professor of Practical Theology.*

Prof Insights workshops

Designed for laypeople, pastors and church workers, the 2023 Prof Insights: Faculty-Led Workshop Series offered in-depth study on contemporary topics that influence the practice of ministry and worship during workshops held in California, Colorado, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska and New Mexico June through August. "These workshops create an opportunity to be fed both intellectually and spiritually," said Pastor Josh Schmidt of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Monterey, Calif., which served as a host congregation for one workshop. "They bind us together as a Synod through our Seminary as well as a church body through the fellowship of all in attendance. I look forward to these opportunities to 'talk shop' and support each other as we walk together in Word and Sacrament ministry as a confessional church with a missional heart."

Professor of Systematic Theology Dr. Leopoldo A. Sánchez M., second from left, shares some laughs during his Prof Insights workshop in Monterey, Calif. Photo: Courtesy Josh Schmidt

Celebration of Seminary authors

More than 15 faculty and staff members from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis wrote or contributed to published books during the 2022-23 academic year. The authors were honored at the annual Concordia Seminary Author Reception May 16 in the Kristine Kay Hasse Memorial Library. Published topics ranged from the contemporary application of Luther's Small Catechism to church structure. To find a full list of this year's published works, visit: csl.edu/2023/06/author-reception-honors-seminary-faculty/.

FACULTY RECOGNITIONS:

Dr. Joel Elowsky, Professor of Historical Theology, "Moses in Patristics and Iconography/Images," *Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity Online* (Brill, 2022).

Dr. Benjamin Haupt, Associate Professor of Practical Theology, ed. *Hans Joachim Iwand on Church and Society: Opened by the Kingdom of God*. Christian Neddens, Michael Basse Gerard den Hertog, anthology eds. Christian Einertson, trans. (Bloomsbury Publishing / T&T Clark, 2023).

Dr. Erik Herrmann, Professor of Historical Theology, "On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church (1520)," *How the Reformation Began: The Quincentennial Perspective*, Anna Marie Johnson and Nicholas Hopman, eds. (Pickwick Publications, 2022), 62-71.

Dr. Robert Kolb, Professor Emeritus: Trans., *The Freedom of a Christian: A New Translation*, Martin Luther (Crossway, 2023).

Dr. Richard Marrs, Professor of Practical Theology: *Haciendo Más Cristocéntrica La Consejería Cristiana*. Spanish translation of *Making Christian Counseling More Christ Centered*. Roberto Weber, ed., Luz Kramer, trans. (Amazon Publishing, 2023).

Dr. David Peter, Professor of Practical Theology:

- *Opening the Scriptures: Expository Preaching in the Lutheran Tradition* (Concordia Seminary Press, 2022).
- *Organizing for Ministry and Mission: Options for Church Structure* (Concordia Publishing House, 2023).

Dr. Ely Prieto, Associate Professor of Practical Theology: "Aconselhamento como porta para a missão," *Aconselhamento Pastoral: Reflexões e Práticas sob a ótica da Cruz* (Editora Concórdia, 2022).

Dr. Robert Rosin, Professor Emeritus, "Luther and Church Revisited," *Luther and Philosophies of the Reformation, Boris Gunjevic*, ed. (Bloomsbury Academic, 2023), 59-87.

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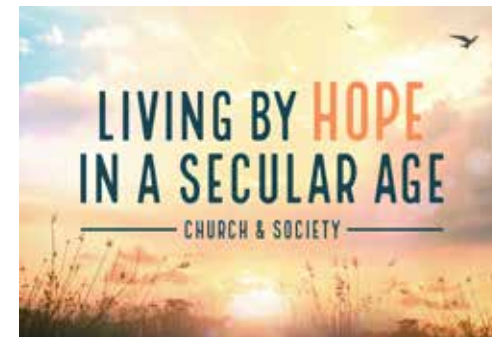
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- **Dr. Joel Biermann**, Professor of Systematic Theology
- **Dr. Robert Kolb**, Professor Emeritus
- **Dr. Timothy Saleska**, Professor of Exegetical Theology
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- **Dr. David Adams**, Professor of Exegetical Theology
- **Dr. Charles Arand**, Professor of Systematic Theology
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- **Dr. Gerhard Bode**, Professor of Historical Theology
- **Dr. Thomas J. Egger**, President and Professor of Exegetical Theology
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Dr. Douglas Rutt
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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

Campus Plan introduced

Ahead of its 100th anniversary of operations on its Clayton, Mo., campus, Concordia Seminary introduced a Campus Plan June 30 that is centered on augmenting its iconic campus for the next century of academic and theological leadership. *Building for Community: The Campus Plan for Concordia Seminary* provides a framework for shaping the Seminary's physical environment to better serve the needs of students, faculty, staff and, ultimately, the congregations and ministries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Plan highlights include new student housing, refurbished historic buildings, new athletic facilities and a new welcome center. "The Campus Plan is aimed at stewarding and enhancing the Seminary's campus to ensure our spaces serve the needs of our seminarians and scholars now and into the future," said President Dr. Thomas J. Egger. "This Campus Plan wisely stewards our financial and physical resources for the sake of our Seminary's long-term Gospel mission. It embodies our commitment to robust campus community and sets a course for our Seminary's continued strength and stability for years to come." Additional information about the Campus Plan, including renderings of the proposed student housing and a downloadable brochure, is available at csl.edu/campus-plan.

Looking west; a rendering shows proposed new single student apartments, left, married student apartments, center. Photo: Courtesy Lawrence Group





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