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Dear Friends of Concordia Theological Seminary:

This issue of *For the Life of the World* focuses on the wonderful gifts that God bestows on the church through the laity. On a personal level, I have had the privilege of watching dedicated and talented laity—men and women—serve their Lord with distinction and excellence.

In the 70’s at Zion Lutheran Church, Atlantic, Iowa, it was delightful to see the wise and capable leadership of men like Karl Aldag and Edward Jensen and of women like Amanda Giessler and Sandra Jensen and the leaders of the various guilds that constituted the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. As their pastor, I regularly gave thanks for their time and talents that so aptly, by God’s grace, met the needs of the parish at just the right moment. Often their expertise and knowledge in a variety of areas—areas where I lacked such capacity—achieved the best for the parish. As pastor, I could behold with gratitude the beautiful bounty of God’s gifts through His people. His name was confessed and His mission advanced by their labors.

Later in the 90’s, I had a similarly rich experience in assisting the Rev. Paul Shoemaker at Emanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, Indiana. The people of Emanuel excelled in service to their Lord. For example, an experienced police officer, despite service on a SWAT team in the middle of the night, would faithfully fulfill all his Sunday duties as an elder.

I could write a book of such examples. Indeed, the history of Christianity is a wonderful record of God’s calling rich and poor, women and men, young and old to the fountains of His mercy and grace in Christ. St. Peter aptly describes God’s people: “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). The apostle is here drawing upon the Old Testament, especially Exodus 19:6, to describe the character of God’s people.

It is noteworthy and foundational that the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, defines people *in relationship to God*, i.e., we are called by grace to confess and to live in accord with His character. This beautiful calling permits God’s people and God’s pastors to work in wonderful support of each other. Unlike our culture which asks: “Who’s in charge here? Who is entitled to make the final decision?” the Scriptures announce that the Lord and He alone is “in charge.” And His Lordship, unlike the powers of this world, is delightful. His gifts of forgiveness and peace daily shower upon God’s people and pastors baptismal water, the living voice of Jesus through the prophets and apostles, and the wonderful food of the Lord’s Supper. With such blessings in Christ, God’s people and God’s pastors are, by grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, called to live a forgiven and holy life of service to God and our neighbor.

We at the seminary rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for His people. Our goal is to serve them with pastors who will continually point them to Christ, even as they exhibit in all their teaching and living their grateful love for their Savior and His people.

A passage by John Watson, preserved in John W. Doberstein’s *Minister’s Prayer Book*, aptly describes the beauty of people and pastor working together in service to their Lord.

One’s heart goes back from this eager, restless, ambitious age to the former days, and recalls with fond recollection the pastor of his youth, who had lived all his ministry in one place, and was buried where he was ordained—who had baptized a child, and admitted her to the sacrament, and married her and baptized her children—who knew all the ins and outs of his people’s character, and carried family history for generations in his head—who was ever thinking of his people, watching over them, visiting their homes, till his familiar figure on the street linked together the past and the present, and heaven and earth, and opened a treasure house of sacred memories. He prayed with a lad before he went away—his mother could almost repeat the words; he was constantly inquiring about his welfare, so binding him to his faith and home by silken ties; he was in the house on the day of his return, to see how it had fared with him in the outer world. People turned to him as by an instinct in their joys and sorrows; men consulted him in the crises of life, and, as they lay a-dying, committed their wives and children to his care. He was a head to every widow, and a father to the orphans, and the friend of all lowly, discouraged, unsuccessful souls. Ten miles away people did not know his name, but his own congregation regarded no other, and in the Lord’s presence it was well known, it was often mentioned; when he laid down his trust, and arrived on the other side, many whom he had fed and guided, and restored and comforted, till he saw them through the gates, were waiting to receive their shepherd-minister, and as they stood around him before the Lord, he, of all men, could say without shame, “Behold, Lord, Thine under-shepherd, and the flock Thou didst give me.” (John W. Doberstein, *Minister’s Prayer Book* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986], pp. 210-211)

Our calling is to form this kind of pastor for every situation and setting. May the Lord bless each and every child of God—the priesthood of all believers—and the pastors who serve them.

Sincerely yours, in our Risen, Ascended, and Living Lord,

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary

[Image]
4 Living the Christian Life in Our Vocations
By Dr. Gene Edward Veith, Director of the Cranach Institute at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Luther said that vocations are “masks of God.” He is hidden in the people who build our houses, fix our cars, teach us how to do things, and create beauty for us to enjoy. Vocation is part of how God governs the universe.

7 Joy in Service!
By Mrs. Beverly A. England, Director of Public Relations for the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, Tulsa, Oklahoma

What a joy it has been! Serving the Lord in His church and being in a leadership position in an organization that has 250,000 members and does mission work by serving the needs of people near and far are so very fulfilling. Joy beyond words, yes!

10 Leading a Christian Life
By Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Ross, Wichita, Kansas

When asked to write an article on living a Christ-centered life, Dennis and Ann Ross were first honored and then perplexed. To them there seemed little that should make their life an example to others, for they know it is only through the Holy Spirit’s power that we are able to submit to God’s will for our lives.

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In Luther’s day, those who wanted to serve God to the utmost would become monks, nuns, or priests. Doing so meant taking a vow not to marry, own property, or exercise worldly authority. Such things the laity had to be concerned with, of course, but spiritual people were thought to have a higher calling.

This notion is still prevalent today, even among non-Catholics who assume that church activities—if not full-time church work, then evangelism, prayer, and Bible study—are the best way to please God.

Luther certainly prized full-time church work, as well as evangelism, prayer, and Bible study. But he showed that what the monastics condemned as worldly—marriage, parenthood, making a living, and civil government—are also arenas for Christian service. And laypeople too, no less than pastors and other church-workers, are engaged in spiritually significant labor.

Today we use the word “vocation” as just another word for “job.” But “vocation” is derived from the Latin meaning “calling.” And it is God who does the calling. We understand that God calls pastors into the ministry. Luther taught that God also calls all of us into various offices and tasks.

Luther’s doctrine of vocation has to do with the way God works through human beings. God proclaims His Word, distributes His Sacraments, and bestows the forgiveness of sins through pastors, the “called and ordained servants of the Word.” By the same token, God gives us our daily bread by means of farmers, bakers, tractor manufacturers, the lady at the checkout counter, and all the other cogs in the wheel of our economy. God protects us through the vocation of police officers, firemen, lawmakers, and our military. God gives His gifts of healing through the callings of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and others in the medical vocations.

Luther said that vocations are “masks of God.” He is hidden in the people who build our houses, fix our cars, teach us how to do things, and create beauty for us to enjoy. Vocation is part of how God governs the universe. Though He can and sometimes does work without means—providing manna in
the wilderness without farmers and healing the sick with miracles—He has chosen, as the general rule, to give His gifts through the means of ordinary people. When people serve us, we should appreciate that God Himself is serving us through them.

And that means God is also working through us in whatever tasks He has put before us. The purpose of vocation, according to Luther, is to love and serve our neighbors, not loving and serving God, directly; loving and serving the people whom God has set right before our eyes.

God does not need our good works, said Luther, but our neighbor does. Our relationship to God is based solely on His work for us in Jesus Christ. But having redeemed us and grafted us into Christ through His Word and Sacraments in the Church, God then sends us back into the world for our faith to bear fruit in acts of love for our neighbor.

Although our works should be directed to our neighbors, and not to God as such, Scripture tells of a surprise. In the last days, Christ in judgment, separating the sheep from the goats—citing how they did or did not feed the hungry, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, and do other works of mercy—reveals that “as you did it to the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me” (Matt. 25:40). That is to say, Christ is hidden in the neighbor in need. So when we love and serve our neighbor, we love and serve Christ after all.

And though we may encounter neighbors in need as the Good Samaritan did on the road to Jericho, the primary place where we love and serve our neighbors is in our vocations.

Our vocations are multiple. God established the family. Being a husband or a wife is a calling. In the vocation of marriage, we have only one neighbor whom we are to love and serve. Wives love and serve their husbands by submitting themselves as to Christ. Husbands are to love and serve their wives by giving themselves up, as Christ did for the Church (Eph. 5:22-33). (Notice how Christ is hidden in the vocation of marriage.)

Being a mother or a father is also a vocation, which entails loving and serving one’s children. Taking them to church, seeing they get an education, driving them to soccer practice, giving them the physical and emotional nourishment they need—God is caring for children through what their parents do.
And what we do to make a living for ourselves and our family is also a vocation. Our God-given talents and opportunities open up specific avenues of service. No business could stay in operation unless it provides a good or a service that fulfills someone’s need. Yes, it is economics, but our labor—when done in faith—can also be an expression of love and service to our neighbors: our customers, our fellow workers, the people who benefit from what we do.

God also established the state, restraining human sin so as to make societies possible (Romans 13). Our citizenship is a calling. Rulers are to love and serve their subjects and vice versa. We are to love and serve our fellow citizens in our political involvement, the policies we support for the good of all, and our involvement in our culture.

And God established the Church. Pastors love and serve their neighbors who constitute their congregations through faithful ministry of Word and Sacrament. We laypeople love and serve each other when someone with musical gifts blesses the rest of us by playing the organ or singing in the choir. All of the other tasks in the church—serving on committees, making the coffee, passing out bulletins—whether large or small, are ways the members love and serve each other.

Of course, we fail to love and serve our neighbors as we ought. When the Catechism addresses “confession,” we are told to consider our stations—that is, our callings—according to the Ten Commandments. We bring the sins we have done in our vocations to church, where we receive from the hands and the voice of the “called” pastor Christ’s forgiveness. Refreshed and built up in our faith, we are sent back to our different callings.

All of this can seem rather mundane. But ordinary life—which non-believers often assume is meaningless—is actually filled with purpose (to love and serve your neighbor) and charged with spiritual significance (God Himself, hidden in vocation and in the neighbor).

**Vocation is part of how God governs the universe.** Though He can and sometimes does work without means—providing manna in the wilderness without farmers and healing the sick with miracles—He has chosen, as the general rule, to give His gifts through the means of ordinary people.

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Dr. Gene Edward Veith is the Director of the Cranach Institute, which is a research and educational arm of Concordia Theological Seminary, devoted to working out the implications of the Lutheran doctrine of vocation and engaging contemporary culture with the truths of the Lutheran Confessions. For more information on the Cranach Institute and Dr. Veith’s writings, please visit www.Cranach.org.
When I think back to that very first time I said yes to my pastor’s wife, who asked me to become a member of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML), and what has happened since that time, I realize I have had some truly remarkable experiences! Doors have opened before me, roads have been traveled, and mountains have been climbed, well not really mountains but big hills!

What occurs in life that brings us into God’s service? So many things influence us along the way. Some things we remember immediately, but others we have to retrieve from the memory bank to make an accurate assessment as to what propels us toward serving! The Holy Spirit moves us to listen, to look, to desire something more than mundane living.

First, there are the things in which we have done nothing, like Holy Baptism. God’s grace to me in Holy Baptism as an infant set the course for my life. Now I can see how God worked in me as a child and then during my teen years as well. He was always directing and nudging me according to His will and by His grace, without me really knowing who was doing the directing or nudging. Then confirmation as an adult and the informed faith that Jesus came personally to me and all the faithful in the celebration of Holy
Communion. Yes, this was very precious to me, but I was still unaware that God had plans for me and that the Holy Spirit had begun working in my heart actively urging me to serve in His church and work in His kingdom here on earth.

Then in looking back at my life, I think of people who have influenced me in different and beguiling ways. There was Pearl, a woman of peace, always lovely and calm, warm and friendly. I remember desiring the glow that beamed from her face. I wanted what she had! There was Pastor Al, a man of God who preached about life in abundance through Christ. I remember wondering, what is he talking about? Whatever it is, I want to find it! Then there was Joan who lost something precious to her, but telling me that it was okay because God had loaned it to her for a while and she enjoyed it for the time she had it. I remember thinking what a wonderful attitude she had and I wanted to think like her. Then, while attending an LWML convention, a pastor used Micah 6:8 as his sermon text, And what does the Lord require of you? To love mercy, seek justice, and walk humbly with your God. This text stuck with me and spoke to me. If I am to love mercy, then I must embrace others that need; if I am to seek justice, then I must beg for truth; if I am to walk humbly with my God, then I must serve Him in any way He asks, for I am His servant. There were countless people like this along the way pointing me toward something. What was it?

Even obscure things, like a stewardship program through our church, brought further understanding of God’s Word to me. The theme was centered on being good stewards in God’s world and revealed we should not only give our treasure, but our time and talents too. Simple to some, but it was thought provoking to me at the time. It was a growth spurt in Christian living and Christian giving. I realized this was not my world but His world, and whatever gifts I had were from Him and I needed to share them. But how? Feeling compelled to serve the Lord, I began to seek His purpose for me, I joined an LWML Bible study group at our church and was a regular for over 30 years—studying with them and searching for direction and purpose in the Scriptures. What joy I found with these women as we searched and delved into God’s Word together.

After I retired from my position as vice president in a large city bank, I relocated with my husband to another state. Once again I found an LWML group and a women’s Bible study group. I joined the adult Sunday Bible class taught by our very knowledgeable pastor, gleaning from the Scriptures again how Christ so faithfully served here on earth and continues to work in our lives every minute of every day. Again, I felt God’s nudging me. (What is it you desire from me, Lord? I would ask in my daily devotions.) The answers came and came quickly!

Being elected President of my local LWML; being asked to serve on the LWML district board; then being elected Vice President to that board was way beyond anything I had ever anticipated. What joy and change this brought about in my life! Serving God in this special way was more than I ever dreamed I would do. But God had more opportunities for me to serve. Soon I was on to being trained in St. Louis as a Mission-Ministry Vision Consultant for the LWML. This opened up countless doors such as leading Visioning Workshops for women’s groups and congregations. But there was more as I received a phone call from our national LWML President asking me to serve on a national committee, and in the next biennium another call to serve as chairman of a committee. After this was finished I was nominated as LWML District President and was prepared to do this if God so desired, but the phone rang again and it was our new national LWML President asking me to serve on the Executive Committee as national Director of Public Relations.

This was so unbelievable to imagine God would want me to serve in this position and do this kind of work! I felt...
unqualified and unequipped, but of course God encouraged and strengthened me in the next few days as my husband and I prayed and contemplated my answer. As I prayed I thought about what I had done in my banking career and how I might use those skills, and I thought about the President’s words in her phone call: “If you say yes to this position, I believe your spiritual life will be enriched and you will meet people you might never have met. You will be immersed in the mission work of the church; you will do things beyond your comfort zone and go places you have never been before.” So my question to the Lord was, “Is this what you want me to do?” After three days of soul searching, prayer, and conferences with my family I said yes. What a joy it has been! Serving the Lord in His church and being in a leadership position in an organization that has 250,000 members and does mission work by serving the needs of people near and far are so very fulfilling. Joy beyond words, yes!

So, what happens in us as the road opens before us? What makes our hearts rise up to meet the road? Something traumatic or a huge divine intervention as in the life of St. Paul? Or is it more subtle; moving slowly in and out, weaving the tapestry that makes up life? Life can be hectic and chaotic as we serve and has some bumps along the way, but it doesn’t compare to the up side of being enriched, fulfilled, and inspired to embrace every day. It is serving Christ that brings us abundant living, of this I have no doubt.

So yes, I am enjoying life in abundance, just like that pastor preached about so many years ago. The joy has been immeasurable, abounding, and delightful! Are there more opportunities to serve ahead? I have no doubt, for I have found God opening more doors every day and find that every door I go through promises gifts beyond measure and always the opportunity to share the love of His Son, Jesus Christ, with others. Now that IS joy!

Mrs. Beverly A. England, who lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma, serves as the Director of Public Relations for the LWML.
Leading a Christian Life
When asked to write an article on living a Christ-centered life, Dennis and Ann Ross were first honored and then perplexed. To them there seemed little that should make their life an example to others, for it is only through the Holy Spirit’s power that we are able to submit to God’s will for our lives. A verse that has become dear to them is found in Jeremiah 9:23-24:

This is what the Lord says:
Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom
or the strong man boast of his strength
or the rich man boast of his riches,
but let him who boasts boast about this:
that he understands and knows Me,
that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness,
justice, and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight, declares the Lord.

Following are their reflections on what it means to them to lead a Christian life.

Our lives have been blessed tremendously with wonderful caring Christian parents who reared us in the faith. Denny was a Methodist during his childhood but joined the Lutheran Church after our marriage. He has been especially drawn to the Lutheran liturgy and musical heritage established by Bach. When our congregation was building a new sanctuary, we wanted to give a sacrificial gift that would help maintain this heritage and give glory to God. We gave a new pipe organ, one that reflected the baroque style of music of Bach but would also accommodate the diverse types of sacred compositions that appeared after this era. Similar to the gifts brought by the wisemen to Jesus, it came from afar (Germany), it required traveling (we visited several German cities examining other organs), and it took planning and effort. The gift was the finest we could offer and was given to worship the

Altona (Nebraska), a small rural community near my home, inspired me with its religious devotion. A church in this area had an elaborate altar, stained glass windows, a pipe organ, and a lovely bell tower. Although the congregation was small, the congregation set an example in their priorities that still exist today; Jesus Christ and the church were the center of their lives. The stained glass, pipe organ, and bells had to be brought to the church by horse and wagon since the church was built in the late 1800’s. The commitment of these farmers sings out to the future “To God be the glory.”
King, Jesus Christ. In giving this gift we felt that we were blessed far more than we could have ever expected.

I, Ann, grew up in a Lutheran dominated community in northeast Nebraska. My father passed away when I was only 16, but his godly life made a lifetime impression. He taught me Sunday School lessons weekly and led the family in our devotions daily. Altona (Nebraska), a small rural community near my home, inspired me with its religious devotion. A church in this area had an elaborate altar, stained glass windows, a pipe organ, and a lovely bell tower. Although the congregation was small, the congregation set an example in their priorities that still exist today; Jesus Christ and the church were the center of their lives. The stained glass, pipe organ, and bells had to be brought to the church by horse and wagon since the church was built in the late 1800's. The commitment of these farmers sings out to the future “To God be the glory.”

Although the influence of our parents and communities helped mold our current “lives as Christians,” the tragedies and difficult times that we have experienced have changed us as well. I had Stage III lung cancer in 1990 and survived only through God’s grace. Many told me to think positively and you can survive, but my position was that I was a child of God and He is in control. He would decide whether I lived or died and He chose for me to live. When our son-in-law was killed in a fire after three months of marriage to our daughter, it was difficult to understand why she should have to endure such grief and heartache. Now three years later she has met a wonderful young man who is understanding and loves her. More recently our son, Aaron, has developed a serious infection in his heart and will soon face heart surgery. We find ourselves again turning to God for strength to endure the trials and tribulations that are presented to us. These difficulties remind us that our life depends on Him and that He is in control of our lives, not we. Allowing God to guide us gives peace to periods of our life that are particularly stressful. Our prayers and those of others have helped us carry on during difficult times.

Finally, to maintain this close relationship with God has required nurturing it. Growing up it wasn’t always “fun” to attend church, but today if we are unable to go to church, we find that we miss it. Attending worship services, studying the Bible, and daily prayer have kept us close to God. From time to time we have made the pilgrimage to the Fort Wayne seminary for the Lutherhostel and have come away inspired by the teachings of the professors. They have reminded us how much there is to know and reflect upon in our Christian heritage. We have come to realize how important Lutheran pastors are to our understanding of the teachings of God. As a result, we have directed some of our charitable giving to support the seminary. We realize that the training of men for the pastoral ministry is critical for the growth of our Christian life as well as that of others.

Our lives are busy. Denny has a busy medical practice. He is involved with the Wichita Grand Opera, the Wichita Community Foundation, and will be the President of the Sedgwick County Medical Society. I teach a weekly Bible class, volunteer for church activities, organize church funeral dinners, and participate in the LWML. Both of us sing in the choir and have traveled with our choir to Europe. We are blessed with four wonderful children, two sons-in-law, and one grandchild. Financially we are secure and we have all of the material things we could desire. But we are well aware that without God our lives would be nothing. He has provided meaning and direction in our lives and through Him we have found real purpose.

Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Ross live in Wichita, Kansas.
A Book for the Laity

On Confirmation Day, Lutherans pledge their allegiance to God’s Word and the Small Catechism. When men are ordained into the Office of the Ministry, they confess the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God and the Book of Concord as their correct and true exposition. The Lutheran Confessions bind pastors and laity together in uttering a united “Amen” to the truth of God’s Word. As I move around in the congregations of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod across the country, I am encouraged at the number of congregations, and in many cases circuits, providing substantial opportunities for laypeople to grow in their knowledge of Lutheran doctrine and its implications both for the life of the church as well as that of Christian people who live out their various vocations in the world.

For the laity the Small Catechism remains the basic and foundational document in the Book of Concord, for it is the compendium of scriptural truth for every Christian. No wonder that the formulators of the Formula of Concord speak of the importance of Lutheran theology for ordinary Christians: “Such matters also concern the laity and the salvation of their souls. Therefore we also confess Dr. Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms as they are included in Luther’s works. They are ‘the layman’s Bible’ because everything necessary for a Christian to know for salvation is included in them, which is handled more extensively in the Holy Scriptures.” (Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, 492).

In fact, Luther suggested that the study of the Small Catechism would lead the Christian finally to take up the Large Catechism. And after the Large Catechism, there is the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, and the Formula of Concord. There is such a wealth of testimony here to the truth of God’s Word, centered in His Son’s work of justifying the ungodly by faith alone, that the Christian could well occupy his or her whole life in the ongoing study of these documents.

Now Lutheran laypeople have a beautifully crafted, reliable, and reader-friendly version of the Book of Concord in Concordia Publishing House’s newly released Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions—A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord (St. Louis: CPH, 2005)*. While not intended to supplant scholarly editions of the Book of Concord like the one edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert and used in our seminary classrooms, the Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions is superb for devotional reading and group study. This elegant volume contains not only a gently updated English translation of the texts of the Lutheran Confessions, it also features accessible historical, introductions, study notes, a timeline of Reformation history, and glossaries. Illustrated with both color prints and woodcuts, the Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions is a veritable feast for the eyes. A daily chart of suggested readings enables users to read through the Book of Concord devotionally in the space of a year.

Life in the Lutheran Church presupposes a laity formed in God’s Word with the ability to discern the difference between the life-giving doctrine of Christ Jesus and the multitude of malignant doctrines that ever threaten to rob Him of the glory that is His alone as our Savior and to deprive tender consciences of the forgiveness of sins. The appearance of Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions holds great potential for introducing our laity to their heritage in the evangelical treasures that belong to us as Lutherans. Many congregations are finding creative ways to use this book to enrich the spiritual lives of their members. Some are presenting Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions to each confirmand as a gift at confirmation with the encouragement to continue to grow in their knowledge of the Catechism. Other pastors are using Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions as a resource for study with the Board of Elders and other congregational leaders. Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions is getting widespread use in adult Bible classes and other settings for parish education. In whatever venue the Lutheran Confessions are read and studied, they have the ultimate purpose in directing us to Christ and the consolation that He bestows in His Word of promise and enabling us to confess Him with truthfulness and clarity before the world.

There is far richer fare in the Lutheran Confessions for the life of faith and the vocation of the laity in the world than the shallow and often misdirected publications of generic Christianity that populate the shelves of religious bookstores. The Lutheran Confessions stand in service of the Holy Scriptures so that the truth of Jesus is proclaimed in all of its fullness. Laity who avail themselves to Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions will be enriched and strengthened for service in the church and the world.

The Rev. John T. Pless is an Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Editor of For the Life of the World magazine.

*This book may be ordered from the CPH Bookstore at CTS by phoning 260-452-3108, or order online at www.ctsfw.edu, click on Bookstore.
If you have read the *Called to Serve* articles for any time at all, no doubt you have noticed that each man often mentions a specific individual who has influenced his decision to pursue the Office of the Holy Ministry. Hans Fiene, a second year student at CTS, is no exception. He credits his pastor, the Rev. John Fiene who also happens to be his father, with being the greatest influence in his decision to pursue the Office of the Holy Ministry. “Having had the same pastor for virtually my entire life, there’s no one I could say has made me want to be a pastor more than my father,” offers Hans.
It is quite a testament when a young man decides to follow in his father’s footsteps. As a “pastor’s kid” they are privy to both the joys and challenges of serving God’s people. “Seeing how his love of the Gospel was never tarnished when being a pastor could be quite burdensome and thankless had quite an impact on me,” shares Hans. “And it was obviously impressive enough to give me the desire to preach the Gospel on a path that will likely be marred with the same difficulties from time to time.”

Hans embarked on his seminary career one year after graduating from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. Once he knew he would study for the ministry he had to decide where he would attend. Once again, some family history came into play. “Primarily I was drawn to the theological prestige of the seminary. But a very large factor in my decision to come to CTS was because of the time spent here by both my grandfather, the late Dr. Robert Preus (President of CTS 1974-1989; 1992-93), and my father,” says Hans. “So, aside from the great theological education available here, there was a sense of comfort and familiarity offered by Fort Wayne.”

In addition to his regular studies here at CTS, Hans had the opportunity to serve a summer vicarage at Messiah Lutheran Church, Keller, Texas. These opportunities are great experiences as they give seminarians the added opportunity to practice what they have been learning in the classroom. While Hans would agree that this was a valuable learning experience, there was an added event that made his summer vicarage most memorable. “I’d be lying if I didn’t say that the seminary giving me the chance to do a summer vicarage and thus meet my wife wasn’t my own personal favorite perk.” Hans and Katie (Huibel) were married on August 19, 2005.

In April of this year Hans will receive his vicarage assignment and, God willing, in the spring of 2008 he will receive his first Call into the Holy Ministry. As he looks ahead what would he most like to do as one of God’s shepherds? To be sure, he says first and foremost it is to preach the Gospel and rightly administer the Sacraments, but there is more. “To be more specific in at least one regard, it seems that confessional Lutheranism is really beginning to grow and prosper in places such as Africa and Asia. I would certainly like to be involved in working with organizations that offer doctrinal and financial support for these churches.”

Now that he has a year-and-a-half of experience behind him at CTS, Hans has these words of advice for those who are also considering the vocation of pastor. “Obviously, I would encourage such a man to pray about the matter, to visit the seminaries, and to talk to his pastor about it. Outside of that, I think a man must consider why he wants to be a pastor,” explains Hans. “If he wants to be a pastor because he thinks he can save the Synod, the Church Universal, or the fallen world, it’s better that he find something else to do. But if you want to be a pastor because you figure, ‘Well, someone has to preach the Gospel, and it might as well be me,’ I think you ought to do so. Such a person probably has a far better understanding of what it means to be a shepherd and a servant of Christ.”

Plan Ahead!
Are you thinking about attending CTS? Make plans to visit with us during:

Christ Academy–College
February 16-19, 2006

Spring
Prayerfully Consider
Invitational Campus Visit
March 23-25, 2006

Fall
Prayerfully Consider
Invitational Campus Visit
September 21-23, 2006

For additional information on these events please call the CTS Office of Admission, 1-800-481-2155.

Seminarian Hans Fiene leads music during Vacation Bible School at Messiah Lutheran Church, Keller, Texas.
“Education is not neutral, and classical education is much more than just a Bible class. The classical method shows God’s hand through all affairs. Conventional education has a philosophy that it merely presents the facts without a spiritual context. Our students will behold the wonders of God’s creation in science, witness His plans for mankind in history, study His order in mathematics, rejoice in His gift of music and the arts, and learn about His love and plan of salvation on a daily basis. Our children learn to speak about God in all aspects and in all subjects. They are comfortable in speaking about God throughout their day, not just at home or on weekends.”

The Mission Statement of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod reads, “In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and the world.” That mission is carried out in over 6,000 LCMS congregations throughout the United States. One such congregation, located in our country’s heartland, is Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Nebraska.

One might think that serving in an area with a rich history in the LCMS might spare a pastor from having to deal with the struggles faced by congregations in other areas of the country. But the Rev. Clint K. Poppe (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1998) knows that is not always the case. During his tenure (1997-present) he has seen challenges as well as many blessings of God showered upon the congregation. “I was placed as a delayed vicar in a congregation that was contemplating closing its doors. God has blessed us with amazing growth, a new facility, and a new school,” explains Pastor Poppe. “We now have an outstanding associate pastor, the Rev. Lance Berndt, and our seventh vicar.” In fact, the congregation has grown from 190 baptized members in 1997 to its current membership of over 1000 members.

Pastor Poppe says that such rapid growth does not come without a certain amount of growing pains, but is quick to add that he and the members of the congregation continue to be patient, faithful, and consistent in their mission. As the challenges are met there is also the opportunity to experience great joy. “Seeing people grow in their faith and understanding; witnessing people being drawn to the liturgy through doctrinal preaching and teaching” are some of his greatest joys shares Pastor Poppe.

To see that all levels of the membership are receiving that teaching, Good Shepherd offers many opportunities for instruction and Bible study. On Sunday mornings two adult studies are taught by the pastors, one on a book of the Bible and the other being a more topical Bible study. Currently the studies are *Song of*...
Solomon, a Bible study to discover what God has to say to us through the words of this book of the Bible, and a Summary of Christian Doctrine, which is a review of the basics of the Lutheran faith as taken from God’s Word. Topics for this study include the Lord’s Supper, prayer, etc., and the biblical foundation for each is discussed. The Youth Bible Study is exploring the Book of Revelation.

These opportunities don’t end on Sunday morning as there are men’s, women’s, youth, and combined Bible studies throughout the week. These groups are studying books from both the Old and New Testaments, in addition to a Luther Bible Study Extravaganza that is an opportunity to learn more about Martin Luther, his discoveries in the Word of God, and how the Lutheran Church had its beginning.

Another area in which Good Shepherd is expanding and growing to meet the needs of its members and the community is through its day school. “We started a classical Lutheran school (the only one in the Nebraska District!) and are in our third year. We now have 28 students in grades K-7 and plan to add 8th grade next year,” says Pastor Poppe. The preschool has over 100 children enrolled.

The congregation is committed to this effort, and their focus for the school is explained on the church website, www.goodshepherdlincoln.org. “The real power is in teaching ALL subjects from a Christian worldview. Education is not neutral, and classical education is much more than just a Bible class. The classical method shows God’s hand through all affairs. Conventional education has a philosophy that it merely presents the facts without a spiritual context. Our students will behold the wonders of God’s creation in science, witness His plans for mankind in history, study His order in mathematics, rejoice in His gift of music and the arts, and learn about His love and plan of salvation on a daily basis. Our children learn to speak about God in all aspects and in all subjects. They are comfortable in speaking about God throughout their day, not just at home or on weekends.”

Continuing this education of both young and old, on Sunday mornings and throughout the week, is what Pastor Poppe sees as one of the greatest needs as he looks to the future for his own congregation and the Synod at large. “We must continue to preach and teach God’s Word in its truth and purity, teach the beauty and joy of the historic liturgy, and introduce all of God’s people to the truth of the Lutheran Confessions.”

The Rev. Clint Poppe also serves as First Vice President of the Nebraska District. He is married to Barbara (Pagels). Their family includes three sons: Adam, with wife Angie and their son, Derek, and another child due in February; John; and Clint, Jr.
Worship with the seminary community at chapel services held four times a day.

Visit seminary classes to experience firsthand the dynamic learning environment.

Learn more about financial aid for your specific situation by meeting with our Director of Financial Aid.

Explore the affordable Fort Wayne housing market by meeting one on one with our Relocation Coordinator, reviewing the homes available for sale from other seminary families, and visiting local neighborhoods and apartment complexes.

Locate Lutheran and public schools with resources provided by our Relocation Coordinator and by visiting the schools themselves.

Identify potential employers, schools, real estate agents, insurance agents, health care services, and campus resources at the Display Fair.

Acclimate yourself to the campus and learn about its architecture with a tour of the chapel, the classroom buildings, the Food and Clothing Co-ops, Christ’s Child Learning Corner, and the gymnasium.

Enjoy multiple opportunities for fellowship with our President, faculty, staff, and students.

March 16-18, 2006

For more information, contact the Office of Admission at the following address and phone number:

6600 N. Clinton St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
admission@ctsfw.edu
(800) 481-2155
CTS Online: www.ctsfw.edu
Continuing Education Benefits You and Your Congregation!

CTS’s Regional Continuing Education Programs for parish pastors and professional church workers bring the best of the seminary to you. Through these specialized courses you will grow in your knowledge and understanding of biblical and theological matters; join with other pastors and professional church workers who, like you, are searching for biblical insights into challenges faced in the parish; and return to your congregation armed with new information after a relaxed, informal retreat to the study of God’s Word.

St. Cloud, MN
May 22-25, 2006
PREACHING IN THE EARLY CHURCH
William C. Weinrich, D.Theol.
Rev. Richard Bolling, Coordinator
Lutheran Student Fellowship
201 Fourth St. S.
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-259-1577
lsafrica@stcloudstate.edu

Pittsburgh, PA
May 30-June 2, 2006
PAUL AND HIS OPPONENTS IN GALATIA
Arthur A. Just, Ph.D.
Rev. Janison Hardy, Coordinator
Our Savior Lutheran Church
608 Country Club Dr.
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
412-561-7299
jahir examining@yahoo.com

Fort Wayne, IN
May 30-June 2, 2006
THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE AND THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
Walter A. Maier III, Ph.D.
Rev. Mark Sheafer, Coordinator
Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
260-452-2266
sheafermc@ctsfw.edu

Highlands Ranch, CO
May 30-June 2, 2006
THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF C.F.W. WALTHER
Cameron A. MacKenzie, Ph.D.
Rev. Bruce Skelton, Coordinator
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
9770 S. Foothills Canyon Blvd.
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
303-683-1300
holycrosspastor@aol.com

Salt Lake City, UT
June 1-3, 2006
THE THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS
John T. Pless, M.Div.
Rev. Bror Erickson, Coordinator
First Lutheran Church
PO Box 738
Tooele, UT 84074
435-850-2399
broro22@att.net

Hickory, NC
June 5-9, 2006
THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
Charles A. Gieschen, Ph.D.
Rev. Ray Ohlendorf, Coordinator
Salem Lutheran Church
4036 NC Hwy. 16N
Taylorsville, NC 28681
828-632-4863
revxpistos@aol.com

Jackson, WY
June 5-9, 2006
THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE AND THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
Walter A. Maier III, Ph.D.
Rev. Marvin Tenne, Coordinator
Our Savior Lutheran Church
2973 East B St.
Torrington, WY 82240-2039
307-532-5801
ntene@communimc.com

San Francisco, CA
June 12-16, 2006
MODERN APOLOGETICS AND THE LUTHERAN MINISTRY DEBATE
Kurt E. Marquart, M.A., D.D.
Rev. Stewart Crown, Coordinator
Trinity Lutheran Church
1295 Middlefield Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-853-1295
pastorercrown@comcast.net

Norwalk, CT
June 26-30, 2006
FORMATIVE INFLUENCES IN AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY
Lawrence R. Rast, Ph.D.
Rev. Robert Bezek, Coordinator
St. Peter Lutheran Church
208 Newtown Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06851
203-847-1252
stpetterelpastor@yahoo.com

Madison, WI
June 26-30, 2006
PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION IN THE CONGREGATION
Brent W. Kuhlman, S.T.M.
Rev. Christopher Seifert, Coordinator
PO Box 197
Stockton, MN 55988
507-680-2777
propittied@yahoo.com

Kearney, NE
July 10-14, 2006
LAW AND GOSPEL IN TODAY’S SERMON
Carl C. Fickenscher, Ph.D.
Rev. North Sherrill, Coordinator
Salem Lutheran Church
731 Knapp St.
Kearney, NE 68847
308-234-3410
PastorSherrill@zels.org

Austin, TX
July 17-21, 2006
MODERN APOLOGETICS
Kurt E. Marquart, M.A., D.D.
Rev. Bryan Sullivan, Coordinator
Grace Lutheran Church
801 W. 11th St.
Elgin, TX 78621-2006
512-281-3367
graceelgin@ev1.net

Albuquerque, NM
July 24-28, 2006
LAW AND GOSPEL IN TODAY’S SERMON
Carl C. Fickenscher, Ph.D.
Rev. Warren Graff, Coordinator
Grace Lutheran Church
7550 Eubank Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122
505-823-9100
wgraff@juno.com

Seattle, WA
July 24-28, 2006
LUTHER ON THE LORD’S SUPPER
Naomichi Masaki, Ph.D.
Rev. Ernie Lassman, Coordinator
Messiah Lutheran Church
7050 35th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98115-5917
206-524-0024
elassman@aol.com

River Forest, IL
July 31-Aug. 4, 2006
THE LUTHERAN MINISTRY DEBATE
Kurt E. Marquart, M.A., D.D.
Rev. Keith GeRue, Coordinator
Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church
118 N. Pine St.
Momence, IL 60954
815-472-2829
revgerue@iw.net

Flathead Lake, MT
July 31-Aug. 4, 2006
THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE AND THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
Walter A. Maier III, Ph.D.
Rev. George Draper, Coordinator
Trinity Lutheran Church
731 Knapp St.
Wolf Point, MT 59201
406-653-3099 or 406-650-8033
frgeorge@midrivers.com

Clarksville, TN
August 7-11, 2006
LUTHERAN REFORMATION STUDIES TODAY
Cameron A. MacKenzie, Ph.D.
Rev. Larry Peters, Coordinator
Grace Lutheran Church
2041 Madison St.
Clarksville, TN 37043-5058
931-647-6790
glepastor@charterinternet.com

Tuition for 4-5 day courses is $225 for ordained pastors and professional church workers, $85 for retired pastors and lay persons, and no charge for vicars and students. Tuition for 3-day courses will be $150 for ordained pastors and professional church workers, $75 for retired pastors and lay persons.

For more information, contact the Continuing Education Office at (260) 452-2266 or e-mail sheafermc@ctsfw.edu. To register online visit www.ctsfw.edu.
Dr. Wenthe Reappointed as President of CTS

The Board of Regents, meeting at Salem Lutheran Church in Tomball, Texas, on December 2, 2005, unanimously reappointed Dr. Dean O. Wenthe to another five-year term as President of Concordia Theological Seminary.

The Rev. Wayne Graumann, Chairman of the Board of Regents and Pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, commented: “The seminary has been blessed under President Wenthe’s sparkling leadership and stands on the threshold of new and expanded ways to serve the church in its mission to share the good news of Christ, the Savior, with all the world through faithful pastors, deaconesses, and church workers.”

Dr. Wenthe has served as President since 1996. He responded to this reappointment: “I am honored and humbled by the Board of Regents’ reappointment. The exemplary work of Chairman Wayne Graumann in leading and supporting the seminary’s ever enhanced service to the church positions us for excellence and growth. Indeed, the entire Board of Regents has exhibited extraordinary dedication and brought great wisdom and churchmanship to the calling of forming missionary and compassionate pastors and deaconesses.”

Together Chairman Graumann and President Wenthe invite everyone to visit the faculty and students on our beautiful campus and to join the seminary’s mission with the prayers and support of God’s people.

Dr. Wenthe Chosen to Participate in Catholic Dialogue

Dr. Dean O. Wenthe and Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, Executive Director of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations, were appointed to participate in Round XI of dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics in the United States. The first session of this round took place in Chicago, Illinois, December 1-4, 2005.

Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President of the LCMS, had these comments concerning the appointments of Dr. Wenthe and Dr. Nafzger in the December issue of the Reporter. “I am confident that the scriptural, confessional, and evangelical positions of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod will be clearly and unapologetically articulated. This is particularly vital as it pertains to ‘The Hope of Eternal Life,’ the topic to be discussed in this round of discussions.” He also encouraged all the members of our Synod to keep this process and the participants in their prayers.
Conference Marks 100th Anniversary of Bonhoeffer’s Birth

The Pastoral Ministry and Missions Department of Concordia Theological Seminary will host the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Conference, February 3-4, 2006, in observance of the 100th anniversary of his birth. The German theologian was born February 4, 1906.

In recent years, Bonhoeffer has received renewed attention among historians and theologians with numerous publications focusing on various topics on this fascinating German theologian. To this day, Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theology raises controversy. In the challenging context of the Third Reich, Bonhoeffer clearly demonstrated that theological thought and personal life are connected. Much of what he said and wrote, especially in the area of ethics and church/state issues, is still of great value for the church today.

We are privileged to have two eminently qualified speakers: Dr. Charles Ford from St. Louis University will be speaking on “Bonhoeffer, Luther, and the German Resistance”; and Dr. Uwe Siemon-Netto, from Concordia Seminary Institute, will be speaking on “Bonhoeffer, a Bold Sinner.” Dr. Ford will also provide a commentary following the showing of Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace on Friday evening. On Saturday he will give a presentation and allow time for questions from the audience.

Scholars, pastors, students, and laity are encouraged to attend this event that will take place in Sihler Auditorium on the seminary campus. Registration for the conference is $20.00. You may register online by going to www.ctsfw.edu, click on Dietrich Bonhoeffer Conference in the left-hand column. You may also phone Mireya Johnson, 260-452-2241, to register or request additional information.

CTS Community Supports Military Troops Project with Christmas Shipment

The military project at the seminary has continued to be very successful due to many outpourings of donations from seminary families and the Fort Wayne community. Donations of snack items, toiletries, and religious reading materials are collected on campus and organized to be sent out every three months. The November shipment was a special one, since it was received by the soldiers in December and was considered to be the Christmas shipment. Personalized thank-you notes made by two different groups of children and crocheted crosses were included in this shipment to add a personal touch. The shipment was sent to Afghanistan and Iraq to send cheer to five soldiers in the Army, Navy, and Marines who are currently on active duty overseas. Due to many generous contributors, 12 large-sized boxes were mailed.

These donations are appreciated more than you may know. Here is what one soldier took the time to write:

Hello,
The 732d Mission Operations Center (MOC) received a package from you all and would like to express our thanks. Your thoughts and care packages mean a great deal to us. In addition we would like to say hello and thank you to Paul, Ruth, Andy, and Josh who wrote letters and drew pictures. Enclosed in this envelope are pictures of our team. Thanks,

SrA Chris Langlois
OIF-Iraq

If you would like to submit the name of a family member or friend on active duty or would like to start your own group to accomplish something similar to this project, please contact Linda Scicluna at 260-492-1877 or e-mail sciclunalinda@hotmail.com.

PV2 Ryan Patterson (middle) was stationed in Iraq and is now back in the States. His father, Jeff Patterson, is a first-year seminary student at CTS.
Discourses in Matthew-Jesus Teaches the Church by Dr. David P. Scaer, Chairman, of the CTS Systematics Department, was named one of “The Theological Best Books” as chosen by the Association of Theological Booksellers and placed on the cover of its publication.

Concordia Publishing House gives the following description for Dr. Scaer’s book. “Focusing his exploration on Jesus’ Five Discourses, Dr. Scaer demonstrates that Matthew was written as catechesis, a method in concert with its content and organization. The discourses summarize the message the disciples are to carry to “all nations,” and each discourse builds on its predecessors to culminate in the narrative of Jesus’ death and resurrection, which is the Gospel’s interpretive key.”

To order the book please phone the CPH Bookstore at CTS at 260-452-3108, or order online at www.ctsfw.edu, click on Events.

## Confirmation Retreat: “The Lord’s Prayer”
**April 28-30, 2006**

Prayer is an important part of our lives as Christians. The Lord’s Prayer is especially important to us since Jesus Christ taught this prayer to His disciples. This retreat will examine the biblical basis for prayer and the Lutheran understanding of the Lord’s Prayer. The presenter will be the Rev. John Dreyer, Admission Counselor at CTS. The retreat is designed for youth who are receiving confirmation instruction in their own parish. The retreat schedule includes time for worship in Kramer Chapel, a scavenger hunt, and recreation time in the campus gymnasium. Registrations are due one month before the retreat begins.

Retreat Fee: $100 (Includes on-campus housing and meals)

## Enter the Biblical World Retreat: “Christ in the Old Testament”
**May 5-6, 2006**

This retreat will be led by the Rev. Dr. John W. Saleska, Director of Concordia Bible Institute, Mequon, Wisconsin. The presentation will focus on Jesus Christ as the heart and center of the Holy Scriptures. Dr. Martin Luther said: “Take Christ from the Scriptures and what more will you find in them?” This study will show that salvation for God’s people in the Old Testament was through faith in Christ alone. Registrations are due two weeks before the retreat begins. Campus housing is available for $25 a day on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 260-452-2247 to reserve a room.

Retreat Fee: $40 (Includes Friday dinner and Saturday lunch)

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2006 CTS Retreat Registration Form

Retreat Name and Date ________________________________

Name(s) _____________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________

City/State/Zip ________________________________________

Phone ______________________________________________

Occupy: [ ] Single [ ] Double

Campus Tour: [ ] Yes [ ] No

A $20 non-refundable deposit is enclosed with this reservation.

(Note: Dorms are air conditioned.)

Mail reservations at least one month* in advance of retreat to the following address: Retreat Coordinator, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825.

*Reservations received less than one week before retreat will be charged a late fee: $10 for weekend or $20 for Lutherhostels.

You may register online at www.ctswf.edu, click on Seminar Retreat, or phone 260-452-2204.
Saturday, November 19
Riding into New Orleans, we are awed at the ever-increasing damage. Our camp leader, Seth, takes us on a tour and gives us this advice, “The most important thing you can do is take the message back home.” The problem is words and pictures can’t come close to describing the utter destruction and despair we’ve heard and seen.

Sunday, November 20
The camp staff gave us equipment and advised us to wear big rubber boots, coveralls, and respirator masks. Some of us macho men didn’t think we’d need them. Wrong again! This house had six inches of vilest, most noxious muck I ever hope to experience. All 22 of us worked that site all afternoon. During that time we came across four snakes (live), tore out the walls down to the studs, ripped out the floor, and threw out everything that family owned. What makes this tragedy so overwhelming is that block after block, street after street, mile after mile, thousands of families are doing the same thing.

Monday, November 21
Our work for the day would include clean-up at a church member’s home. We could tell from a dark waterline that the water had been approximately ten feet deep in this neighborhood. As we gathered up our tools and walked out of the home, we were greeted by the view of what had become a mountain of household belongings. To a passerby, this looked like many of the thousands of trash piles visible outside homes throughout this devastated city. In reality what’s being seen is a part of the lives of these homeowners, a part they must leave behind as they make their new beginning.

Tuesday, November 22
We gutted Gladys Brown’s home. Everybody seems to know Miss Gladys, and we soon found her to be a grand lady. When we packed up our tools, only the studs and rafters remained. Miss Gladys thanked every one of us, brought us lunch, gave us shirts, and even brought us a cake. When we were ready to move on to our next site, Miss Gladys went with us because she was not ready to say good-bye just yet.

Wednesday, November 23
Feeling the aches and pains of several hard days of work, some of us were ready to finish work for the day and head back to camp. As we rounded the corner, however, we couldn’t help but notice an elderly man trying to clean out his home. His name was Mr. Wilson. As we worked on the Wilson home we noticed an elderly gentleman across the street carrying out items from his home while using a cane. We found 83-year-old Lonnie trying to cut a mattress in half so he could drag it out of the house. Half the team went to work on his house. When we finally left several hours later (it took almost as long to leave as it did to do the work), we were all touched by the gratitude reflected in the smiles and tears.

Thursday, November 24–Thanksgiving Day
So here we sit, in a school gymnasium 1000 miles away from home, savoring the best meal we’ve had in years, made specifically to thank us for helping them. More importantly we sit as one, volunteers and victims bonded by a catastrophic event. Who could ask for a better Thanksgiving than that!
2006 Symposia Coming to CTS
Exegesis & Confessions—January 17-20, 2006

Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, will again host its annual Symposium, January 17-20, 2006. Held every year on the Fort Wayne campus, presentations on Exegetical Theology and the Lutheran Confessions will highlight the four-day event.

Celebrating its 21st year, the theme for the Exegetical Theology Symposium is “Justification in the Scriptures: Old and New Testament Challenges to ‘the Doctrine Upon Which the Church Stands or Falls.’” The 29th annual Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions has chosen “The Holy Spirit as Giver, Gift, and Gifts” as its theme.

**EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY**
Tuesday, January 17, 2006

9:00 a.m. Welcome
9:05 a.m. “Justification: Representative Passages from the Old Testament”
10:00 a.m. Chapel
10:30 a.m. Coffee Break
11:00 a.m. “Justification and the Book of Acts”
11:45 a.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. “Justification Is the Answer; What Is the Question?”
2:00 p.m. “Imputation, Narration, and Justification: Where Do We Now Stand?”
3:00 p.m. Coffee Break
3:15 p.m. “Justification and Incorporation into Christ: How Are They Related?”
4:00 p.m. Panel Discussion
4:45 p.m. Vespers
5:00 p.m. Dinner

Wednesday, January 18, 2006

8:00 a.m. Short Exegetical Paper Sectionals
9:00 a.m. “Nuances in the Relationship Between Incarnation and Justification”
10:00 a.m. Chapel
10:30 a.m. Coffee Break
11:00 a.m. “Simil Iustus et Peccator: The Chronicler’s David”
11:50 a.m. Lunch

**THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS**
Wednesday, January 18, 2006

12:45 p.m. All Bach Organ Recital
1:45 p.m. Welcome
1:50 p.m. “Justification and Theosis—Congenial Ideas?”
2:50 p.m. “Justification as Issue in Current Protestantism”
3:40 p.m. “Faith in Contemporary Evangelicalism”
4:45 p.m. Choral Vespers

Thursday, January 19, 2006

8:30 a.m. “The Holy Spirit and His Gifts”
10:00 a.m. Choral Matins
11:00 a.m. “The Holy Spirit, Sacraments, and Other Churchly Rites”
11:45 a.m. Lunch
1:15 p.m. “The Holy Spirit in Luther’s and Zwingli’s Doctrines on the Lord’s Supper”
2:15 p.m. “Church as an Instrument and External Form of the Holy Spirit”
3:15 p.m. Panel: “Holy Spirit, Sacraments, and Justification”
5:30 p.m. Symposium Reception and Banquet. The banquet will be held at the Hilton Grand Wayne Center, Convention Hall, with a sit-down dinner.

Friday, January 20, 2006

9:00 a.m. “Africa as Home of Classical Christianity”
10:00 a.m. “Sacraments as the Mysteries of God”

The deadline for registration is January 9, 2006. Please call 1-260-452-2247 for additional information.

**Lenten Preaching Workshop**
Pastors attending the 2006 Symposia Series are invited to arrive one day early for *Coming Home from Exile*, a preaching workshop designed to assist in sermon preparation and liturgical planning for the Divine Service as well as midweek services, Holy Week, and Easter worship. The workshop led by Prof. Chad L. Bird, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology, will meet January 16, 2006, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Registration is $25.00. Please phone 260-452-2204 to register.
As many of you are aware, each year the Seminary Guild hosts a Donation Day. The beginnings of this can be traced to the earliest years of the seminary when local farmers would bring produce, dairy products, and the like to help feed the student body. That tradition has grown into having individuals, congregations, and organizations from across the nation participate in the annual Donation Day. Some are able to bring their donations to the campus; others participate by sending a financial donation. Each and every gift is most appreciated by the students and their families. To show you just how much, we have included a letter from Evelyn Burger, wife of Christopher Burger who graduated in May 2005 and is now pursuing a Masters of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.) at the seminary.

My grandmother Sarah came to the states on a boat when she was just a girl. She traveled from Scotland and so the story goes met Robert Burns, the famous poet, on the voyage over here. Looking back on the dates, the “history detectives” would tell us this couldn’t really be true (perhaps she met his grandson or another descendant). However, as family lore goes, meeting this famous author was the version we knew. All her life Sarah remembered “Bobby Burns” and kept a little book of his poems.

My “Nana” also kept many other things. Sarah was a single parent during the depression years and after her husband died, she raised two small children, working long hours as a seamstress and renting out the second floor of her home to make ends meet. I always knew she was thrifty and laughed at stories that she’d hang her tea bags out on the clothesline and then reuse them.

It wasn’t until I was a teenager though, helping my mother move Nana into an apartment, that I realized how careful she was. Cleaning out some of her drawers we found many wonderful gifts that she had received from relatives over the years. She kept them all—new and unwrapped. I suppose that depression-era living formed in her a sense of saving for that “next” rainy day. I remember feeling a sense of sadness that she had not enjoyed that pretty scarf or nightgown picked out just for her and sent with love.

I, too, have inherited her thriftiness, but consider living creatively in lean times a wonderful challenge. I never pay full price, love a bargain, and screech to a stop at garage sales. I know that some day I will purchase an “Antique’s Road Show” treasure for $1.00.

In the meantime—there is you. You have provided my family with clothes, household goods, and countless other treats. My children are clothed and fed because of your generosity. You have cleaned out your closets, garages, and gift drawers. You have made my “rainy day” joyful and bright.

My daughter Sarah will undoubtedly learn to love thrift stores, yard sales, and the like. It’s in her Scottish blood. At 21 months she won’t remember the seminary co-ops, but her mother and father will. We will tell her of your love and practical aid during the lean times. We will speak of her Heavenly Father’s love and care for us and how He used each one of you to bless us along this journey. I may never “hit the jackpot” and find some dusty antique treasure, but what an eternal treasure we have because of our Savior Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for us. You have been such a reminder of His love. God has richly provided for our earthly needs through each one of you and I thank you.

Evelyn Woolsey Burger
10/18/2005
New Advancement Officer Added to Staff

The Advancement Office is pleased to announce the acceptance of a Call issued to the Rev. Grant Knepper of Seattle, Washington, as its new Director of Congregational Support.

Rev. Knepper was born in Columbus, Ohio. His father was an officer in the U.S. Army, leading to Grant living in nine different states as well as in Germany before he graduated from high school. He continued his education, graduating from Seattle Pacific University with a B.A. in History.

In 1992 he married Pamela Wendling. Since he was raised in a Methodist home, Pam’s pastor, a graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, suggested it would be good for him to take an adult instruction class so that he could better understand his future wife’s faith. He did that and ended up reading the entire Book of Concord. His life was never the same. Two years later Grant and Pam packed up their belongings and moved to Fort Wayne, where he enrolled in Concordia Theological Seminary. He served his vicarage at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Redondo Beach, California, and received his Master of Divinity degree in 1998. Following this, he remained at the seminary doing additional study and serving as a Graduate Assistant in Historical Theology.


In his new position, Rev. Knepper will work with pastors and congregations to encourage support of the seminary both by congregations as well as individual members. He will especially focus his activity in the state of Indiana, where special opportunities exist because of generous tax credits available to individuals who support the seminary. He will also work with individual donors in other areas as the seminary seeks to broaden its base of support to meet ever-increasing fiscal challenges.

Rev. and Mrs. Knepper have been blessed with the gift of a daughter, Renee, who is in the first grade. The family looks forward to returning to Fort Wayne to serve in this new capacity for the seminary.
The topic of relief has been in the news since Hurricane Katrina dealt its devastating blow to the Gulf Coast several months ago. Millions of people have responded to this immense disaster with an outpouring of support greater than in any natural disaster ever to hit our shores. Tens of thousands of our LCMS members have also responded with generous gifts to aid our storm-stricken neighbors in their plight, including, we know, many of those who regularly support Concordia Theological Seminary.

The seminary community has also responded, not only with gifts of money, but with time and sweat and presence for those in such great need. Just days after Hurricane Katrina struck a team of 20 students, led by CTS Dean of Students, the Rev. Timothy R. Puls, journeyed to Louisiana to assist in cleanup efforts. That was followed by another trip to Mississippi during the Thanksgiving break. Details of these trips can be found on other pages in this issue of *For the Life of the World*.

What is noteworthy is the compassion and kindness so quickly offered to give relief to those who are hurting. Students left during the very first week of classes to help the downtrodden and gave up family holidays for the same purpose. This is the mark of those whom we want to send to be shepherds of God’s people, serving under the chief Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ.

While this relief has been given by students, we in the Advancement Office also want to do all that we can to help provide relief for students. The days are long gone when tuition was low because of substantial help from the treasury of Synod. Our synodical treasury no longer has the funds to do this. Consequently, students bear a much larger portion of the cost than in previous years. Because many students today are what are termed “second career” students, that is, they have had a previous career and may be anywhere from 25 to 60 years old when they begin their seminary education and therefore have special needs. Leaving their jobs and salaries behind and taking four years out of their life when they have a family to support is a mighty challenge for many and requires a great leap of faith.

The seminary attempts to help students as much as possible, but half of our students need to borrow while in seminary, and those that do graduate with an average of about $25,000 in debt. Thus, relief for students who seek to bring the relief of the precious Gospel of Jesus Christ to His people is most critical. We appeal to God’s people to provide relief for our students through gifts to our Student Aid Fund, which helps provide grants to our students, or to general operations, which helps keep the seminary’s tuition rate as low as possible. Gifts to either fund accomplish much the same purpose.

Please consider a generous gift today and send it in with the coupon below. If you would like to consider a larger gift through an estate plan or establish an endowment, please send in the coupon below and we will be sure to contact you. Thank you so much for considering providing relief for students who will bring the ultimate relief to those deeply in need of it.

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Please send to:

Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St.  Fort Wayne, IN 46825
877-287-4338  Advancement Office, Ext. 2212
Life-Changing Studies

Christ Academy, like Concordia Theological Seminary, is centered on Christ crucified, who is present in His Word and Sacraments to forgive and dwell in His Church. Students of Christ Academy will study Exegetical, Systematic, Historical, and Pastoral Theology. Seminary professors, Concordia University professors, and pastors teach the classes.

- “Very edifying, interesting, and kept me on the edge of my seat.”
- “I enjoyed the lively debates, relaxed atmosphere, and theological insight.”

Worship, the Center of the Experience

Students are engaged in the daily prayer life of the seminary. Attendees will join both professors and seminarians in daily worship services, which take place four times a day.

- “These past two weeks have really made me come to realize that it’s not about what we do for Christ, but what He did for us in His sacrifice.”
- “I really enjoy worshiping four times a day. It ties in with what we’re learning.”
- “Great! Services kept me focused throughout the day.”

Clarity of Direction

Having a focus that’s uniquely Lutheran, Christ Academy explores the many facets of pastoral ministry and its application in the real world.

- “A great event to attend if you are planning on becoming a pastor, or if you just want to learn more about what you believe.”
- “The Academy was not only very informative, but also very fun and helped me not only strengthen my faith, but to realize that I want to serve the Lord by preparing to go into the Holy Ministry.”
- “I definitely want to become a pastor.”

Fun Activities

Lifelong friendships are made at the Academy. These friendships are strengthened through activities such as the trip to Cedar Point Amusement Park, the tour of churches, flag football, soccer, capture the flag, etc. Activities are designed to engage students in the whole of Christian life.

- “It is the best possible way to spend two weeks of summer, with excellent teaching, heavenly worship, and a good community.”

Christ Academy–June 18-July 1, 2006

For more information about Christ Academy, please call us at:
1-800-481-2155

You can also find information in the Events section of the seminary’s web site, www.ctsfw.edu or e-mail ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu
What is Christ Academy College?

Christ Academy College is intended for all college-age men, from both state and private institutions, who are seeking the Office of Holy Ministry. The weekend includes classroom observation of the seminary, unique lectures specifically for CAC students, and an opportunity to visit with both students and professors. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming CAC retreat, and we welcome you to our seminary community.

What’s Included?

- All meals in Katherine Luther Dining Hall.
- Housing on campus during the retreat.
- A complimentary CAC polo shirt.
- A weekend of seminary life and theological reflection in classroom and lectures.
- Up to $250 reimbursement for those traveling. Note: This is especially applicable to those flying to CTS from over 500 miles away. However, if you are within a reasonable distance, driving would be recommended, for which reimbursement is also available. Please identify your need for reimbursement when present at CAC weekend. We will need your travel receipt(s) to properly refund expenses.

Contact Information:

Rev. John M. Dreyer–Director of CAC
E-mail: Dreyerjm@ctsfw.edu
Phone: 260-452-3139
800-481-2155

Sam Schuldheisz–Assistant Director CAC
E-mail: CACollege@ctsfw.edu

For more information please visit our website, www.ctsfw.edu/admission/academy/college.php. There is an online application for reservation for your attendance. Please fill this out if you plan to attend.

Itinerary

Wednesday - February 15
Arrival day at seminary for CAC weekend, Fort Wayne city visitation, and class observation (all optional)

Thursday - February 16
Arrival day for weekend–free time to relax and get acquainted
7:30 a.m. Matins at Kramer Chapel
10:00 a.m. Morning Service at Kramer Chapel
4:00 p.m. Vespers at Kramer Chapel
9:30 p.m. Evening Offices at Kramer Chapel

Friday - February 17
7:30 a.m. Matins at Kramer Chapel
8:00-8:55 a.m. Genesis: Prof. Bird
9:00-9:55 a.m. Church History I: Dr. Weinrich
10:00 a.m. Morning Service at Kramer Chapel
11:00-11:55 a.m. Gospels II: Dr. Gieschen
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00-1:55 p.m. Dogmatics I: Prof. Ziegler
2:00-2:55 p.m. Reformation Era: Dr. MacKenzie
3:00-4:55 p.m. Genesis: Prof. Bird
4:00 p.m.
4:30 p.m.
5:00-6:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.

Saturday - February 18
8:00 a.m. Matins at Kramer Chapel
8:30-9:00 a.m. 
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Continental breakfast
12:00-1:30 p.m. Lecture with Dr. Rast
2:00-5:00 p.m. Lunch
5:00-6:00 p.m. Lecture with Dr. Just
7:00-9:00 p.m. Dinner
9:30 p.m. Compline

Sunday - February 19
Worship at Historic St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
Day of departure

Monday - February 20
Also a travel day
In one of the collects from *Lutheran Worship* we pray: “Lord and Shepherd, in all the many things that need to be done for your Church, grant to those entrusted with special responsibilities zeal and faithfulness to perform their tasks to the upbuilding of your Church and the glory of your saving name.” In another collect our petition is that God would “grant [His] servants all the gifts necessary to the godly administration of their duties.”

Having had the privilege of serving congregations in Arkansas, Minnesota, and Indiana during the last 16 years, I have witnessed God at work in a variety of congregational settings (i.e., rural, campus, city). As I have set about my task of preaching the Gospel and teaching God’s Word, one of my greatest joys as a parish pastor is having the opportunity to discuss the importance of rightly understanding Christian vocation in the world, in the family, and in the church. As Dr. Gene Veith has written, “To find Him [God] in vocation brings Him, literally, down to earth, makes us see how close He really is to us, and transfigures everyday life.”

I give thanks to God for the many gifts He supplies the members of His Church—talents and abilities for use in the day-to-day, institutional needs that enable me to focus on the spiritual needs of Word and Sacrament. They have different titles—secretary, trustee, treasurer, committee member—but the duties they perform are absolutely vital as we together proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in our communities.

_In what you give us, Lord, to do, Together or alone, In old routines or ventures new, May we not cease to look to You, The cross You hung upon —All You endeavored done._

#879 (v. 4), *Hymnal Supplement ‘98*

Pastor Kevin Karner (CTS 1989)
Chairman, CTS Alumni Advisory Board

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**Reunion News**

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Calendar of Events

Events

Sunday Brunch
Katherine Luther Dining Hall
11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
February 5
March 5
April 2

Lenten Preaching Workshop
January 16
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2204

2006 Symposia Series
January 17-20
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2247

Prayerfully Consider
Campus Visit
March 16-18
1-800-481-2155

Vicarage Placement Service
April 25
7:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Candidate Call Service
April 26
7:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Music

Epiphany Lessons and Carols
Seminary Kantorei
January 15
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Passion Choral Vespers
Seminary Schola Cantorum
April 2
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Retreats

Confirmation Retreat
The Lord’s Prayer
April 28-30
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2204

Easter Choral Vespers
Seminary Kantorei
April 23
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

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www.LifeOfTheWorld.com. The current issue, as well as previous issues, can be found at this interactive portal.
Today as much as ever, we need workers who are willing to answer God’s call, men who will choose a life that is steeped in the presence of Jesus Christ, men who are willing to proclaim the Word of God, administer the Sacraments, offer prayer for all God’s people, instruct, watch over, and guide the Good Shepherd’s flock.

Concordia Theological Seminary is a community that prepares men for pastoral service in the congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Our seminary is a place where men of all ages and backgrounds come together in prayer, study, and reflection on God’s presence in Christ. It is a place where men, and their families, join together and receive God’s gifts in His Word and Sacraments. Is it time for you to join our community and answer His Call?

1-800-481-2155