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Every generation of human beings, from Adam and Eve’s fall into self-absorption, measures significance in the wrong way. Power, prestige, pride, and pleasure permeate our thinking. In many and various ways human worth is reckoned by such criteria. Through such lenses the world appears challenging and fierce. Even those who have seemingly “succeeded” are often driven to want more and more, or they worry about keeping all that they now possess.

A central calling of the church is to name those forces that degrade and destroy. It is, then, our privilege to share the Name that restores and renews.

On the question of human significance and purpose, the living voice of Jesus through Prophets and Apostles provides a dramatic reversal. Jesus names the wrong way to view human worth and frees us to see the rich and full significance of every human being.

Listen to His measure of human worth. “In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10). Here every human being is given value beyond measure.

In His ministry Jesus reverses the assumptions of our human nature, “And whoever wants to be first must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:27-28).

The church is called to speak this freeing reversal to all the world. Our foundational energies and our self-understanding are to be expressions of Jesus’ presence and His gifts. The rich, the poor; the strong, the weak; the smart, the slow; the professional, the layperson: all are the object of God’s profound affection and expansive mercy. Such infinite love is embodied in Christ who serves all of humanity and gives His life for all.

How do we reverse the false assumptions that reduce human beings to economic or political beings only? A recent book offers rich analysis and suggestive strategies for Christian witness and mission. James K. A. Smith’s, Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism? (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2006), identifies the forces that are often unnoticed or hidden in European and North American culture. Smith writes:

By using repetition, images, and other strategies—all of which communicate truths in ways that are not cognitive or propositional—marketing forms us into the kind of persons who want to buy beer to have meaningful relationships, or buy a car to be respected, or buy the latest thing to come along simply to satisfy the desire that has been formed and implanted in us. . . . But the church must . . . enact counter-measures, counter-disciplines that will form us into the kinds of people that God calls us to be. (pp.105-6)

How do we form and shape ourselves as Christians? What “counter-measures” will assist us in the face of constant media manipulation? One strategy that appears very promising to our community is a recovery of Christian art. A portrait—an image—has the capacity to communicate the story of Jesus in a manner that entails multiple episodes. The entire Scriptural story is frequently entailed in a single painting.

In “Allegory of the Crucifixion,” shown above, the Master of Westphalia portrays the crucifixion as the fulcrum point for every human being, for salvation on the one hand or for destruction on the other. Note:

- Near Jesus’ right hand, a hand of blessing extends from the cross.
- The cross, sprouting branches and leaves, symbolizes the Tree of Life.
- On Jesus’ right are the blessings of redemption: the church, symbolized by the building and the woman with chalice and banner, the mystical lamb, and the New Testament.
- On Jesus’ left, the cross sprouts a sword to denote judgment and punishment.
- The skull has a snake with an apple in its mouth to signal that sin is the cause of death.
- The man with a bull on an altar indicates that Christ’s sacrifice has ended the Old Testament sacrificial system.
- The hammer at the foot of the cross, about to shatter a skull, points to Jesus’ victory over death.

Such portraits can serve our spiritual formation and invite us to reflect on the reality of Christ. The sound-bytes and subliminal sales efforts that bombard us daily will be challenged by such art. More importantly, our self-understanding will be grounded in appropriate rather than alien images.

I invite you to ponder this suggestion and communicate your thoughts, for the seminary seeks to reach out with the Gospel and serve others as this issue, devoted to special efforts at outreach and service, will illustrate.

May Christ’s presence in Word, Water, and Wine illumine your life and your labors.

In Him,

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
4 What Is a Chaplain?
By the Rev. John A. Fale, Associate Executive Director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care, Saint Louis, Missouri
Nearly every day of the 14 years that I served as a chaplain and pastoral counselor I was energized by the fact that I would get to meet people who were looking for a word of comfort...a word of hope...something to hold on to...something to hold them...something...anything...as illness, disease, death, or broken marital and family relationships knocked the stuffing out of them. I was grateful that I had something to offer them.

7 You Care! You Understand!
By the Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer, Director Emeritus of Concordia Bioethics Institute at Concordia University–Wisconsin, Mequon, Wisconsin
When the sufferer experiences your willingness to enter into his suffering the response is usually something such as, “You care! You understand!” The pastor can then help the sufferer recognize his pastoral caring as God’s caring for the sufferer as simply as saying, “God cares for you.” Then conversation that follows can build upon the suffering of Christ on the cross as the evidence of God’s caring and desire to embrace the sufferer with forgiveness and hope.

10 The Cure of Souls: Good for What Ails You
By the Rev. Dr. Harold L. Senkbeil, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary
Mention “healing” and most people think of physicians, the medical arts, and pharmacology. Yet increasingly, medical personnel are broadening their horizons to think holistically about human health. They have come to see that the physical health of a human being is connected to mental and emotional health. Some health professionals have even begun to see that these two components of human well-being are incomplete without a third—spiritual health.

13 What Does This Mean?

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CTS Alumnus to Head New Wittenberg Center p. 26
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What Is a
I must admit that I was taken back a bit when I was asked to write an article for *For the Life of the World*, which is highlighting what a Lutheran chaplain brings to bear in the care of souls. I jumped at the opportunity to tell the story of those who serve as “domestic missionaries,” as chaplains (and others who serve in specialized pastoral ministry such as pastoral counselors) are apt to meet more non-Christians who welcome the spiritual care of a “religious type” than most any other church worker in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). Nearly every day of the 14 years that I served as a chaplain and pastoral counselor I was energized by the fact that I would get to meet people who were looking for a word of comfort . . . a word of hope . . . something to hold on to . . . something to hold them . . . something . . . anything . . . as illness, disease, death, or broken marital and family relationships knocked the stuffing out of them. I was grateful that I had something to offer them.

Upon further reflection, writing about what a Lutheran chaplain brings to bear in the care of souls is a daunting task to accomplish in 1200 words. A Lutheran chaplain possesses a veritable trove of treasures that have been given to us by God under the blessings of the First Article of the Creed, Christ in His Word and Sacraments, and by Lutheran confessors of the faith. It is difficult to identify all that a Lutheran chaplain has to offer to the spiritually vulnerable and hurting souls one encounters each day. But I shall limit my discussion to the resources that I have found to be most helpful: the Scriptures, the *Book of Concord*, a hymnal, Dr. Walther’s *Law and Gospel*, and clinical pastoral education.

Lutheran chaplaincy is not outside of the church’s healing ministry of Christ; rather, Lutheran chaplaincy is an integral part of our tradition of providing specially trained ordained and commissioned ministers to carry out the ministry of the church in very challenging and demanding settings in life.* A Lutheran chaplain seeking ecclesiastical endorsement in the LCMS and certification through a professional pastoral care organization must have earned either a Master of Divinity degree, a Master of Arts in Theology with Deaconess Certification, or a Master’s degree in Theology and have completed 1600 hours of supervised Clinical Pastoral Education or its equivalent. Evangelical Lutheran theology is the foundation of a Lutheran chaplain’s pastoral or diakonial identity, providing the theological lens through which we see sin, suffering, and the work of God, and continuing to be the very spring from which a Lutheran chaplain continually draws. Clinical Pastoral Education teaches Lutheran chaplaincy students effective, interpersonal communication and relational skills, an awareness of themselves as instruments of bringing Christ’s compassion and healing gifts to those who suffer, and how to integrate and apply Lutheran theology to the care of souls.

In his preface to the Large Catechism, Luther emphasized the importance of learning and memorizing the Catechism and Scripture, because the Word is the very power of God that gives “immeasurable comfort.” Comforting afflicted souls was the ministry of Christ as He drew people to Himself as the incarnation of God’s promises in Scripture.* His Word was God’s Word, the very Word that offered and gave life and salvation as He fulfilled the promises of God.

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* The words “chaplain” and especially “chaplaincy” have been defined in a variety of ways in the Lutheran tradition. Currently they can refer narrowly and exclusively to a man in the office of the public ministry or more broadly to a man or woman in an institutional chaplaincy setting. This article is using them in the broader sense.
through His perfect life, bloody death as the sacrifice for all sin, and His resurrection that took the sting out of sin, which is death. Comforting souls that suffered under the heavy burden of the Law, sin, and the hardships of a life infected by the results of sin was also the essence of Luther’s care of souls.

Luther did not know a care of souls apart from the Gospel. A Lutheran chaplain seeks always to bring the comfort of Christ, grounded in our justification, to burdened consciences and weary souls through the Gospel because it is a “comforting and joyful message,” as it “directs them solely to the merit of Christ and raises them up again by the delightful proclamation of God’s grace and favor acquired through the merits of Christ.”

Because the Book of Concord is a true exposition of Scripture and a correct exhibition of Lutheran doctrine it is, by its very nature, pastoral in its application; just as memorizing Scripture enables a Lutheran chaplain to readily recall particular verses or stories that speak to a specific need. Memorizing and being familiar with the theology and doctrine of our beautiful confession of the faith equips the Lutheran chaplain to apply the very theology of Scripture to the reality of suffering and subsequent explorations for sources of comfort and relief. Luther and the other authors of the Book of Concord understood that pure theology cannot and should not exist solely as a set of theological precepts to be learned. The Book of Concord is replete with examples of applying the comfort of theology to the reality of suffering. Speaking to the use of the sacraments, Melanchthon wrote, “Here we are talking about personal faith, which accepts the promise as a present reality and believes that the forgiveness of sins is actually being offered, not about a faith which believes in a general way that God exists.

“Such use of the sacraments comforts devout and troubled minds.” Regarding Baptism Luther stated, “It is so full of comfort and grace that heaven and earth cannot comprehend it.” One of the roles I served as a chaplain was to teach or instruct those who did not know the blessings God gives through the Gospel and to remind Christians of these precious gifts, while at the same time teaching them how to comfort themselves through these gifts of Christ’s mercy.

Lutheran worship, hymnody, and occasional rites and services were also helpful resources to me as a chaplain. After ten years I still remember Marjorie, a hospice patient who was dying of cancer. I was called by Marjorie’s family because she wanted to receive Holy Communion with her family as it was clear that death was imminent. When I arrived, Marjorie’s family told me that she was incoherent, “speaking gibberish.” As I eased up to Marjorie’s bedside and listened to her, I recognized the words she was speaking. “Your Mom is not speaking gibberish,” I told her family. “Marjorie is reciting the Te Deum.” During other pastoral visits, as some patients shared their concerns with me, I often remarked that the cry of their heart sounded like the words of a hymn or psalm; then I shared the words of the hymn or psalm. It brought relief and comfort to them to know that theirs was an experience shared by people of faith before them.

For baptisms and occasional services, I gave copies of the Order of Service to family members gathered around. After the service some families remarked that being able to participate or follow the service was very comforting; they felt a part of the prayers lifted up.

Just as Luther considered himself to be a lifelong student of the Catechism and correctly applying God’s Word in Law and Gospel, a Lutheran chaplain is well-served by reviewing Walther’s Law and Gospel. One of the most difficult tasks in caring for souls is correctly applying Law and Gospel. Indeed, it is spiritually dangerous to speak words of Law when a heart is already terrified and burdened, and Gospel to a heart that is quite secure in itself and feels no need for the mercy of God. Through attentive, careful listening, seeking clarification and understanding, a Lutheran chaplain invites conversations about one’s life, thereby gaining understanding of the soul’s needs.

What does a Lutheran chaplain bring to bear in the care of souls? We bring Christ, who forgives, heals, and makes all things new.

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1 Large Catechism, Preface, 11.
3 FC, Epitome, V:7.
4 Apology, XIII, 21-22.
5 LC, Fourth Part: Baptism 39.
Recently I sat with a friend in his living room listening to him talk about the sudden and unexpected death of his wife the night before. She had left the room to get ready for bed when he heard her collapse on the floor upstairs. He climbed the stairs quickly and knelt at her side as she cried out, “Al, I’m dying!” In panic he blurted out, “You’re not dying,” and ran to call 911. Within minutes of the paramedics’ arrival she was pronounced dead. As I listened he spoke and wept intermittently, and I tried to empty myself of my own thoughts in order to focus on his grief. He had been a good friend for 15 years and I felt deeply for his sorrow. How could any man bear the death of his wife whom he loved so dearly? How could I if I were in his place?
I have worked hard as a pastor, learning how to allow myself to feel the pain and helplessness of others in their moment of need for support. I am convinced it is the starting place for pastoral care before any offer of prayer or sacrament ought to be made. Compassion is a skill to be learned if we have the willingness to learn it. Some people are naturally compassionate and show it unemotionally through generosity of spirit and doing things to be helpful.

Pastors, however, need to learn to feel the sufferer’s helplessness in suffering and allow it to become their own feeling for the moment. They need to understand that this identification with the sufferer’s helplessness is the way to communicate God’s compassion for the suffering. Jesus demonstrated this when He sat on the hillside overlooking Jerusalem and wept for the city. In His own helplessness to save them, even in their rejection of Him, He had compassion for them.

When the sufferer experiences your willingness to enter into his suffering the response is usually something such as, “You care! You understand!” The pastor can then help the sufferer recognize his pastoral caring as God’s caring for the sufferer as simply as saying, “God cares for you.” Then conversation that follows can build upon the suffering of Christ on the cross as the evidence of God’s caring and desire to embrace the sufferer with forgiveness and hope.

During my 20 years as a hospital chaplain, I had to face up to my own sometimes unwillingness of the moment to bear the burden of another patient as I listened endlessly to patients as they poured out their hearts to me everyday. Periodically, during the years of chaplaincy someone would ask me, “How are you able to do that all day, day after day?” What sustained me more than anything was being cared for by God through worship and my early morning devotions in which I could keep putting the suffering of others back on Christ’s hands and move on with open hands to receive the next sufferer. Admittedly, I had to hand some of the same people back to God over and over again until I could let go of them, but letting people go into the arms of Christ is what pastoral care is all about.

This was especially painful when a patient died. I often thought of myself as walking up to the door of heaven with them as they leaned on my arm, holding the door for them as they stepped inside, then being denied entrance myself into the joy of God’s presence and having to turn away alone. Of course, I am glad to be alive, but there is a part of me that is eager to be with the Lord most fully.

The worst thing a pastor can do is to substitute his lack of empathy with verbalized theological truths that ring clear and true, but come across cold and lacking in compassion. The two are not mutually exclusive and neither theology nor personal caring ought to be divorced from pastoral care. All pastors have days when they have all they can do to deal with burdens they bear without looking for more sufferers. It sometimes takes an effort to allow oneself to feel what others feel and by doing so enter into the suffering of others. Most of us feel some empathy for others at times,

The task of pastoral care is not to bring an end to people’s suffering but to help them find Christ in the midst of it. Unfortunately, every other spirituality around us today aims at escape from suffering. Meditative techniques, whether spiritual or secular, aim at finding peace in one’s inner being by blocking out the suffering. But it is in the midst of suffering that God chooses to reveal Himself to us.
but we learn early in life to bury our capacity for empathy in some deep, secret place within us when the suffering of others becomes too much for us. There is nothing wrong with either allowing empathy to surface or with burying it, depending upon circumstances. But it is important for a pastor to be willing to feel the suffering of others as Jesus did when He wept at Lazarus’ death. This bearing of our grief and suffering is why God became man in Jesus Christ. Christ’s suffering and death are taken on to end them for all eternity and to enable us to live with hope and peace in the midst of our sufferings in this life.

The task of pastoral care is not to bring an end to people’s suffering but to help them find Christ in the midst of it. Unfortunately, every other spirituality around us today aims at escape from suffering. Meditative techniques, whether spiritual or secular, aim at finding peace in one’s inner being by blocking out the suffering. But it is in the midst of suffering that God chooses to reveal Himself to us. As Walter Brueggemann says, “… the cross places suffering at the heart of God’s character and at the heart of meaningful, faithful human life.” The pastor helps parishioners find Christ in their suffering as an extension of God’s self-revelation through Christ’s suffering on the cross. This theology of the cross, as Luther identified it in the Scriptures, is the heart of pastoral care whether administering the Lord’s Supper or listening to an old man in his living room talking about the sudden death of his wife.

There is a triumphalism in the American spirit that has carried over into the churches that causes us to turn our eyes away from suffering. In turning away from suffering we fail to see Christ at work in the midst of it. Luther went so far as to say, “God can be found only in suffering and the cross.” Triumphalism seeks to rid the Christian of his suffering in this life by the strength of his own faith. Luther called this a theology of glory. Blind to Christ’s self-revelation in suffering they do not see the victory of the cross on Good Friday. Good Friday and Easter cannot be separated from each other. Good Friday is the victory and Easter is its celebration. Looking for God elsewhere than the cross is a theology of glory built on the strengths of men (even the strength of their faith) and not on the strength of God found in Christ’s weakness on the cross. The humiliation and willing weakness of Christ is heard from the cross, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” Patients can identify with this forsakenness, but because of it they can find hope and peace in the midst of suffering because of the victory of Christ on the cross. Our peace in this life is found not in the absence of suffering but in the midst of it. That is where Christ finds us. There, in the midst of suffering we can say to God, “You care. You understand! Thanks be to God!”

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The Cure of Souls:

Good for
People who take the Scriptures seriously are not surprised. Humans exist in three distinct yet overlapping dimensions—body, soul, and spirit.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. Psalm 103:1-5

Notice here how the healing God provides embraces all three dimensions of human existence—the forgiveness of sins, the healing of disease, and the redemption of life from despair.

Classical Christianity takes seriously this biblical view of humanity. In fact, the earliest designation for what it is that pastors do for people was called the cura animarum—the cure of souls. Clergy were viewed as “physicians of the soul” precisely because they were engaged in a healing art. Their work included both diagnosis and treatment, just like physicians of the body. But the work of pastors as spiritual physicians focused on the diagnosis and treatment of ailing souls.

In the Lutheran tradition we find the same understanding of pastoral ministry—seelsorge, or the care of souls. A word about that little word “care.” Certainly empathy and emotional care for people are just as important in pastoral work as they are in medical work. But the “care” involved in pastoral care is far deeper than mere empathetic concern for the well-being of people. It means addressing the spiritual health of people using the tools that Christ has given to His church on earth: the living Word of the Gospel and the healing ministrations of the sacraments.

Thus, the classical understanding of pastoral work includes two distinct, but overlapping, activities: the care of souls and the cure of souls.

Common experience with medical care helps us to understand the distinction and connection. To maintain their health, people go to their physicians for care—that is, regular checkups, monitoring, and early detection of possible ailments. When people experience illness they go to their physicians for cure—that is diagnosis, prescription, and treatment designed to eradicate the disease, or at least minimize its effects. When people are chronically ill, they need care. When people are acutely ill, they need cure. Both are provided by competent and trained physicians.

The same holds true when it comes to spiritual health. Ever since the rebellion of Adam and Eve, all humanity has been chronically ill—our disease is sin. God sent His Son to earth to treat this disease...
at its root. “For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” (II Cor. 5:21) The essence of the care of souls, therefore, is the forgiveness of sins and that’s what pastors do for sinners under their care. They apply the forgiveness that Jesus won for all the world on His cross.

In the absolution pastors announce the forgiveness of sins to penitent sinners “in the stead and by the command of (the) Lord Jesus Christ.” In Holy Baptism pastors baptize penitent sinners “in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” for the forgiveness of sins. In the Holy Supper pastors distribute to penitent sinners the Body and the Blood that Jesus gave once upon His cross for the forgiveness of sins. These are the ordinary means of the care of souls; this is what pastors do continually for the souls entrusted to their care in order to maintain their spiritual health. Through the divinely given Word and sacraments, pastors apply the forgiveness of sins that Jesus purchased for His church by His innocent suffering and death and with His holy, precious blood.

But in this fallen world, sinners have special circumstances that call for extraordinary interventions. Because of the impact of their own and others’ sins, people can come under spiritual attack and fall ill, acutely and spiritually speaking. Luther describes these circumstances as anfektungen, or spiritual assaults. The devil, this fallen world, and our own sinful nature often conspire to deceive or mislead us into false belief, despair, “and other great shame and vice” (Small Catechism, Sixth Petition). When this happens people need spiritual cure—it’s no longer a question of maintaining spiritual health; now it’s a matter of restoring and guarding spiritual health.

Faithful pastors, like the Good Shepherd in whose Name they serve, care for the whole flock and for each individual sheep within the flock. “I am the Good Shepherd,” says Jesus. “I know My own and My own know Me, just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep.” (John 10:14-15) The Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:27-28).

Like the Good Shepherd, undershepherds know their sheep. The care of souls is tailored to the unique spiritual needs of each person under a pastor’s care. As he gets to know each person, he begins to understand the natural disposition of each personality within the flock—a factor he bears in mind as he seeks to diagnose and treat their spiritual ailments. For example, distress, fear, and anxiety manifest themselves differently in people who are quiet and reserved than they do in highly energetic people.

The care of souls is a complex and challenging responsibility for pastors. Like medical care, it involves both a science and an art. Thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as a healthy understanding of the human psyche, is fundamental to the care of souls. Historically, this is why our church has emphasized the necessity of building and maintaining an educated clergy. But knowledge itself doesn’t heal people. A good “bedside manner” is vital when applying the means of grace to the needs of people. Diagnostic and treatment skills are developed while practicing the art of spiritual care. There is no substitute for pastoral experience and pastoral practice when it comes to developing competencies in the cure of souls.

Finally, when all is said and done it is not the pastor who cures people of their spiritual ailments. He is only the “best man” by which the heavenly Bridegroom sends gifts to His beloved bride, the Church. Christ Himself is the great physician of body, mind, and spirit. By His death and resurrection He has conquered sin, death, and hell. The sacred washing which He has instituted is a link to His saving work at the cross and open tomb; it is a bath of regeneration in the Holy Spirit for all who believe. In His sacred Body and most holy Blood there is health and healing for every wounded soul. In His powerful Word there is life eternal, starting here and now within His church.

These are the sacred means of Grace, the medicine Jesus Christ has given for the forgiveness of sin—for the health and well-being of His church on earth. And they are good for whatever ails you!

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Speaking the Absolution in the Face of Illness

Martin Luther once noted that the subject matter of lawyers is justice, of physicians it is medicine, but of pastors it is sinful humanity and a gracious God. When pastors go to the hospital they go not as therapists or clinicians, but as shepherds entrusted with the speaking of words that kill and heal. They have no techniques that will vanquish suffering or chase away the anguish of a diseased body. Counselors may help patients cope. Nurses may alleviate pain. Surgeons may extract deadly tumors. Pastors come for another reason altogether. Sent from the Lord, they come to speak a word of absolution that renders a divine verdict on sinners, “I forgive you your sin.”

It is the same word that Jesus spoke to the paralytic who was brought to Him (see Matt. 9:2-8). Through His authority as the Son of Man, Jesus attends not simply to crippled limbs and unresponsive muscles, but to a life gripped by sin bound by death.

Many today would avoid the language of sin. Over a quarter of century ago Dr. Karl Menninger of the Menninger Foundation wrote a book under the title Whatever Became of Sin? Menninger wondered why it was that clergy were unable to speak clearly of sin and instead turned to the categories of psychology as they attempted to make sense of disordered lives, yet avoided naming the root cause. We hear less of sin and more of meaninglessness and victimization. Sin would locate the responsibility with us, but who is responsible for “meaninglessness”? To speak of sin brings the target of sin into the picture. To speak of sin one must speak of God. Evil is that which we abhor. God abhors sin.

It is less threatening, so we reason, to see ourselves as victims. To be a victim is to have some evil done to you by your own unreliable and unpredictable body. Victims are made by an unseen West Nile Virus or SARS that secretly slips in as the pestilence that stalks in darkness; the destruction that wastes at noon day to use the words of the Psalmist. Victims are made by blind chance—being in the wrong place at the wrong time, the cruelty of another human being, or a faceless “they.” He is a cancer victim, we say of the man who suffers with a tumor. She was the victim of a tragic accident, we say of the woman whose car just happened to be in the path of an out-of-control truck. Groups are often described as victims of an oppressive society.

The paralytic healed by Jesus was the victim of some disabling disease. Robbed of the gift of mobility, he was at the mercy of others. He had to be carried to Jesus on a stretcher. But Jesus does not address him as a pitiful victim of some random virus that commandeered his limbs or of some freakish accident that left him in this miserable condition. Jesus goes to the heart of the matter. The Lord declares, “Take heart, My son, your sins are forgiven.”

Behind the paralysis is a deeper bondage than confinement to the bed. Where is God in all of this? “You have God as you imagine Him to be,” says Luther. What can this paralyzed man imagine about God? What can he conclude about God apart from Jesus Christ? Is God angry with him? Is this disease the heavy hand of God punishing him for some transgression? Does God have any care at all for him? Is God oblivious to his need, so far removed from him in might and majesty as to be unconcerned with his misery?

We are not told anything at all about the inner thoughts of this nameless man. We see him only in his need. His friends bring him to the Lord. Hoisted upon a stretcher, he is carried to Jesus with the expectancy, yes, the faith that Jesus could and would invigorate his powerless limbs and set him on his feet. The word was out. The stories of Jesus’ miraculous works—the way He cleansed a leper and restored health to the centurion’s son, His deliverance of the demon-possessed from the devil’s grip, and His authority over wind and wave—were broadcast throughout the region. Maybe Jesus would provide relief for this man as well.

Jesus utters a sentence, but it is an unexpected sentence. He says to the paralytic, “Take heart, My son, your sins are forgiven.” With these words, Jesus shows Himself to be the Savior. His greeting is the vehicle for mercy. Luther observes that “the kingdom of Christ is in the sentence ‘your sins are forgiven’; here there are no works, no merits, no commandments or law—only pure grace and kindness.” Jesus’ words give the paralyzed man nothing that he must do to attain health. The Lord comes not to provide him with a regiment for physical therapy or a plan of spiritual renewal that he is to work at to help him cope with his misfortune. Jesus invites the man to “take heart,” that is, to have courage. With these words the Lord puts all anxious thoughts to flight, giving him courage in the face of his affliction. Calling him “son,” Jesus shows Himself to be there for this man as his helper and Savior. He has not come to mock him in his infirmity or crush him with condemnation. He has come as his Lord with words of peace and absolution: “Take heart, My son, your sins are forgiven you.” It is that message that pastors bring to bedsides and waiting rooms.

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.
Russ Dewell was already used to being a soldier, but in a different army, when he decided it was time to attend the seminary. He went from serving in the United States Army to preparing to serve in “God’s Army” by studying to become a pastor. Russ is currently in his fourth year at CTS, but his journey has had some interesting twists and turns.

Russ, raised a Roman Catholic, had considered becoming a priest, but his parish priest encouraged him to complete a college degree first and off he went to the University of Montana in Billings. “Father Connolly married Gerlinde and me about three years later . . . so much for becoming a priest,” said Russ. When the Dewells relocated to Twin Falls, Idaho, they began sending their children to Immanuel Lutheran School. They also began to attend church at Immanuel where they received instruction and became members of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Following that he joined the Army and some years later he was once again encouraged to consider a life of service in the church. He first considered serving in
“Outdoor Ministries,” but two of his pastors told him of the great need for parish pastors. “I was stunned that they thought I was ‘good enough’ to be one, and it took a year until I ‘gave in.’ I was in Korea with the Army for a year when Gerlinde came to visit me. Her words, ‘Pastor Lunista thinks you’d make a great pastor,’ sealed the deal. I began the process of getting out of the Army and heading to seminary,” explained Russ. “I e-mailed for my seminary application from Korea on September 12, 2001, no kidding.” (Remember, part of September 12th in Korea is September 11th in the United States.)

Russ and his family of seven relocated to Fort Wayne and he began his studies at CTS. There were the trying times when tests didn’t go as well as expected, but there have been plenty of rewarding times that validated his decision to pursue the vocation of pastor. “I have assisted with communion and performed some emergency baptisms. It is both liberating and empowering to watch the Gospel at work knowing it has very little to do with me, its humble, inadequate messenger,” offered Russ.

There would be yet another difference for Russ as he continued his studies at CTS. “I took a year’s leave of absence between finishing my course work and vicarage to complete the Army Chaplain Basic Course at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I had some time on my hands upon returning to Fort Wayne, so I went to the local VA Hospital to see if they could use me at all. A chaplain there told me I should do a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). I looked into it, checked with the seminary, talked to my wife, and again she confirmed that I should do it,” said Russ. “I really enjoyed learning more about myself as a chaplain. My CPE supervisor, and several Lutheran Hospital staff members I respect and trust, told me I am gifted and talented in that environment. They encouraged me to take the residency program.”

So now Russ is well on his way to returning to the Army as a chaplain, specifically as a Chaplain Clinician which means he will be qualified to serve in military hospitals, possibly in field hospitals in Iraq or Afghanistan. While he has not served “in the field” yet, he has truly enjoyed his residency at Lutheran Hospitals of Fort Wayne. “First off, every day in the hospital is unique. It is the antithesis of routine. It requires extreme mental and emotional flexibility, much like the Army. It is never boring. Each patient visit, on-call response, and referral is special. This also requires pastoral and theological agility. Not that I compromise or am expected to compromise my confession, but providing care for an upset, life-long Methodist, elderly lady patient, requires ‘meeting her where she is’ with the truth of the Gospel I bear,” explained Russ. “Also, not every care-giving situation requires doctrinal import. Many, many times patients, families, or staff just need someone to listen to them, to help them sort through their overwhelming feelings, or be present with them in the shock of bad news: a life-impacting diagnosis, death of a loved one, or critical emergencies. This requires patience, emotional strength, and wisdom.”

He has even had the opportunity to assist the hospital staff in making sure they could communicate clearly with a Chinese patient. “Recently I facilitated medical treatment and care for a Chinese patient who speaks very little English by asking second-year seminarian Chris Yang to translate. I helped ensure clear communication of medical ideas and concepts, provided continuity, supported nurses, and guided and encouraged Chris who so generously offered to step into this dynamic and challenging environment as we both offer witness in Christ’s name by caring for this ‘traveler.’”

Has hearing Russ’ story made you think about pursuing the vocation of pastor or chaplain? Has it made you think of someone you might encourage to come to the seminary?

Russ has these words of advice, “Don’t put it off. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, and the harvest is ripe! The Lutheran Confessions may be the last bastion of the pure Gospel in an increasingly secular and spiritually generic world. People are yearning for peace from their hurts, woes, and burdens under sin. Stop questioning God, get out of ‘your boat’ and get on with it.”

Russ, Gerlinde, and their children, Reece (19), Emily (17), Rachell (16), Eric (14), and Reagan (12) are looking forward to the next step in their journey as they await his first call that will be issued in April of this year.

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

Christ Academy—High School
June 17-30

Fall Invitational Campus Visit
September 20-22

For additional information on these events please call the CTS Office of Admission 1-800-481-2155.
Physician for the Soul
By Jayne E. Sheafer

“Times of fear, pain, and uncertainty provide wonderful opportunities to bring people back to the unchanging promises and blessings that are ours in Christ, received through Word and Sacraments. This is the time to show people Christ with them in the midst of suffering; to relieve them of the burdens of the law that insist they ‘pray enough’ or ‘muster up enough faith,’ and to wrap them instead in the promises of their Baptism and the blessings that are theirs already in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

He’s on call 24 hours a day, people are coming to him for answers and comfort, he dispenses what they need to be healed . . . are we describing a doctor or a pastor? In this instance it is both. Dr. James R. Holowach, a 2004 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, has filled both job descriptions. Before coming to the seminary he was a physician in Alabama for 11 years. In fact, while studying at CTS he continued to work part time at immediate care facilities in Fort Wayne. Rev. Holowach currently serves Christ Lutheran Church in Jackson, Mississippi.

It is interesting to hear Pastor Holowach tell how he began his own journey in pursuing the pastorate. While an elder at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Cullman, Alabama, he had become very involved in the music program at the church. “As a layperson given responsibility for the music program in our church, I felt it was important to learn as much as possible about the theology of worship and church music. I read an article by Kantor Richard Resch on Church Music in the 20th Century that I found particularly compelling,” explained Pastor Holowach. “I invited him to speak at our church in Alabama and he was the first to suggest I consider the Office of the Holy Ministry. After attending a CTS Level 1 Organ Workshop led by Kantor Resch a few years later, I made the decision to come to the seminary at Fort Wayne. Of course, by then I had met others on the staff and had become familiar with the writings and teachings of many of the professors on the faculty at Fort Wayne, which made it the obvious choice of seminary for me.”

Pastor Holowach has served his congregation in Mississippi since 2004. Does he see similarities in his previous vocation and now in his calling as a pastor? “The two vocations are similar in many ways, though I must say the full-time work of pastor keeps me far busier than the full-time work of medicine did,” explained Pastor Holowach. “Both require round the clock
availability, careful attention to detail, a great deal of ongoing study, and a tremendous responsibility to the people entrusted to your care. Both vocations place you in highly stressful and demanding situations at times and require skills in working with people when they are particularly vulnerable or upset.”

In addition to these general similarities, Pastor Holowach’s years as a physician have given him some very, specific advantages when ministering in the health care setting. “I’m also very comfortable in clinical settings which gives me a great advantage when providing comfort to those in unfamiliar and frequently intimidating surroundings. I am also able to answer questions people have about the care they are receiving. The ability to judge when a situation is critical and when it’s not has been particularly helpful in comforting people and easing their anxieties,” offered Pastor Holowach.

“On a different note, my past training and experience have also enabled me to speak to physicians and health care providers in their own language about ethical issues and matters of faith.”

While ministering in the health care setting is different than Sunday morning worship, Pastor Holowach says there are some important concerns to keep in mind. “The means of grace serve as the foundation for our lives in Christ, so why offer something different to those in need just because they aren’t in the nave? Times of fear, pain, and uncertainty provide wonderful opportunities to bring people back to the unchanging promises and blessings that are ours in Christ, received through Word and sacraments. This is the time to show people Christ with them in the midst of suffering; to relieve them of the burdens of the law that insist they ‘pray enough’ or ‘muster up enough faith,’ and to wrap them instead in the promises of their Baptism and the blessings that are theirs already in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Pastor Holowach further explains his goal when making hospital visits, “(Pastors can) bring them back to their Baptism with the invocation, then consider using the lectionary and the liturgy as the foundation upon which to bring them God’s Word. You may even consider providing the ‘medicine of immortality’ in the Holy Supper where it is appropriate to do so. When the comfort you offer is the comfort God alone gives by way of Word and Sacrament, your people will be blessed and so will you!”

“I spend most of my time preaching and teaching dependence in a culture of independence; dependence upon Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins: dependence upon Baptism and the Holy Supper as the means by which we receive that forgiveness and live at peace with God and with one another; dependence upon the Word of God to inform our Christian lives and to have good use of us in our vocations as fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, attorneys, taxi drivers, etc.; to be a light for the world and the means by which God provides for the needs of our neighbor.”

While he enjoys making his calls to the hospitalized and shut-in, there is still the day-to-day work in the parish that can be a challenge of any pastor. “What I THOUGHT would be the greatest challenge was really no challenge at all! When I was called to Christ Lutheran Church, there were only 39 active members remaining in the congregation. They had suffered through some difficult challenges and there was considerable anxiety about how the church would survive, let alone grow,” said Pastor Holowach.

“However, the Lord obviously intended to have a church here because the people called a full-time pastor to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments. And that’s all I had to do . . . after several weeks of teaching and preaching the sufficiency of God’s means of grace to grow the Church and provide for the needs of His people, the anxiety simply disappeared!”

As he serves God’s people at Christ Lutheran, Pastor Holowach says he and the members of the congregation continue to reach out to a group with special needs. “We serve a large deaf community by providing interpreters for all of our Sunday School classes, worship services, and special functions. This year we have received a grant from the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) to send several of our members to the Church Interpreters Training Institute (CITI) at CTS, and we have hosted sign language classes for our hearing members as well.”

In summing up his ministry and service to the church Pastor Holowach says, “I spend most of my time preaching and teaching dependence in a culture of independence: dependence upon Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; dependence upon Baptism and the Holy Supper as the means by which we receive that forgiveness and live at peace with God and with one another; dependence upon the Word of God to inform our Christian lives and to have good use of us in our vocations as fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, attorneys, taxi drivers, etc.; to be a light for the world and the means by which God provides for the needs of our neighbor. In a ‘purpose driven culture’ the challenge is to bring people to the understanding that we are ‘nothing but given to’ by the Lord, and that when we simply let go of the verbs, God can have good use of us to love Him and serve one another.”

The Rev. James R. Holowach and his wife, Susan, are the parents of Marie (17) and Michelle (15).
Seminarians Complete Second
Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar

By Professor John T. Pless

“I was impressed by the way in which the Malagasy Lutheran Church joins spiritual care with bodily care, especially in the tobys. Their church ministers to the whole person. It delivers forgiveness of sins even as it shows mercy to those in need—the poor, the elderly, the blind, and the sick.”

All of these institutions are operated by the Malagasy Lutheran Church. From its inception 140 years ago, the Malagasy Lutheran Church has preached repentance and faith in Christ’s name while seeking to bring healing in His name to those who suffer the ravages of disease. Seminarian Peter Gregory said, “I was impressed by the way in which the Malagasy Lutheran Church joins spiritual care with bodily care, especially in the tobys. Their church ministers to the whole person. It delivers forgiveness of sins even as it shows mercy to those in need—the poor, the elderly, the blind, and the sick.”

There were many deeply moving moments throughout the week. One came when Professor Pless and the CTS students presented a gift of books to the library of the regional seminary in Antsirabe where the Rev. David Rakotonirina, a CTS graduate student, is President. Among the books given to the library were books from the collection of the late Wes Geer, a CTS seminarian who died this past June. His widow, Julie, donated Wes’ books to the Malagasy seminary. Malagasy pastors and seminarians received copies of the new Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions purchased with funds

I have never seen such dedication and compassion as that exemplified by pastors, teachers, doctors, nurses, and workers in the Malagasy Lutheran Church,” commented Nathan Raddatz after returning from the second Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar funded by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod’s Board for World Relief and Human Care.

Nathan was one of six fourth-year seminarians from Concordia Theological Seminary who accompanied Professor John T. Pless on this spring break event to gain first-hand experience concerning the linkage of Gospel proclamation to works of mercy in one of Africa’s fastest growing Lutheran churches. The Rev. Matthew C. Harrison, Executive Director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care, and Dr. Albert B. Collver, Executive Pastoral Assistant, joined the CTS group for the first three days of the tour.

The group was in Madagascar from February 23–March 3, visiting Lutheran churches, a regional seminary, a center for the poor, several “tobys” (encampments of mercy), hospitals, an agricultural school, an orphanage, and a school for the blind.

Seminarian Peter Gregory shares care packages with children in Madagascar.
raised by CTS students. After receiving the Concordia, one Malagasy seminarian remarked, “This is the best gift you could give to us.”

CTS students who participated in the 2006 Mercy Mission Expedition raised over $8,000 for LCMS World Relief and Human Care to use in support of the Good Samaritan Center in Fianarantsoa. This year students visited the Good Samaritan Center where the fund-raising efforts of their fellow seminarians will result in the construction of an enclosed kitchen. Currently the cooking is done outdoors, a very difficult endeavor during Madagascar’s long rainy season.

After seeing several profound instances of suffering and destitution in the Malagasy hospitals and tobies, Seminarian Christopher Raffa said, “I was able to see in the most concrete realities where theology and human care are united in the person of Christ who came not to be served but to serve. God in Christ gives His life for the world, and now man justified freely gives his life for the neighbor. The essence of the church, therefore, is not only to be a recipient of God’s grace and mercy, but also a dispenser of it, to serve as one who has been served.”

In a similar vein, Seminarian Jeremy Mills reflected upon Ephesians 4:4-6 remarking that, “The Malagasy Lutheran Church is an attestation to the reality that all who confess Christ are formed into His body and unite together with Christians from all over the world in confessing Christ’s saving grace to a hurting and dying world.”

Seminarian Jeff Ware commented, “Not only were we able to discover ways in which we can assist the Malagasy Lutheran Church but we also learned a great deal from them. The tremendous dedication of the Malagasy Lutheran pastors and the great sacrifices that they make in order to preach the Gospel was an inspiration to me.”

The CTS students were humbled and impressed by the sacrifices that their Malagasy counterparts make to study theology. More adequate library resources are needed. The library at Antsirabe has no more than 500 books and only a couple of computers, none of which is in good condition. To say the least, living conditions at the seminary are challenging. Several of the student houses have leaky roofs. Students attend classes in the morning but farm in the afternoon in order to provide food for themselves and their families.

Spring Break 2007 was an adventure in mercy for the students blessed with the opportunity to travel to a church in a distant part of the world. Morning and Evening Prayer with readings throughout the week from II Corinthians and Martin Luther’s Day By Day We Magnify framed the experience. It was a week that they will not soon forget. Concordia Theological Seminary is deeply grateful to the Rev. Harrison for his farsighted leadership in partnering with us to make these expeditions of mercy substantial opportunities of learning and pastoral formation for our students.

Each of the students who participated in the trip has pledged to make at least ten presentations in congregations, Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) groups, schools, or pastoral conferences over the next year. If you would be interested in having such a presentation, please contact Professor Pless at plessjt@ctsfw.edu or phone 260-452-2271.

The Rev. John T. Pless is an Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and

Professor Pless presents Malagasy seminarians copies of Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions as Seminary President, the Rev. David Rakotonirina, looks on.
Dr. Cameron MacKenzie Installed as Ellis Professor of Historical Theology

On Wednesday, January 10, Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie was installed as Ellis Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary. The installation took place during the morning worship service in Kramer Chapel. The Chair is the result of a bequest from the estate of Forrest E. and Frances H. Ellis who wanted to encourage the study of the German Reformation by theologians of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). Dr. MacKenzie is the first CTS professor to enjoy this distinction.

“Dr. Cameron MacKenzie has distinguished himself for more than two decades as a professor, pastor, and mentor at Concordia Theological Seminary,” commented President, Dean O. Wenthe. “He is eminently qualified to fill the Chair as stipulated by its sponsors: ‘The holder of the Forrest E. and Francis H. Ellis Chair for the Study of German Affairs for the Period of 1400 to 1700 should be an exemplary teacher and scholar and a mentor of students as they learn the central importance of German literature, politics, and theology in the formation and development of the Lutheran Church. In accordance with the expressed intent of the Ellises, the holder of the Chair shall be one who conforms wholly to the inspired Word of God and to the confessions of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. As such, the Chair holder shall possess a knowledge and respect for the Lutheran Confessions and subscribe to them unconditionally and to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God.’”

“For almost 24 years, it has been my privilege to teach at Concordia Theological Seminary and to help in the preparation of men for the pastoral ministry and now, more recently, for the deaconess ministry of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod,” commented Dr. MacKenzie. “Through the years God has been very good to me in this work by surrounding me with faithful students, encouraging colleagues, dedicated staff workers, and supportive administrators. And now I am being honored by being placed into the Ellis Chair of Historical Theology for doing what has been the joy of my life! I am very appreciative of Dr. Wenthe, the Ellis family, and all those who have made this possible, and very grateful to God for this and all His blessings. I pray that He will grant me many more years of service here at Concordia and will continue to bless our seminary in preparing dedicated and faithful workers for His Church.”

Following the installation, Dr. MacKenzie led a convocation with the presentation of his paper entitled The Challenge of History—Luther’s Two Kingdoms Theology as a Test Case. The audio and video of the convocation may be found by going to www.ctsfw.edu/academics/faculty/mackenzie.php.
Care Packages Continue to Go Overseas to Our Soldiers

For the last several years the CTS family has been sending shipments to soldiers who are serving in all parts of the world. The effort has been led by seminary wives who have had children who are serving in the Armed Forces. Our current coordinator is Rene Schmeltz. She is married to second-year seminarian, Rodney, and their son, Jake, is a Marine who is currently serving in Iraq. “I want to thank those who have sent donations for the project. It is such a blessing. I was about to ask for monetary donations for shipping costs for the last mailing, when three checks came in. Wow, the Lord is faithful,” said Rene. “Thank you to everyone for making this happen. I know the members of the military who are serving overseas really appreciate the boxes, my son included.”

Thanks also go to The Ladies of Bethlehem from Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, who again gave a donation for the most recent shipment. They have been doing this twice a year.

Beginning in May, Renee Mosher will coordinate this effort. She and her husband, James a first-year seminarian, have a real interest in this project as James served in the U.S. Army before coming to the seminary.

If you would like to become involved in this effort, please contact Renee at moshierrc@ctsfw.edu or phone her at 260-492-8739.

If you would like to donate, here is a list of the items that are always appreciated:

**Personal hygiene items:** Baby wipes, toothbrushes, solid stick anti-perspirants, books, magazines, devotional material, hometown newspapers, stationery, sunscreen lotion, disinfectant wipes, mouthwash, eye drops, lip balm, dental floss, baby powder, foot powder, liquid hand sanitizer, breath mints, contact lens cleaner.

**Food items:** Crackers, beef jerky, nuts, instant drink mixes (in powder form), coffee, tea bags, candy (M&M’s are great, hard candy—anything that won’t melt), gum, Rice Krispie treats, Kraft Easy Mac, microwave popcorn, granola bars, power bars, dried fruit, Chex Mix, canned soup, tuna, oatmeal, salsa, lollipops, marshmallows, instant soup.

Monetary donations should be mailed to Concordia Theological Seminary, Attention: Military Project Coordinator, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN. All checks should be made payable to the CTS Mailroom.

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**The Best of England & Scotland**

Hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Dean Wenthe, Rev. and Mrs. Wayne Graumann, and Dr. and Mrs. Cameron MacKenzie

July 23-August 2, 2007

$2979 from Chicago

$2999 from Houston

per person/double occupancy

In the story of western civilization, no country has been more important than Great Britain. At one time “the sun never set on the British Empire.” Even though those days are long gone, all over the world, including right here in the United States, people employ the language, political institutions, and forms of Christianity that first appeared in the British Isles.

Of course, it is one thing to read about the history, literature, and culture of England, but quite another to visit the actual places where Shakespeare presented dramas that still delight audiences, Winston Churchill gave speeches that inspired his nation, and Henry VIII set in motion the English Reformation that produced so many different Protestant churches—from the Episcopalians to the Quakers! And to do so with knowledgeable and experienced tour guides as well as seminary hosts with expertise, enthusiasm, and commitment to making this an educational and inspiring tour. Such a trip promises to be the experience of a lifetime.

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For a Tour Brochure and Registration Application, please complete this form and return it to: CTS Tours • Concordia Theological Seminary • 6600 N. Clinton St. • Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825.

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Opportunities to Refresh and Renew at CTS

Confirmation Retreat
What’s Love Got to Do with It?–A Study of the Ten Commandments, Especially the Sixth
April 27-29
This Confirmation Retreat, led by the Rev. Tim Pauls of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Boise, Idaho, is designed for youth who are currently receiving Confirmation instruction in their own parish. During these years between childhood and adulthood, young people are bombarded with conflicting ideas about authority, responsibility, and relationships.

After a brief survey of the Ten Commandments in general, this retreat will focus on God’s Word regarding relationships, sex, and marriage. As with all our Confirmation retreats, there will be opportunities to enjoy worship in Kramer Chapel, a scavenger hunt, and recreation time in the campus gymnasium.

Retreat Fee: $100 (includes on-campus housing and meals). Registrations are due one month before the retreat begins.

Enter the Biblical World Retreat
My Word Shall not Return Void: God’s Word and the Seminary’s Mission—Past, Present, and Future
May 5
The first president of the LCMS, C. F. W. Walther, wrote: “By the Word alone, without any other power, the church was founded; by the Word alone all the great deeds recorded in church history were accomplished.” This perspective has distinguished CTS’s work since its founding in 1846 and is the means by which it continues to impact the world today and into the future. This retreat, led by professors from the seminary and other church leaders from around the world, will explore the mission character of the Lutheran Church and the way in which it is sharing the Gospel and shaping the future through the living Word of God.

Retreat Fee: $40 (includes Saturday lunch and an evening reception). 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.

For additional information concerning CTS retreats go online to www.ctsfw.edu, select Events, and select Seminary Retreats, or phone 1-877-287-4338, ext. 2266.
The beautiful CTS Deaconess Studies logo (shown below) figures prominently on seminary brochures, cards sent from the Deaconess Studies Office, and shirts worn by deaconess students. Created in the likeness of early Christian art, the logo portrays Phoebe, “a servant of the church at Cenchrea,” who delivered personally St. Paul’s epistle to the church in Rome. St. Paul commended this saintly woman as one who “has been a great help to many people, including me” (Rom. 16:1-2). To the right of Phoebe are three crosses depicting her service to the one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Psalm 100:2 provides the basis for the logo motto. *Serving the Lord with Gladness* describes the activity and attitude expected of deaconess students as they study, carry out fieldwork, or serve internships in congregations, institutions, and missions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Readers might recognize the Deaconess Studies motto as almost identical to another motto associated with the work of women in our Synod. In 1943, Central District President Rev. Walter F. Lichtsinn suggested that *Serve the Lord with Gladness* would be a fitting motto for the newly-formed Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML). However, long before LWML delegates adopted Psalm 100:2 as their motto, this Old Testament verse frequently surfaced in “deaconess circles.”

When the Rev. Bruno Poch consecrated the first four graduates of the deaconess training school at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, in 1925, he preached on Psalm 100:2. Rev. Poch explained, “This was the same text that Pastor Theodor Fliedner chose when he installed the first Lutheran deaconess, Miss Gertrud Reichardt, in the little parish church at Kaiserswerth, Germany, in October 1836. The same words were carved as a fitting motto over the entrance of the first deaconess motherhouse. As the believers in the Old Testament served the Lord with gladness because they realized His manifold blessings, both temporal and spiritual, thus also we have every reason to serve the Lord with gladness.” The CTS Deaconess Studies logo reflects an unbroken diaconal tradition of *Serving the Lord with Gladness* as exemplified by Rev. Fliedner, the father of the modern Protestant deaconess movement.

For more information about Deaconess Studies, or to offer financial support for diaconal training, please call 1-800-481-2155 or e-mail Deaconess@ctsfw.edu.

Cheryl D. Naumann is the Secretary and Historian for Concordia Deaconess Conference—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. She serves Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Oakmont, Pennsylvania.

David P. Scaer’s *Discourses in Matthew* Now Available in Spanish

Dr. David P. Scaer, Chairman of the CTS Systematic Theology Department, is a prolific writer who appeals to a vast audience. That audience has increased even more as his *Discourses in Matthew: Jesus Teaches the Church* is now available in a Spanish edition entitled, *MATEO enseña a la iglesia: estructura teológica del primer evangelio* (*Matthew Teaches the Church: Theological Structure of the First Gospel*).

“David Scaer understands Matthew as primarily five catechetical discourses written by the apostle for use in preparing initiates for participation in Baptism and the Eucharist. His book carefully distills decades of reading, studying, and teaching this Gospel. Scaer masterfully teaches the teaching of Matthew and—much more importantly—the teaching in word and deed of the one who is seen and heard through Matthew’s Gospel and received in the sacraments: Jesus Christ,” said Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Chairman of the CTS Exegetical Theology Department, in a quote from the Concordia Publishing House (CPH) website.

The Spanish and English versions may be ordered from the CPH Bookstore at CTS, www.ctsfw.edu, select Bookstore, or phone 260-452-3108.
2007 National Offering Designated for Pastoral Formation Worldwide

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is pleased to announce that the 2007 national offering will be used to support pastoral formation. With hopes of raising at least $1 million, two-thirds of all gifts received will support Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. The remaining one-third will support the preparation of pastors at seminaries of LCMS partner churches around the world.

The national offering provides an opportunity for the entire church to join in a common goal. The theme of the 2007 national offering is “Preparing Pastors Worldwide.” LCMS President Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick will invite the entire church, including individuals, congregations, and other organizations, to participate in gathering the 2007 national offering at this summer’s 63rd Regular Convention. “On behalf of the entire seminary family, I want to express my gratitude to President Gerald B. Kieschnick, and to the people of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, for this wonderful gift in dedicating two-thirds of all the offerings during our national convention to seminary education. It is a great privilege to form able pastors and deaconesses for the church. We are delighted that the church sees this as central to its future, both in nurture and in outreach,” said Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, CTS President.

“This year’s national offering supports the tie between the church and its seminaries,” says Cindy Simpson, Vice President, LCMS Joint Seminary Fund. “Seminaries serve a vital role in preparing public proclaimers of the Word—pastors whose calling is ‘vigorously to make known the love of Christ.’ The offering gathered at the convention further highlights the relationship between the church and its seminaries. Attention at the convention on the national offering provides the opportunity to build awareness and generate support for the preparation of pastors to proclaim boldly that Jesus Christ alone is the Savior of the world—which is the core message of the convention theme ‘One Message—Christ!’”

Opportunities to make direct gifts to the national offering will be available beginning in April at www.GiveNowLCMS.org. The offering will remain open through the next convention in 2010.

2007 Golf Outing at Cobblestone Golf Links—June 23

Your Name: _______________________
Address: _______________________
City: _______________________
State: _____________ Zip : _____________
Phone: _______________________
E-mail: _______________________

Yes, I want to be a:
☐ Sponsor (up to $249).
☐ Tee Sponsor ($250-$499).
☐ Hole Sponsor ($500+).
☐ I would like to register a foursome ($85/golfer).
☐ I would like to sponsor a student golfer ($85/golfer).

Please send your payment to:
Concordia Theological Seminary, Attention: Golf Outing
6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825

It’s time again for Concordia Theological Seminary’s Grand Ol’e Lutheran Fellowship golf tournament. The tournament will again benefit the seminary in a very specific way: to help build a “playscape,” an elaborate, creative children’s playground on the campus.

Once again we plan many prizes, trophies for winning teams, and a wonderful supper. Those of you who have attended in the past know that few, if any, players go home without a prize.

Mark your calendars, form your teams, and practice your wedges! Whether young or old, male or female, expert or duffer, you will have a great time."
**CTS Alumnus to Head New Wittenberg Center**

The Rev. Wilhelm Torgerson, a 1971 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, has been selected as the new Director of the Wittenberg Project—a collaborative effort by the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK), the LCMS Board for Mission Services, the LCMS Board for Human Care, and Concordia Publishing House.

The aim of the project is three-fold: to establish a Welcome Center for Lutheran pilgrims from around the world; to provide limited accommodation for lecturers and church leaders; and to encourage the re-establishment of a Lutheran congregation (SELK) in Wittenberg.

Pastor Torgerson recently resigned as Propst (synodical vice president) in the SELK in order to have more time to prepare for his new responsibilities. Presently serving as pastor of the Berlin-Mitte congregation, his last regular Sunday worship there will be Easter Day, after which he will move to Wittenberg and begin serving as Director of this new outreach project.

A large building located immediately next to the historic St. Mary’s Church (*Stadtkirche*) and the Bugenhagen parsonage has been purchased with the help of the Central Illinois District. The building, the former boy’s high school of 1564, will be renovated to provide a visitors center, book shop, meeting room, guest rooms for teachers and church leaders, and housing for the Director. Dedication of the renovated building is currently slated for Reformation Day 2008.

Inquiries about the mission and scope of the Wittenberg Project may be directed to Pastor Torgerson: Lutherische-Mitte@t-online.de.

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**Kantorei Easter Tour 2007**

**Wednesday, April 11**
Lamb of God Lutheran Church
8411 Old Green Bay Rd.
Pleasant Prairie, WI 53158
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, April 12**
Concordia University—Wisconsin
12800 N. Lake Shore Dr.
Mequon, WI 53097
Service Time: 9:30 a.m.

**Thursday, April 12**
Luther Memorial Chapel
3833 N. Maryland Ave.
Shorewood, WI 53211
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

**Friday, April 13**
Concordia University Chapel
7400 Augusta St.
River Forest, IL 60305
Service Time: 11:00 a.m.

**Friday, April 13**
St. Paul Lutheran Church
1500 S. Briggs St.
Lockport, IL 60441
Service Time: 7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, April 14**
Zion Lutheran Church
11456 N 11000 E Rd.
Grant Park, IL 60940
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, April 15**
St. Peter Lutheran Church
810 W. Talmer Ave.
North Judson, IN 46366
Service Time: 9:00 a.m.

**Sunday, April 15**
Concordia Theological Seminary Easter Choral Vespers
Kramer Chapel
Service Time: 4:00 p.m.
A

s you can well imagine, when families come to the seminary their household budgets are drastically reduced with mom or dad as a full-time student. Mrs. Karen Fuelling, Director of the Food and Clothing Co-op, shared her thoughts concerning recent activity at the Co-op.

“Through the efforts of the CTS Advancement Department and Mrs. Deborah Rutt, a long time member of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML), many Mission Grant requests were written to benefit the Food Co-op. Mrs. Rutt, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement at CTS, brings a unique perspective. She was a student wife here at the seminary in the early 1980s; served with her husband as missionaries in Guatemala; was Director of the Food and Clothing Co-op in the mid 1990s; and her husband, Dr. Douglas Rutt, is a member of the seminary faculty. Being a mother of five children, she understands fully the need for wholesome food for the students and their families as well as the cost to provide those items,” explained Mrs. Fuelling. “Through the combined efforts and dollars of the many LWML Districts, we now provide milk, cheese, hamburger, fresh fruits and vegetables, and if the price is right, we purchase laundry detergent and cleaning supplies. Prior to the LWML Mission Grants we were spending $7000 per month on perishable and non-perishable food items with no produce purchased. This is over and above the generous gifts of food donated by churches, organizations, and individuals. Since receiving the grants we now order at least $3000 in fresh produce per month, plus other perishable items. For many of our students the Co-op is their only grocery store. God is certainly taking care of the students through the loving hands of His people.”

In 2006 14 LWML Districts voted to fund Mission Grants to the CTS Food and Clothing Co-op in the amount of $149,000. They are: Florida/Georgia, Indiana, Iowa East, Kansas, Louisiana/Mississippi, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska North, Nebraska South, North Dakota, Northern Illinois, North Wisconsin, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota. Two Districts, Texas and Minnesota South, sent the Co-op door offerings from their conventions, totaling over $5600, and the Minnesota North LWML District collected long distance phone cards with a total of 17,000 minutes to be shared with students.

As of February 1, 2007, the Co-op has received grants for a total of $26,360.26. Here are some examples of what this enables Mrs. Fuelling to purchase for the Co-op:
- 800 pounds of hamburger every five weeks ($1,672.00)
- 640 gallons of milk per month ($1,862.00)
- 200 dozen eggs per month ($168.00)
- 275 packages of cheese ($385.00)
- 1000 pounds of fruits and vegetables

The Co-op is also the grateful recipient of approximately 2500 pounds of chicken products donated and delivered every six weeks by Brakebush Brothers of Westfield, Wisconsin.

The words of CTS seminary families best convey how very grateful they are for the Co-op and all the generous donors:

“There are no words that can express our appreciation for the wonderful contribution of fresh vegetables, fruit, and dairy products from LWML. Due to our health concerns, we are now eating more fresh produce, which previously was too expensive for us to purchase at the supermarket. What a blessing to put fresh, healthy produce on the table! We have truly been blessed by all of the wonderful contributions from the LWML, many other individuals, churches, and groups.

Ginger Erdman, wife of third-year seminarian, Roger Erdman

If you would like information concerning the Food and Clothing Co-op or how you or your organization can donate, please e-mail Mrs. Fuelling at Co-ops@ctsfw.edu, or phone her at 260-452-2168.
Gifts from IRA’s

By the Rev. Ralph G. Schmidt, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Last summer Congress passed legislation allowing people who are at least 70½-years-old to make gifts directly from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) to any qualified charity during the remainder of 2006 and 2007. The maximum transfer that qualifies under such legislation is $100,000 in each year. Gifts to Concordia Theological Seminary qualify under this legislation. Such gifts do not count as income under this legislation, but they also cannot be used as an itemized deduction. They do, however, count toward the required minimum distribution. We printed an article on this legislation six months ago, but many have not heard of this opportunity, and thus it bears repeating.

Who benefits the most from such legislation?

- Those who do not itemize deductions. People whose only itemized deductions are property taxes and charitable contributions may benefit the most by using this transfer. If all contributions to charitable beneficiaries, such as their congregation and the seminary, are made from their IRA, they can use the standard deduction during 2007 and realize lower federal income taxes. This is assuming, as is true for most people, that their property taxes are lower than the standard deduction.

- Those who itemize deductions but live in states which do not have itemized deductions on their state income tax forms. Such people who make gifts from their IRA will benefit because their taxable income will be lower on their state income tax.

- Those whose income is high enough that their personal exemptions are phased out ($225,750 for couples, $150,500 for singles).

- Those for whom giving a gift directly from their IRA will stay under the thresholds for taxes being paid on social security income. A married couple pays federal income tax on 85% of their social security income above the $44,000 adjusted gross income threshold, 50% over $32,000, and 0% on income under $32,000. For singles the thresholds are $34,000 and $25,000.

- Donors who are subject to the 50% annual charitable deduction limitation.

- Wealthy individuals who want to reduce the size of retirement assets in their estates. Such assets at death may have cumulative taxes amounting to over 80% for some.

Who does not benefit from such legislation?

- Primarily those whose itemized deductions will offset their extra income from the IRA if they make a withdrawal and then make a charitable gift and who are not affected by any of the previous points.

Please note that such gifts can only be made from an IRA, not other types of retirement plans such as 403(b) or 401(k) plans. The check must be sent directly from the IRA administrator to the charity, and the person must be at least 70½ when the gift is given. For married couples, each spouse can make up to a $100,000 contribution, but it must come from their individual IRA.

Finally, for those who made such gifts in 2006, this gift plus any other distribution from their IRA must be reported on Line 15A of their 1040, assuming that is the form they use, but it should not be included on line 15B which is only for taxable distributions. These gifts may not be included on Schedule A where a person claims an itemized charitable deduction for conventional charitable gifts.
Simple Estate Gifts  
By the Rev. Ralph G. Schmidt, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Many people think leaving an estate gift to Concordia Theological Seminary is a difficult process. To be sure, there are some types of gifts that are complicated. However, there are also ways to leave an estate gift that are very simple and require very little effort. The following are a few ways this can be done in order to leave gifts of any size to accomplish the Lord’s work of preparing men for the Office of the Holy Ministry and women to serve as deaconesses in our church.

1 Place a POD on a bank account or Certificate of Deposit (CD).

POD means “payable on death.” A CD or account with such a designation will go to the person or institution so named and takes precedence over what the person’s will might say. Thus if a person leaves half of his or her estate to each of two children, but wants the seminary to receive a gift of $10,000, it is not necessary to change the will. Simply putting a POD on a $10,000 CD will accomplish the same purpose, as long as that CD is not redeemed. The will does not affect that CD. Such POD’s can also be put on accounts at the Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

2 Gifts of life insurance. There are several ways to give gifts of life insurance, but here we will speak only of those that are easiest. Many times people take out life insurance when they are young and need coverage for their families in the event of unexpected, early death. But later on that policy may no longer be needed for that purpose. Such policies can be given to the seminary. That can take place in one of two simple ways. First, the beneficiary designation may simply be changed. All one needs to do is ask his or her agent for a change of beneficiary form, change the beneficiary to the seminary, and then return it to the insurance company. The second way that can be done is by actually gifting the policy to the seminary so that it is both the beneficiary and owner of the policy. To do this one can again simply ask the agent for the correct form. The advantage of doing this is that the donor receives a tax deduction for the value of the policy. The disadvantage is that once this is done the donor can no longer change the policy since it now is the property of the seminary.

3 Gifts of qualified retirement plans. A larger and larger portion of assets in our country are being found in retirement plans such as Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA), Tax Sheltered Annuities (TSA), 401(k)’s, etc. Such plans are excellent vehicles for retirement income, but were never intended to pass on wealth to another generation. When such plans are left to individuals, income tax needs to be paid on the proceeds. If donors wish to leave a portion of their assets to the seminary, qualified pension plans are the best funds to leave because the seminary does not need to pay income tax on such proceeds because it is a qualified charity. To leave all or a percentage of the proceeds of a qualified retirement account to the seminary, simply get a change of beneficiary form from the administrator of the plan and put the seminary down as the beneficiary of all or the appropriate percentage of the account. As is the case with POD’s, this also passes to the designated beneficiaries regardless of what one’s will says, so there is no need to change a will.

4 Gifts from annuities. Like IRA’s, annuities may have income that is taxable if left to individuals. Also like IRA’s, a simple beneficiary designation change is all that is needed to leave a gift to the seminary.

The above are four easy ways to leave an estate gift to help prepare our future pastors and deaconesses. If you would like to talk in more depth as to how an estate gift could help and how best to leave a gift in your particular circumstances, please fill out the coupon below and return it or call the Rev. Ralph Schmidt, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, at 1-877-287-4338, ext. 2268.

Use my gift for preparing men to serve as pastors.

Please accept my gift of:
☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ $500  ☐ Other $___________

In support of:
☐ Where most needed.
☐ General Operations.
☐ Student Aid.
☐ Other __________________________
☐ Check is enclosed.  ☐ Charge my credit card.
☐ MC  ☐ Visa Card #: __________________________
    Expiration date: __________________________
    Signature: __________________________

Name: __________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: ___ Zip:________

☐ I am a Thrivent member (form enclosed).

You may also donate online at www.ctsfw.edu.

Please send me information on:
☐ Endowments.
☐ Estate planning.
☐ Including CTS in my will.
☐ Please have an Advancement Officer contact me.

Name: __________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: ___ Zip:________
Telephone #: __________________________

Please send to:
Advancement Office
Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St. • Fort Wayne, IN 46825
877-287-4338 Ext. 2212

APRIL 2007
Seminary Guild 2007 Events

The Concordia Theological Seminary Guild is ending the 2006-2007 academic year with a shower for the Christ Child Learning Corner. Here’s a look at what to expect:

April 10

★ 1:00 p.m.-April Shower for Christ’s Child Learning Corner-Luther Hall
★ 2:00 p.m.-Guild Business Meeting and Election of Guild Officers

Diapers, baby wipes, tissue, toys... these items may not sound like a lot, but to the children who use them at the seminary’s Christ’s Child Learning Corner they are precious. Be sure to bring these items to the Seminary Guild’s annual April Shower for the Christ’s Child Learning Corner.

The Seminary Guild strives to be inclusive of ladies of all ages, professions, and cultures. In that we reflect our student body, where men of all ages, different professional backgrounds, and diverse ethnicity study together in order to become servants of the Lord. We encourage individuals and groups from our LCMS congregations to participate with us in this service. To do so, simply fill out and return the coupon provided below. For additional information about the Seminary Guild, go to www.ctsfw.edu, select About CTS, and then select Seminary Guild.

Concordia Theological Seminary
Affiliate Guild Registration

☐ Yes, we are interested in becoming an Affiliate Guild. Please send more information to:

Name: ____________________________________________________________________
Organization: _______________________________________________________________
Address: ___________________________________________________________________
City: ____________________________ State: ______ Zip: _________________

☐ We have enclosed our yearly $25.00 check for our group to be an Affiliate Guild.

☐ I have enclosed my yearly $10.00 check to be an individual affiliate member.

☐ I have enclosed a check to support the renovation of the Commons area.

☐ Donation Day gift.

☐ Please contact me with more information.

☐ We have enclosed a donation payable to Concordia Theological Seminary Guild, Box 8, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996.
CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Calendar of Events

Events

Sunday Brunch
Katherine Luther Dining Hall
11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
April 1
May 6
June 3
No brunch in July or August

Vicarage/Deaconess Internship Placement Service
April 23
7:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Candidate Call Service
April 24
7:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Deaconess Placement Service
May 17
10:00 a.m.
Kramer Chapel

Baccalaureate Service
May 18
10:00 a.m.
Kramer Chapel

Graduation Ceremony
May 18
6:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Christ Academy–High School
June 17-30
1-800-481-2155

Grand Ol’e Lutheran Fellowship (GOLF)
June 23
Cobblestone Golf Links
Kendallville, Indiana
(260) 452-2162

Music

Easter Choral Vespers
Seminary Kantorei
April 15
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Retreats

Confirmation Retreat
What’s Love Got to Do with It?–
A Study of the Ten Commandments,
Especially the Sixth
April 27-29

Enter the Biblical World Retreat
My Word Shall not Return
Void: God’s Word and the Seminary’s Mission—
Past, Present, and Future
May 5
For information on all retreats:
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2266

Workshops

Organist Workshops 2007
Organist Primer–June 11-15
Level II–June 18-22
Improvisation–June 25-29
260-452-2224

For your free subscription, please send your name, address, city, state, and zip code to:
For the Life of the World, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825. Pastors may subscribe their entire congregation, at no charge, by submitting a membership list (including members’ name, address, city, state, and zip code).

For those congregations that do not wish to provide a membership list, bulk subscriptions are available for $5.00 per subscription/per year with a 50 order minimum.

You can support this magazine through a $20.00 yearly donation to the following address:
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Public Relations
Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
Please make checks payable to CTS.

If you would like to see For the Life of the World on the World Wide Web, go to web site: www.LifeOfTheWorld.com. The current issue, as well as previous issues, can be found at this interactive portal.
Christ Academy, held annually during the last two weeks of June, is a residential program for high-school-age men founded by Concordia Theological Seminary. It is a place where students can study about Christ who is present in His Word and Sacraments and who died that their sins would be forgiven. It is a place where students can experience seminary life. It is a place where students can explore the possibility of some day becoming a pastor.

- **Worship, the Center of the Experience**
- **Life Changing Studies**
- **Clarity of Direction**
- **Fun Activities**

For more information, please call:

**1-800-481-2155**

[www.ctsfw.edu](http://www.ctsfw.edu)  *  [ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu](mailto:ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu)