One of the most interesting and stimulating challenges for Christians today is the task of interpreting what is happening all around us. Such a calling is critical so that Christ can be proclaimed faithfully but also freshly, i.e., in language and categories that gain traction with men and women as they are today. To spend our energies in answering questions that are no longer being asked is to miss opportunity after opportunity.

Not so long ago it was a widely held assumption that the chief challenge to the Gospel was rationalism or the elevation of human reason to answer every question. While this view dominates many universities and is influential among intellectuals, there is a growing awareness that most human beings find such total dependence on reason to be inadequate and inappropriate to address their most foundational questions. What is the meaning of life? Where am I going? How do I distinguish between good and bad? Microscopes, test tubes, and computers are simply not able to produce an answer to these central questions.

In the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, a recent article was entitled “The Fatigue of Secularism.” Its point was that men and women are no longer satisfied with simply seeking more pleasure or more possessions. Increasingly they want more meaning. An illustration of this reality is the way in which Islam is growing in some of the most secular cultures of Europe. Young people, especially, are searching increasingly for something that is greater than self-absorption. They want something greater than self. They want to give themselves to a great and truthful cause. Religion, not sovereign reason, is seen as an attractive option.

What an opportunity for the church to proclaim the crucified Christ! How beautiful and compelling the Gospel is compared to every other alternative! And, most foundationally, it is the truth about who we are because it announces the truth about who God is. A recent article compared Islam and Christianity: “Christianity is a religion of the cross. Islam sees Allah’s glory in triumph and expansion; Christianity sees God’s glory in Christ crucified. Islam says Allah would not allow His prophet Jesus to be crucified; Christianity says God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.”

Secularism and rationalism reduce human beings to accidental products of an aimless evolutionary process. Religions born from the imagination of man reduce human beings to blind obedience or return them to the prison of their own appetites.

Christ clarifies this landscape for us: “When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life’” (John 8:12).

Darkness and light: the contrast is that sharp. Christ leads us from the darkness of an aimless cosmos, from the darkness of violence, from the darkness of death—from every view that would reduce human beings. Christ proclaims that men and women are the apex of creation and the object of the Father’s most profound love and affection. His Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension have displayed mercy and grace beyond our capacity to comprehend fully.

Now all who are “in Christ” can display “the light of life.” It is exciting to carry the light to this dark world. It is thrilling to share the one story that is profoundly good because it is profoundly true. In a word, we offer Christ who is the light of the world.

So, every Christian and we at the seminary are called to study and to interpret the world about us, to name the dark forces that reduce human beings, and to offer the light that flows from Christ’s presence.

Let us journey together on this challenging and exciting mission: proclaiming Christ freshly and faithfully in the most strategic places and in the most compelling manner as we daily analyze the culture that surrounds us.

Faithfully yours, in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
4 I Am a Christian
By Professor James G. Bushur, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
In communion with Christ our identity is fundamentally altered. Here we are Christians—not because we merely act, speak, or think like Jesus—but because Christ Himself lives within us. At Christ’s altar our families and ethnicities are forgotten; our careers, economic status, as well as every other earthly association, must be left behind.

6 Christ and the Challenge of Neo-Paganism
By the Rev. Larry A. Nichols, Pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Smithfield, Rhode Island
Christ in a pagan world is not about the past. It is about a very real present. This is true because our culture is filled with cults, the occult, neo-paganism, Wicca, the New Age Movement, etc.

8 The Quest for Experiencing the Divine: The Rise and Effect of Eastern Religions
By Dr. Naomichi Masaki, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology and Supervisor of the Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.) Program at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
While the joy in the forgiveness of our sins remains firm because of the Lord’s gifts in baptism, the world into which we are placed each day is ever changing. As the “mainline” churches continue to decline in membership “spirituality,” the impulse to seek communion with the Divine is thriving.

11 What Does This Mean?

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“... And in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians” (Acts 11:26). If I were to ask you to stand up and introduce yourself, what would you say? First, you would most likely tell me your name; you might tell me about your family; some might speak about their ethnicity; others might refer to their education or careers. In other words, when we consider our identity, we immediately consider those things that shape our lives in this world. We think of parents, family, education, careers, and the like. We describe ourselves in terms of those things that shape our present existence in this world.

However, if we were to ask a member of the church at Antioch, “Who are you?” I suspect we would get a very different answer. Instead of referring to his personal name and family, rather than describing his ethnicity, career, or education, a member of the church at Antioch would likely answer before all else: “I am a Christian.” The truth of this statement is evident in the stories of the early martyrs. In the middle of the second century a severe persecution broke out against Christians in Lyons and Vienna.

The account of these martyrdoms tells of a certain deacon of the church named Sanctus. It tells us that no matter what question was put to him, Sanctus would simply respond with the words, “I am a Christian.” Thus, the ancient account records the interaction this way: “... but he (Sanctus) resisted them with such determination that he would not even tell them his own name, his race, or the city he was from, whether he was a slave or a freedman. To all their questions he answered in Latin: ‘I am a Christian!’” The record of his martyrdom goes on to say that “the pagan crowd heard not another word from him.”

For these early martyrs, their identities were not essentially determined by their families, birthplaces, ethnicities, careers, bank accounts, or anything else in this world. Rather, their identities were wholly shaped by their relationship to God; and it is this relationship to God that is represented in the simple confession: “I am a Christian.” But what does such a confession actually mean? What does it mean that the disciples were, for the first time, called Christians at Antioch?

For us living in modern America, the name “Christian” is merely an adjective. It describes one aspect of our earthly lives. The name Christian represents the religion we have chosen for ourselves. However, this is not at all true for the disciples of Antioch. For them, the name “Christian” is not an adjective but a noun. It not only describes one’s life; it is his life. Being a Christian is more fundamental than personal names, families, or ethnicities; it is more essential to their being than careers or economic status. Indeed, based upon the testimony of the ancient martyrs, being Christian is more essential to their existence than eating, drinking, or breathing; it is more necessary than heart, soul, mind, or body. To be called Christians means that these disciples at Antioch found the whole of their identity in God. And this is true because God had first found His...
identity in them. In Jesus Christ, God assumed our human nature into His own being. The Son of God did not merely become man in appearance. Our flesh was not like a winter coat that adorned Jesus’ shoulders for a season. Rather, He who is God of God took humanity—body and soul—into the very depth of His own divine life, and through His own death and resurrection He bestowed a new and permanent identity upon humanity. For Jesus, being human is not merely an adjective. The Son of God does not merely look human, act human, and speak like a human. Jesus is human at the core of His being, Jesus is flesh and blood.

Yet, the Son of God abides in flesh and blood so that flesh and blood men like ourselves might abide in Him. By giving our human nature a home in the depth of His being, He gives us a share in His own divine and eternal identity. Here lies the mystery of Holy Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the hearing of the Word. Christ’s own identity as the Son of the Father lives in us as we pray, “Our Father, who art in heaven.” When we partake of Christ, we become one with Him—flesh of His flesh, bone of His bones. In communion with Christ our identity is fundamentally altered. Here we are Christians—not because we merely act, speak, or think like Jesus—but because Christ Himself lives within us. At Christ’s altar our families and ethnicities are forgotten; our careers, economic status, as well as every other earthly association must be left behind. At the altar there is only Christ given by the Father in the power of the Spirit.

Am a Christian

By Professor James G. Bushur

In communion with Christ our identity is fundamentally altered. Here we are Christians—not because we merely act, speak, or think like Jesus—but because Christ Himself lives within us. At Christ’s altar our families and ethnicities are forgotten; our careers, economic status, as well as every other earthly association must be left behind. At the altar there is only Christ given by the Father in the power of the Spirit.
When I was asked to write this article on the theme of “Christina Pagan World,” I thought immediately of Christianity’s beginnings. “Paganism, after all, addresses the ancient world,” as I used to think. “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” as Mark writes, presents to us divinely inspired words addressed to a world that knew no ultimate truth and was most certainly a world filled with much less than good news. The message of Mark was directed to unbelieving pagans, a world populated with mystery religions, fertility cults, emperor worship, numerous forms of idolatry, and various forms of occult practice.

Christianity went on to transform society in the Middle Ages and a Christian ethos would emerge and flourish. Dr. Alvin Schmidt, in his outstanding book How Christianity Changed the World (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), outlines in chapter after chapter how Christianity transformed society. He speaks of how Christianity introduced a moral code to sex and marriage; elevated the status of women; advanced the cause of charity and compassion; introduced hospitals and took leading roles in human care; assumed a leading role in founding educational institutions, private schools, colleges, and universities; led in the advance of scientific knowledge; was foundational in law and jurisprudence; led the way to the abolition of slavery in America; and contributed great advances in music, art, and literature. Christianity indeed transformed a pagan world.

That was then! What of today? We are now living in the early 21st century. Up through the mid 1960s one could argue plausibly that Christianity and its influence was still the dominant religious paradigm in popular American culture. Even amongst non-churchgoers Christian themes were dominant cultural motifs. For example, while in no way did Hollywood present the Gospel of Christ, during this time it did not go out of its way to challenge, deny, or declare an all out culture war against it as is the case today. The pervasive moralism of popular shows like Leave It to Beaver presented a world where Dad and Mom were married for life, slept in separate beds (at least on television), and in the end the viewer generally related to and agreed with whatever discipline they meted out to Wally and Beaver and thought that this was the way that life ought to be lived.

Speaking of the 1960s, I remember before I was ten years old having to leave early on Sunday mornings in order to find a seat as churches were packed back then. Christianity certainly was still the dominant motif of the culture. The countercultural revolution of the middle part of the 60s, the Viet Nam War, assassinations of two Kennedys, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, the Kent State slayings, the Woodstock era, the death of Hendrix and Joplin, the hippies, Jesus freaks, flower children, and communal living introduced rapid changes that would leave the world reeling. I can still remember the words of John Lennon, “We are going to steal your children.” It didn’t mean anything to me back then. But now as I think back, these words represent the introduction of a major paradigm shift, not to something wholly new, but a repristination to the major themes of paganism so prevalent in the early Christian church.

Christ in a pagan world

Mark’s Gospel starts with the words, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). While Matthew and Luke tell of the birth narratives of Jesus, and John begins with the divine account of Jesus as the Word made flesh, Mark’s Gospel alone introduces Jesus to a Gentile and a pagan world. Mark tells these Gentiles at the outset that Jesus is the beginning of the evangelineon—“good news.” This word eventually came to be translated into English as “Gospel.”

When I was asked to write this article on the theme of “Christ in a Pagan World,” I thought immediately of Christianity’s beginnings. “Paganism, after all, addresses the ancient world,” as I used to think. “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” as Mark writes, presents to us divinely inspired words addressed to a world that knew no ultimate truth and was most certainly a world filled with much less than good news. The message of Mark was directed to unbelieving pagans, a world populated with mystery religions, fertility cults, emperor worship, numerous forms of idolatry, and various forms of occult practice.

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is not about the past. It is about a very real present. This is true because our culture is filled with cults, the occult, neo-paganism, Wicca, the New Age Movement, etc. and I have written extensively on these themes. But the reality of Christ in a pagan world today became painfully obvious to me in my early years as a pastor. I was on my way to a hospital visit in the early morning hours. I stopped at a restaurant for breakfast. My waitress was in her early twenties. She immediately asked me about “the white thing” I was wearing around my neck. The following represents the conversation as I best remember it:

“I am a Christian minister,” I responded.  
“What is a minister?”  
“Have you ever heard of Jesus?” I asked.  
“No, who is Jesus?”  
[I was incredulous!] “You have never heard of Jesus Christ?”  
“No I really have not!”  
“Really?” Now my mind was rushing for some common reference. “Have you ever seen a building with a cross on it?” I asked.  
“Come to think of it, I have,” she said.  
“Ok, have you ever seen a cross on a building with a body on it?”  
“Yes, and I always thought that this was something horrible and cruel.”  
“Well the person on that cross is Jesus,” I told her. “I want to tell you something about who Jesus is and what He did for you.” I pulled out my pocket New Testament and turned to John 3:16. Now most Christians know this passage by heart, but I wanted to read it to her with her looking at the very words on the page. I started to read “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . . .” As I read these words I heard a noise. I looked up. She was sobbing.  
“Does this Jesus really love me and did God do that for me?”  
I’m not making this up. This conversation really took place. My point for relating it is that this is not as anecdotal as it seems. Many young people are no longer tuned in to Christianity. I spend a good deal of time on Luther’s explanation to the Second Commandment in Catechism: “We should not use witchcraft . . .” along with other parts of the Lutheran Confessions as an opportunity to teach extensively about the world of the occult and how we as Christians are to assess it.

In my latest book, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Cults, Sects, and World Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), I note the difference between spirituality and religion. Almost without exception, young people today distinguish between the two. Spirituality is a good thing while religion, especially organized forms of it, are out. Whether it be the Kabbalah, an Ouija Board, or personal meditation with New Age crystals, this constitutes a multi-cultural spirituality. But the corporate gathering around the liturgy of Word and Sacrament, which clearly presents the Gospel of Christ, constitutes a chokehold on the “liberation” one can experience with personal tailor-made homespun spiritualities. This thought process creates a challenge to the church today to continue to proclaim to the neo-pagan culture around us the words of Mark 1:1, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” For many, Jesus Christ can indeed be a new beginning.
The Quest for Experiencing the Divine:
The Rise and Effect of Eastern Religions

By Dr. Naomichi Masaki
“Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn...” “Joyfully” rings a bell of the Gospel; with vitality we are moved into the places of our daily calling as the Morning Prayer in the Small Catechism suggests. A hymn that comes out of our lips may be one of Paul Gerhardt’s hymns in Lutheran Service Book (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006):

All Christians who have been baptized, Who know the God of heaven, And in whose daily life is prized The name of Christ once given: Consider now what God has done, The gifts He gives to ev’ryone Baptized into Christ Jesus! Lutheran Service Book, 596, v. 1

The rhythm of Christian living always starts with our Lord Jesus. The Lord’s initiative and bestowing of His gifts prompt creating and enlivening of faith which ushers the faithful into living the life of service. With the Lord’s giving and our receiving, the richer our life of service.

While the joy in the forgiveness of our sins remains firm because of the Lord’s gifts in baptism, the world into which we are placed each day is ever changing. As the “mainline” churches continue to decline in membership “spirituality,” the impulse to seek communion with the Divine is thriving. Our friends and neighbors may say: “I’m a spiritual person, but I’m not religious.” More people now ask how they may experience God in their own lives rather than how much they should know about God.

A recent article in Newsweek, “In Search of the Spiritual,” confirms such an observation when the writer of the article comments that according to the latest poll Americans are looking for a deeper and immediate personal experience of God (Aug 19–Sep 5, 2005). In other words, “if you feel God within you, then the important question is settled; the rest are details.” People are seeking “a religion that empowers them” rather than “a God who commands them.”

Some scholars remind us that since the time of Constantine in the fourth century, Christians have by and large enjoyed a sense of superiority over the religions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The main challenges to Christian faith, especially in the West, did not come from those non-European religions but from the inroads of the enlightenment religions and secularized society, in addition to numerous heresies and controversies within the church. But today, Christians in North America encounter not only particular accents in the so-called post-modernism such as ambiguity, healing, taste, progress, and choice, but also non-Christian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, each with its specific teachings and worship practices.

Zen Buddhism is discussed in the aforementioned article of Newsweek as to how it has affected the worldwide meditation practice known as centering prayer popularized by Father Thomas Keating. This fact may illustrate that the blending of eastern religions and modern day spirituality in America has already taken place.

Zen Buddhism is often considered as the final form of Buddhism developed in Japan. Unlike the original teaching of Buddhism, it does not require followers to forsake the world to live in seclusion. Nor does it teach that one needs to train oneself rigorously in order to become a Buddha. Rather, it teaches followers to live as if they were already a Buddha. As in Buddhism, the main teaching of Zen is still how one may be rescued from this world of suffering. But the attention is now drawn not only to the rigorous exercises of self-discipline, but also to the empowerment of one’s heart. To feel a god within you is common in both Zen Buddhism and post-modern spirituality.

Surprisingly, the same Newsweek article reports that some Americans talk to their ancestors on a regular basis. Although such a practice derives not from Zen Buddhism but from Confucianism, it is what most Japanese have practiced for centuries. When we consider what is generally acknowledged as three characteristics of Japanese culture and religion, our observation of the similarity between current spirituality here in America and the traditional Japanese religiosity may be further underlined.

Those three characteristics are aestheticism, ambiguity, and amalgamation. Aestheticism has to do with the traditional Japanese culture which values a sense of delicacy, precision, and aesthetics, developed out of the demands to live in harmony with the four seasons. Ambiguity is seen most clearly in Japanese language which causes harm at times in business contexts because it is more fitting to communicate feelings rather than subject matters. In terms of amalgamations, over the course of Japanese history at least four such experiences may be identified:

We observe that spirituality today is polytheistic and that all polytheism is projections of our thinking of God. Idolatry is usually symptomised by having more than one idol. When I am sad, I want a Jesus to make me happy. If I have just lost my job, I want a Jesus who will help me get another one. If my son or daughter is going astray, I want a Jesus who will bring him or her back. In each of these Jesus seems to come only second; first is what I want Him to do.
amalgamations of primordial religion and Shinto; Shinto and Buddhism; Buddhism and Confucianism; and Shinto and modernization.

The effect of eastern religions on our post-modern culture may continue among us. This prompts us to ask what implications there are for our life of service. First, we observe that spirituality today is polytheistic and that all polytheism is projections of our thinking of God. Idolatry is usually symptomatic by having more than one idol. When I am sad, I want a Jesus to make me happy. If I have just lost my job, I want a Jesus who will help me get another one. If my son or daughter is going astray, I want a Jesus who will bring him or her back. When I am sick, I want a Jesus to help make me healthy. Facing death, I want a Jesus who will get me through that. In each of these situations Jesus seems to come in second; first is what I want Him to do. To fit Him to that, I may choose the appropriate piece of Jesus I want. Luther’s profound insight in his Large Catechism is that it is our faith that creates false gods. Beside the fact that false gods can never give good gifts, they don’t forgive our sins. They only require our efforts, making us work and be useful.

Secondly, even if our heart may be able to feel the Divine, the point of departure is what I think of God and how I end up finding “the hidden God.” We wind up remaining in darkness because there is no certainty in the hidden god or gods of which we can take control.

Thirdly, we confess that the only God who finally holds is the One who bestows forgiveness of sins extra nos (from outside). The initiative is the Lord’s and His ways of Law and Gospel. We are under the Word at the receiving end of His gifts. We don’t discover the Gospel, the Gospel discovers us. God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17–21) is the opposite of what people expect God to be. His glory is seen not in His majesty or in His almighty power, but in His suffering and dying. Jesus is the Son of God not because He did miracles but because He died on the cross (Mark 1:1, 15:39). We can speak of God only when God reveals Himself in Christ to whom the Holy Spirit bears witness in the means of grace.

Fourthly, we should joyfully consider doctrine as important even when it is despised at the expense of experiencing God within you. Doctrine is important not only because we confess it as a norm of our faith and life, but because doctrine belongs to Jesus, not to us. As such, the doctrine lives as Christ lives. The doctrine has to do with our Lord’s dynamic giving of His gifts which are received from outside. We should keep in mind that Satan attacks the means of grace point so that the sinners may not be comforted (Eph. 4:14). Nevertheless, the tremendously good news is ours; that in our Baptism the devil has already been renounced with all his works and all his ways. Moreover, our Lord continues to sustain us by the life-giving body and the life-giving blood that we are given to eat and to drink.

“You who worship ancestors!” Dr. David Scaer teased me one day when he had just heard me speak something very nice about Dr. William Weinrich as I introduced him as a speaker at our annual theological symposia. To this I replied, jokingly, “You worship ancestors only when they are dead. Don’t make Dr. Weinrich dead!” Who knows when America will “catch up” more fully with the attraction from the East to embrace such a practice. But no matter what happens around us, we remain profoundly joyful and confident because we are in the Lord. Now is the time of the church, the time when our Lord Jesus is distributing the fruits of His cross to the whole world through the means of grace. We don’t have to force ourselves to rejoice in the Gospel. In fact, as the Small Catechism confesses, we can’t.

There are many challenging moments in the life of a Christian. But when the Gospel from outside touches our hearts, we no longer serve our neighbor with the Gospel because we “have to”; rather we “get to” do it on account of an inability to keep silent about such a wonderful Savior (Acts 4:31).
Spirituality or Faith: The Difference of the First Commandment

In the summer of 1983 I had just arrived at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and was eagerly preparing for the beginning of the school year. Rummaging through the articles and books left behind by previous campus pastors in the ‘60s and ‘70s, I came across material that carried the imprint of the era; it was the time of Harvey Cox’s *The Secular City*. There was a lot of sweated hand-ringing about the fate of religion on many college campuses. Some worried out loud that the arid secularity of the age would cause religion to wither and crumble. After all, a scientific age such as the twentieth century could not be expected to embrace myths and morals held out of superstition and fear. Humanity was ready to shed the robes of religion for more fashionable attire firmly established by assured scientific data. The brightest theological minds of the day were hard at work to ensure at least a little space for religion. Rudolf Bultmann thought that the New Testament might have some currency if its message could be separated from its mythological wrappings. Paul Tillich sought to encode religious symbols with meaning derived from depth psychology and existential philosophers for the new generation of Christianity’s “cultured despisers.”

But social scientists and theologians alike were in for a surprise. The Jesus’ Movement and the Charismatic Movement would find fertile soil on university campuses alongside exotic Eastern religions and an exploding number of eclectic cults and sects. Campuses did not become deserts devoid of religion; they were veritable gardens with myriad expressions of spirituality all vying for devotees. The campus of the ‘80s and ‘90s was just out ahead of the curve of what is now happening throughout North America. The prophecies of a secular city did not come to fulfillment. We do not have an irreligious culture but a super religious one. Church attendance may be down but interest in spirituality is not.

Martin Luther observed that when God disappears, the fairy tales arrive. And fairy tales we have in abundance. New religious movements offer their clients yet more options for ladders to access the deity whether that god be housed in some transcendent realm, buried within the ego, or permeating the universe with divine presence and energy. The new religions are really not that new; they are in fact the recasting of venerable attempts to secure life in the face of death by means of rationality, morality, or mysticism. Spirituality is inviting because it appeals to the sensualities of the soul. It offers a path of fulfillment through disciplines that promise wholeness. It holds out some piety that I can enact for myself that promises to order my life, rescue me from a chaotic universe, and justify my existence with meaning and purpose. Spirituality produces human beings who are “unhappy gods,” to paraphrase Luther. Spirituality is not so much a path to faith as it is a turn toward idolatry, for it seduces its adherents, beckoning them to seek God in all the wrong places. The search for God apart from Jesus Christ leaves us with nothing more than ghosts who haunt, but have no power to forgive sin and save from death.

The first commandment exposes the way of self-made spirituality for the idolatry that it is, the failure to fear, love, and trust in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ above all things. The pluralistic culture (both outside and within the churches) pushes against the assertion of the first commandment. Hence the claim is made that the distinction made by the first commandment between the God of Israel and the gods of the nation breeds violence and intolerance, whereas polytheism serves as a catalyst for peace and acceptance. It is a temptation for the church to abandon the worship of the only true God in the name of openness and religious sensitivity. But such an accommodation finally robs us of the God who will tolerate no rivals, the God who is completely jealous for us even to the point of the cross. His death fractures spirituality and opens the way of faith. Faith clings to the promises of the One who was crucified, looking to Him for all good and trusting in Him in the face of every affliction. You have no need of any other gods for you have the only God you need in Jesus Christ. There is no other. It is Him that we proclaim.

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.
I’ll never forget my first week of law school; the Chief Justice of the South Dakota Supreme Court came to speak to us. He told my classmates and me, ‘You are not here to study justice but the law.’ I see no point in the law apart from justice. I was still resolved to become a lawyer for lack of any better ideas. I attended Concordia Lutheran Church, Vermillion, South Dakota, while I was in law school. There I met my home pastor, the Rev. Michael Boykin. He taught me about church history, ecclesiology, Christology, and other topics that I found captivating. I spent many hours a week discussing these topics with him. I found that I enjoyed studying theology more than the law. In time, I began to flirt with the idea of becoming a pastor. I realized that, as a pastor, I wouldn’t have to separate what I believe as a Christian from what I do in my vocation. I get to teach people, preach, and also lead them in worship. By fall of 2004, I had resolved to withdraw from Law School and attend Concordia Theological Seminary.” These are the words of second-year seminarian Nathan Fuehrer as he describes the beginning of his journey to become a pastor.

Since that time Nathan says the entire educational experience has been the most rewarding part of his time at Concordia Theological Seminary.
CTS. “I’ve listened to hours of lectures by great professors and have been able to immerse myself in the study of God and Scripture,” explained Nathan. “I’ve also had the opportunity to practice preaching and the liturgy at my fieldwork congregation, Zion Lutheran Church in Willshire (Schumm), Ohio.”

Nathan has had another interesting way to put what he has learned at seminary into practice with a summer vicarage he served in 2006. He spent the summer on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota under the supervision of the Rev. Andrew Utecht, a 1997 graduate of CTS. There he gained invaluable experience in serving in a cross-cultural mission setting to the Indians (please note that Nathan says those with whom he worked this summer called themselves Indians, rather than Native Americans).

One of the first cultural differences he noticed is that on the reservation everyone runs on “Indian time.” This means that things start when they start, not necessarily as a predetermined time. Pastor Utecht serves as a vacancy pastor in Valentine, Nebraska, and also is the missionary pastor at the churches in Rosebud and Parmelee, South Dakota—both on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. “Church in Valentine begins at 8:15 a.m. and in Rosebud at 10:00 a.m., but it was more like ‘10-ish.’ We were rarely able to make it from Valentine to Rosebud (about a 40 minute drive) before 10:20 a.m. The surprising thing was that no one was ever mad about it,” offered Nathan.

Sadly there were other aspects Nathan witnessed that were not as harmless as starting worship a few minutes late. “The most heart-wrenching is all of the gang activity. In Rosebud, virtually every street sign is painted over two or three times with gang symbols. Gangs are a reality all over the reservation, but the worst seems to be in Parmelee,” said Nathan. “Part of the reason I was asked to serve as a summer vicar was to help out Pastor Utecht with Vacation Bible School. Each week in June, we traveled to different places on the reservation, and the third week we went to Parmelee. Bible School consisted of group singing, Bible study guides, and puppet shows about the Ten Commandments. The last activity of the day was always a craft. In Parmelee, the kids there were actually requesting specific gang colors to make their craft, and many of them were trying to make gang symbols for their project. Some of these kids were eight years old and younger. It really is tragic.” Like in our own culture Nathan attributes many of these problems to the lack of parental supervision, but he also is quick to note the importance of continued outreach to this culture. “The only answer is to continue missionary work on the reservation and to bring the saving Gospel of Jesus.”

Another important reason to continue this mission work is to make inroads toward unraveling continued worship of false gods. “If there’s a pagan world on the Indian reservation, it is among the Traditionalists. In short, they believe that all life and the world is governed by the Great Spirit, and they and their tribe receive either blessings or a cursed fate in this life according to whether they have gained favor with it/him,” explained Nathan. “While on the reservation, I witnessed one of their organized worship services called the Sun Dance. This is the event where they actually offer their sacrifices. Certain men who volunteer to sacrifice for the tribe are pierced by skewers through their skin above their pectoral muscles. The skewered men dance to the beat of drums and Indian chants. As they dance, they lean backwards to cause paint to their pierced bodies. The endurance of pain is thought to be the sacrifice that pleases the Great Spirit.”

Interestingly enough, even though many on the reservation participate in such rituals, Nathan found that most claimed Christianity as their religious identity. This offers true hope in knowing that these people are open to the Gospel spread by those who serve in this special mission field. “I had a wonderful time in Rosebud and learned a lot. I can’t imagine a more rewarding or fun way to have spent last summer.”
God calls men to be ministers in His church from all walks of life. Jesus’ disciples included fishermen and a tax collector. There are men currently studying at CTS whose previous vocations were that of lawyer, teacher, law enforcement officer, and more. The Rev. Bryan C. Wolfmueller (CTS 2005) journeyed from a graduate of the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (1999); to working in his family’s jewelry business; to enrolling in CTS; to his present call as pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colorado.

How does one even begin that journey? “We were encouraged to visit and attend CTS by our pastor, the Rev. Randall Golter (then serving Grace, Albuquerque, and now President of the Rocky Mountain District),” offered Pastor Wolfmueller. “We attended two symposia and were delighted to hear historic Lutheran theology strongly rooted in the biblical text and the Lutheran Confessions.” The academic programs of the seminary, through its dedicated faculty, bolstered his understanding and knowledge of Scripture and Lutheran doctrine. Worship in the chapel strengthened and fed his faith. Combined, these elements were key in preparing him for life in the parish.

This preparation is evident when he expresses his goals as he serves his congregation. “I look to develop a strong Sunday School which is grounded in the catechism and continue to develop educational materials for the further study of the Scriptures and Confessions that all the saints would be theologians,” shared Pastor Wolfmueller. “We also want to reach out to the neighborhood and all visitors with the forgiveness of sins won for them by Jesus, as well as comfort the sick and dying, that the devil would not snatch any of these lambs from the hand of their Lord.”

Outreach for this urban congregation, located just outside of Denver in an ethnically diverse neighborhood, could prove daunting to many. But Pastor Wolfmueller has a very specific view on how congregations in any area of the country can reach out to those in their neighborhood and beyond. “There is nothing unique in the Lord’s church. We have only what we have been given: the pulpit, the font, the altar, and Jesus’ promises. We have unlimited opportunities in the neighborhood around the church to speak of the Lord’s forgiveness, and we pray continually that

All too often we think being a Christian is to be good and that our identity is found in ourselves, our works, our thoughts, and our intentions. “Yet our true identity is found in the word and work of God, outside of ourselves in the word that Jesus speaks to us, ‘I baptize you’; ‘I forgive you’; and ‘This is My body . . . for you.’ His speaking marks us as His own,”
the Lord would set us as a light in the midst of a dark world.” Pastor Wolfmueller knows that it is through the continuous sharing of this good news of the Gospel and pointing people to God’s means that more and more people will find comfort through faith in Jesus Christ.

Another part of this outreach and “in-reach” to the congregation is to remind all of what it really means to be a Christian. Pastor Wolfmueller has found that all too often we think being a Christian is to be good and that our identity is found in ourselves, our works, our thoughts, and our intentions. “Yet our true identity is found in the word and work of God, outside of ourselves in the word that Jesus speaks to us, ‘I baptize you’; ‘I forgive you’; and ‘This is My body . . . for you.’ His speaking marks us as His own,” said Pastor Wolfmueller. “Our Christian identity is not in the Law, in knowing it or keeping it (this is essentially a pagan identity), but in the Gospel, in the blood of Jesus, and His name washed over us. So there is a constant need to point to the cross and the objective realities of our salvation.”

As he continues to get to know and minister to the members of his congregation, Pastor Wolfmueller has already garnered many experiences that bring him joy in his role as Christ’s undershepherd. “The Lord intends to give us the comfort of the forgiveness of all of our sins. The greatest joy in the ministry is seeing this comfort planted in the hearts of the Lord’s people and then seeing it bloom into the joy of salvation. Especially wonderful is to see the tears of joy after the Lord uses me to say, ‘I forgive you all of your sins.’ There is also the joy of unfolding the Lord’s word of Law and Gospel and letting it have free course among us. There are wonderful moments when I’ve been teaching and the light in people’s faces flickers on with the joy of the Gospel. What wonderful moments!” He also tells of the joy that can come even when ministering to those who have lost a loved one.

“Funerals bring the blessedness of the Lord’s people to a brilliant clarity. It is a tremendous joy to say, ‘Our sister is now before the face of her Jesus and she knows nothing but the wonder and bliss and the fullness of joy in the presence of the Holy Trinity.’ There is no greater joy than saying such words.”

While the demands of the parish life can be great, Pastor Wolfmueller knows that to be a good and faithful pastor he too must remain strengthened and nourished. “The Gospel alone sustains the Lord’s pastors, just like it alone sustains His people, ‘mutual consolation of the brothers’ is what Luther calls it. I find it first at home with Keri (my beloved) and our children. Also our circuit meets monthly for the Divine Service and study and discussion of the Lord’s Word,” he explained. “I’ve been in the Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (P.A.L.S.) program since we arrived in Colorado, which has been a wonderful time for all of the pastors’ families who are working through many of the same situations to make new friends.”

Finally, in addition to these opportunities, Pastor Wolfmueller finds that some of the best support comes from those who have taught him and his brothers who are currently serving in their own parishes. “I’ve been in touch with some of my professors from CTS and other pastors, all of whom have brought welcome help, advice, and instruction from the Lord’s Word. Some of the best advice was, ‘listen to your own preaching.’ We find rest only when we stop the work of storming heaven and impressing God with our own good works. We find rest when we rejoice in the gift of Christ’s righteousness.”

The Rev. Bryan C. Wolfmueller and his wife, Keri, are the parents of Hannah (6), Andrew (4), and Daniel (5 months). He is also a frequent guest on the radio program Issues, Etc. To listen to some of his broadcasts go to www.issuesetc.org.

“There is nothing unique in the Lord’s church. We have only what we have been given: the pulpit, the font, the altar, and Jesus’ promises. We have unlimited opportunities in the neighborhood around the church to speak of the Lord’s forgiveness, and we pray continually that the Lord would set us as a light in the midst of a dark world.”
An Enduring Legacy

By the Rev. Scott C. Klemsz

A legacy and architectural treasure in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod was built 50 years ago. Christened as Concordia Senior College and today as Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, this original masterpiece made up of bricks, steel, and glass stands as an achievement both architecturally and theologically. Designed by Eero Saarinen, the campus achieved a unique relationship between the spiritual and the physical needs of man. The campus stands as a place to be transformed by God’s presence. Saarinen’s design credits also include the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, the TWA Terminal at JFK Airport, and Washington Dulles Airport, all of which stand as pillars of mid-twentieth century modern architecture.

Kramer Chapel, at the center of campus, stands as both the physical and spiritual center of the community. It is no accident that it rises above all the academic and residential buildings, giving a focus from every vantage point. Kramer Chapel, at the center of campus, stands as both the physical and spiritual center of the community. It is no accident that it rises above all the academic and residential buildings, giving a focus from every vantage point. The acoustics were engineered to accentuate the song of the church as men and women pray daily during the various chapel offices. The 54-rank, Schlicker pipe organ was designed by Saarinen and built by Herman L. Schlicker. Light provides the contrast between the chancel and nave, drawing the eye from the baptismal font at the entrance to the freestanding altar created by a single piece of Vermont marble weighing six tons. Nothing in this unique space is left to chance, even the triangular brick pattern on the front wall representing the 168 hours of the week.
reminds the worshipers of the never ending prayers of the church.

While the chapel serves as the spiritual center, Walther Library serves as the repository of the church’s written volumes for students and the community. Over 170,000 volumes, in all disciplines of theology and other important fields of knowledge, line the shelves. The library is also connected electronically to academic libraries throughout Indiana, multiplying the collection far beyond its four walls. The architecture of Walther Library along with Katherine Luther Dining Hall represents some of the best examples of Saarinen’s use of the mezzanine. The sweeping and open spaces created by the various mezzanines provide a continuous space, without division or separation between students and faculty.

The newly renovated Student Commons again reflects the feel of mid-century architecture. The open space is anchored in the middle by a massive fireplace and hearth. A large hearth representing the center of family life was very common in residential architecture of the time. Saarinen followed the same thought in the Commons. Gathering to study, enjoy a cup of coffee, or to play a game of pool, the Commons continues to be the campus’ “living room.”

All the art located on the campus is based upon the timeless confession of faith contained in the Te Deum Laudamus. The chief artist of the mosaics on campus, Siegfried Reinhardt, reflects these important words in several large pieces that impose themselves on the lives of the campus. The unique art of the campus also includes a massive brick relief in the dining hall in addition to symbols of the prophets, evangelists, and saints made from wood, metal, and terra cotta. Many of these smaller works were designed and executed by the Art Institute of Chicago.

As the church celebrates this crowning achievement of architecture and its expression of theology, we are reminded of the joy found in our Lord who is the author and creator of all the arts as they represent the glory and majesty of our faith.
Dr. William Weinrich to Serve as Rector of Luther Academy in Latvia

Concordia Theological Seminary is proud to announce an unprecedented event. Archbishop Janis Vanags of the Lutheran Church of Latvia has invited Dr. William C. Weinrich, Academic Dean, to serve as Rector at Luther Academy in Riga. “This decision by an eminent archbishop of the Lutheran community, supported by a plenary vote of the consistory of his church in the Baltics, displays the high regard in which the Latvian Church holds Dr. Weinrich,” commented Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, CTS President. “To choose an American to head theological education in the post-Soviet period is a remarkable compliment and endorsement. As President of Concordia Theological Seminary I could not be prouder of this achievement.”

Dr. Weinrich will undoubtedly be asked to speak throughout Europe and to advise the archbishop on many challenging theological developments. To have his profound knowledge and his confessional conviction will be a wonderful encouragement for our brothers and sisters in the Latvian Lutheran Church and throughout Northern Europe. It will be a treat to hear of his work and of his travels inasmuch as he has assured us that he will keep the seminary family fully informed in periodic “Letters from Latvia.”

“I am also happy to say that Dr. Weinrich will remain on our faculty as a deployed professor throughout his tenure in Latvia and Europe,” explained Dr. Wenthe. “He has agreed to return from time to time to teach intensives and to lecture at the seminary as his responsibilities in Latvia will permit.” May the Lord attend Dr. Weinrich and the Latvian Lutheran Church with His peace and presence.

Seminary Supports Our Military Troops

What is the project? As a way of showing our support, we send as many care packages as possible to military troops serving currently in war zones. The packages are sent to troops associated with the seminary, such as son/daughter, other relatives, or close friends.

What can I do? Donate items to place in care packages or make a financial donation. Checks should be made payable to Rene Schmeltz, CTS Military Project, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825.

What can I donate for the Care Packages?
Personal hygiene items: Baby wipes, toothbrushes, solid stick antiperspirants, books, magazines, devotional material, hometown newspapers, stationery, sun screen lotion, Clorox wipes, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, conditioner, mouthwash, eye drops, Chapstick, lip balm, dental floss, baby powder, foot powder, liquid hand sanitizer, breath mints, contact lens cleaner, nail files
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), Little Debbie snack cakes, 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, fast food condiments (hot sauce, ketchup, mustard, salt & pepper, relish, mayo packets)

Who do I contact to help with this project?
Contact Rene Schmeltz at rrschmeltz1@netzero.com, or phone 260-493-2499.
In 1997 CTS joined with the young Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) to establish Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) in Novosibirsk, Siberia. Novosibirsk, population 2.5 million, is the third largest city in Russia and is located in the center of this vast nation. Graduation ceremonies for the second class took place on November 17, 2006, and included: Demitry Dotsenko, Russia; Andrei Faist, Kazakhstan; Mansur Kurmanbakeev, Kyrgyzstan; and Andrei Lipnitsky, Moldova. The graduates received certificates from Concordia Theological Seminary and diplomas from LTS.

The graduation was timed to coincide with the Fourth Annual International Theological Conference on the Nature of Holy Scripture hosted by LTS. It attracted 40 participants from eight countries. Rector Alexei Streltsov explained the rationale for this year’s topic. “Last year the topic was the Holy Ministry. Because of the comments expressed at that conference and discussions with other Lutheran Churches in Russia it became increasingly clear that the problems we deal with are only symptoms. We need to look at the root of the problem, which is the proper attitude toward Holy Scripture. Thus the problems of higher criticism and fundamentalist biblical interpretation were addressed.”

Dr. David P. Scaer, Professor and Chairman of the CTS Systematic Theology Department, presented papers entitled Trinitarian, Historical, and Ecclesiastical Perspectives on Biblical Authority and Critical Approaches to the Scriptures. Professor Alan Ludwig lectured on the Biblical Interpretation and the Unus Sensus Literalis. Professor Roland Ziegler, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, CTS, presented a paper on Luther’s View of Holy Scripture. Presenters also included Dr. Horace D. Hummel, retired Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri; the Rev. Daniel S. Johnson of Marshalltown, Iowa; and LTS Seminarian Andrei Lipnitsky.

In his graduation address, Dr. Timothy C. J. Quill, CTS Dean of International Studies, told the seminarians, “It is fitting that this graduation coincides with the seminary’s Fourth Annual Theological Conference on the Nature of Holy Scripture. You have heard excellent papers on the mischief that occurs when Holy Scripture is removed from the arena of faith and the church and transferred to the arena of reason and the secular academy. The Bible belongs to the Church where it is read and preached, producing faith and doxology. Your vigorous study of Scripture and theology might be intellectually stimulating, but in the end it is time poorly spent unless it is put into practice. This you will do as faithful pastors by preaching, teaching, hearing confession, absolving sins, celebrating the Lord’s Supper, and providing pastoral care.”

In June and July CTS jointly organized mission seminars to assist the SELC in its outreach to non-Christians and catechesis of new members. These seminars have been held every summer since 1996. Since then the SELC has expanded west to Ekaterinburg and east beyond Lake Baikal to Chita. This year was noteworthy since a seminar was conducted in Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka (near Alaska). Dr. Quill and the Rev. Scott E. Stiegemeyer, CTS Director of Admission, taught at this seminar and then traveled on the Siberian Railroad to Chita and Abakan. Dr. Peter J. Scaer, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology at CTS, and Dr. Mark Nuckols, Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas, lectured at seminars in Ekaterinburg, Chelybinsk, Novosibirsk, and Tomsk.
Concordia Theological Seminary Sponsors
“The Best of England and Scotland” Tour

Concordia Theological Seminary is pleased to sponsor a tour of England and Scotland. For 11 days, July 23-August 2, 2007, tour participants will visit some of the most beautiful and most significant places in the British Isles. This tour is reasonably priced at $2979, per person from Chicago; and $2999, per person from Houston. The tour includes round trip airfare, accommodations, and visits to Edinburgh, Stratford, London, and much, much more.

In the story of Western Civilization no country has been more important than Great Britain. That’s obvious, of course, with respect to the United States. But all around the world people use forms of government and belong to Christian churches that first developed in Britain, and the English language is studied and used almost everywhere. Now CTS invites you to travel to the land where this world culture was born.

Of course, there are many tours to this part of the world, so what makes this tour special? Besides the price (which is a very good one), the special reason for going with the seminary’s tour is the fact that it is being hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Dean Wenthe; Rev. and Mrs. Wayne Graumann; and Dr. and Mrs. Cameron MacKenzie. Dr. Wenthe is President of the seminary; Rev. Graumann is Chairman of the CTS Board of Regents; and Dr. MacKenzie is a Professor of Historical Theology and has been studying, teaching, and writing about Christianity in England for over 35 years.

So imagine walking through some of the most imposing and beautiful churches from the Middle Ages like Westminster Abbey and York Minster, enjoying the scenic beauty of the Lake District, or viewing mysterious Stonehenge. As tour participants stroll down the streets of Stratford-on-Avon, they will be surrounded by reminders of Shakespeare. They will also travel to the beautiful city of Edinburgh in Scotland and the fascinating city of Bath, founded by the Romans. The trip also includes a stop in Oxford, site of one of the world’s leading universities; a visit to the Lake District, whose scenery inspired great poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge; and finally, three nights and two full days in London, one of the greatest cities in the world.

This tour will highlight cathedrals, castles, pageantry, history, good food, and fellowship. The seminary hosts promise to use their talents, enthusiasm, and expertise to make this trip educational and inspiring. Together, tour participants will build a storehouse of memories from this wonderful tour of England and Scotland.

For additional information concerning this tour go to www.ctsfw.edu and select England Tour in the left-hand column, or call CTS Tours at 1-877-287-4338, ext. 2241.

Calling all Videographers/Photographers

The Public Relations Office of Concordia Theological Seminary is looking for video and still photography from the daily life of our LCMS congregations to use in future video projects for the seminary. The types of images we would like to collect include:

- Preaching
- Teaching Bible Class, Confirmation, and Sunday School
- Baptisms, especially adults and families
- Confirmation Services
- Funeral Services
- Weddings
- Vacation Bible School
- Shut-in Visits
- Lutheran Day School Activities
- Outreach Activities
- Special services, such as ground-breaking, cornerstone-laying, etc.

If you would like to contribute, please send your VHS video, DVD, or photos to:

Concordia Theological Seminary
Public Relations–Video Project 2007
6600 North Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46825

We would like to receive these materials no later than February 15, 2007. We will not be able to return videos, DVD’s, or photos. We certainly look forward to seeing the faces and places from around the LCMS!
Sunday, Dec. 31  
5:00 p.m.  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
1801 Russell Rd.  
Alexandria, VA 22301  
703-549-0155  
www.ilcalex.org

Tuesday, Jan. 2  
7:30 p.m.  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
36-01 Bell Blvd.  
Bayside Queens, NY 11361  
718-229-5770

Wednesday, Jan. 3  
7:30 p.m.  
First Lutheran Church  
38 Field Point Rd.  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
203-869-0032  
www.1stlutherangct.org

Thursday, Jan. 4  
7:00 p.m.  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
154 Meadow St.  
Bristol, CT 06010  
860-583-5649

Friday, Jan. 5  
7:30 p.m.  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
54 Cedar Swamp Rd.  
Smithfield, RI 02917  
401-232-7575  
www.orelc.org

Saturday, Jan. 6  
4:00 p.m.  
St. Luke Lutheran Church  
950 East St.  
Dedham, MA 02026  
781-326-1346  
www.stlukeslcms.org

Sunday, Jan. 7  
8:00 and 11:00 a.m.  
First Lutheran Church of Boston  
299 Berkeley St.  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-536-8851  
www.flc-boston.org

Sunday, Jan. 14  
4:00 p.m.  
Concordia Theological Seminary  
Kramer Chapel  
6600 N. Clinton St.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46825  
260-452-2224  
www.ctsfw.edu

Music of the Christmas and Epiphany season presented by the Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
Spring Invitational Campus Visit
March 22-24, 2007

- 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-op, Christ’s Child Learning Corner, and the gymnasium.
- Enjoy multiple opportunities for fellowship with our President, faculty, staff, and students.

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

Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St. • Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996
1-800-481-2155 • www.ctsfw.edu • Admission@ctsfw.edu
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, 2007
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 4-5, 2007
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 Friday dinner and Saturday lunch). 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 Retreat, or phone 1-877-287-4338, ext. 2241.

2007 CTS Retreat Registration Form

Retreat Name and Date: __________________________________________

Name(s): ______________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ________________________________________________

Phone: ________________________________________________________

E-mail: _________________________________________________________

Occupancy: □ 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 of $10.
Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, will again host its annual Symposia, January 16-19, 2007. Held every year on the Fort Wayne campus, presentations on Exegetical Theology and the Lutheran Confessions will highlight the four-day event.

Celebrating its 22nd year, the theme for the Exegetical Theology Symposium is *Christian Identity in a Pagan World: Lessons from Ancient Israel and Early Christianity*. The 30th annual Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions has chosen *Confessional Lutheranism in the Ecumenical World* as its theme.

**EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2007**

- **9:00 a.m.** Welcome—Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President of Concordia Theological Seminary
- **9:05 a.m.** “Christian Identity in Thessalonica: Imitating Paul’s Personal Example”—Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Professor of Exegetical Theology and Chairman of the Department of Exegetical Theology
- **10:00 a.m.** Chapel
- **11:00 a.m.** “Does Our Baptismal Identity Change Our Personality? The Apostle Paul before and after Damascus”—Dr. Arthur A. Just Jr., Professor of Exegetical Theology, Dean of the Chapel, and Director of Deaconess Studies
- **1:00 p.m.** “Paul among Stoics and Cynics in Corinth”—Dr. Abraham J. Malherbe, Buckingham Professor Emeritus of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
- **2:15 p.m.** “A Glimpse into the Early Church Catechism”—Dr. Harald G. Tomesch, President of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada
- **3:15 p.m.** “The Lord’s Supper as Symposium: A Place for Shaping Christian Identity”—Dr. Peter J. Scaer, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology
- **4:00 p.m.** Panel Discussion moderated by Dr. Daniel L. Gard, Professor of Exegetical Theology and Dean of Graduate Studies
- **4:45 p.m.** Vespers

**Wednesday, January 17, 2007**

- **7:45 a.m.** Short Exegetical Paper Sectionals
- **9:00 a.m.** “From Creation to Consummation: The Inclusive Identity of Israel’s God as Challenge to Ancient and Contemporary Pluralisms”—Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, Professor of Exegetical Theology
- **10:00 a.m.** Chapel
- **11:00 a.m.** “Identity in Christ: Pauline Perspectives on Slavery”—Dr. John G. Nordling, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology
- **12:45 p.m.** All Bach Organ Recital—Leon W. Coach III, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS
Wednesday, January 17, 2007

1:45 p.m. “Luther, Lutheranism, and the Challenge of Islam” — Dr. Adam S. Francisco, Assistant Professor of History, Concordia College, Bronxville, New York

2:50 p.m. “Sola Fide: Luther and Calvin” — Dr. Phillip Cary, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Eastern University, St. Davids, Pennsylvania

3:50 p.m. “Fundamentalism, Neo-Evangelicalism, and the Revival of a Confessional Lutheran Awareness in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” — Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., Associate Professor of Historical Theology and Academic Dean

4:45 p.m. Choral Vespers — Schola Cantorum, Kantor Richard C. Resch

Thursday, January 18, 2007

8:30 a.m. “A Confessional Lutheran Voice in the Contemporary Scene” — Dr. Robert Benne, Director, Center for Religion and Society, Roanoke College, Salem, Virginia

10:00 a.m. Chapel

11:00 a.m. “The Metamorphosis of Confessional Lutheranism” — Dr. David P. Scaer, Professor of Systematic Theology, Chairman of the Systematics Department, and Editor of Concordia Theological Quarterly

1:30 p.m. “The Drift of Neo-Evangelicalism into Mainstream Protestantism” — Dr. D. G. Hart, Visiting Professor, Westminster Seminary — California, Escondido, California

2:45 p.m. “Confessional Lutheranism in an Ecumenical World” — Dr. Carl E. Braaten, Past Editor of Pro Ecclesia, Sun City West, Arizona

5:30 p.m. Symposium Reception and Banquet Grand Wayne Center

Friday, January 19, 2007

9:00 a.m. “Crossing Old Line Boundaries: Works of Lutheran Charity” — The Rev. Matthew C. Harrison, Executive Director, LCMS Board for Human Care and World Relief, St. Louis, Missouri

10:00 a.m. “Confessional Lutheranism in the Ecumenical World: A Missouri Challenge” — Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, Executive Director, LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations, St. Louis, Missouri

11:00 a.m. Chapel

Registration is $165.00. Full payment or a non-refundable deposit must accompany all registrations to guarantee your registration. The deadline for registration is January 8, 2007. Registration forms and additional information can be found online at www.ctsfw.edu. Click on events, click on Symposia, or call 260-452-2241.

Lenten Preaching Workshop
Pastors attending the 2007 Symposia Series are invited to arrive one day early for Baptized into Christ’s Death: Catechetical Preaching on Holy Baptism and the Passion of Christ, 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 Dr. Timothy C. J. Quill, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, will meet January 15, 2007, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Registration is $30.00. Please phone 260-452-2224 for additional information.
Christ Academy is a two-week residential program for high-school-aged young men of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It is a place where students can study about Christ who is present in His Word and Sacraments and who died that our 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.

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

**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 ultimately what He did for us in His sacrifice.”
- “I really enjoy worshipping four times a day. It really 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–H.S. June 17-30, 2007**
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 in the seminary, unique lectures specifically for CAC students, and an opportunity to visit with both students and professors at the seminary. 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 the distance area, 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 or CACollege@ctsfw.edu
Phone: 260-452-3139 or 800-481-2155

For more information please visit our website at www.ctsfw.edu, select Events, select Christ Academy. There is an online application for reservation for your attendance. Please fill this out if you plan to attend.

Itinerary

Wednesday - February 14
Arrival day at seminary for CAC weekend, Fort Wayne city visitation, and class observation (all optional)

Thursday - February 15
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
4:30 p.m. Vespers at Kramer Chapel
9:30 p.m. Evening Offices at Kramer Chapel

Friday - February 16
7:30 a.m. Matins at Kramer Chapel
8:00-8:55 a.m. Class Visit
9:00-9:55 a.m. Class Visit
10:00 a.m. Morning Service at Kramer Chapel
11:00-11:55 a.m. Class Visit
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00-1:55 p.m. Class Visit
2:00-2:55 p.m. Class Visit
3:00-4:55 p.m. Class Visit
4:00 p.m. Vespers at Kramer Chapel
4:30 p.m. Gemuetlichkeit
5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 p.m. Reception in Admission Office

Saturday - February 17
8:00 a.m. Matins at Kramer Chapel
8:30-9:00 a.m. Continental breakfast
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Lecture
12:00-1:30 p.m. Lunch
2:00-5:00 p.m. Lecture
5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00-9:00 p.m. Fireside Chat
9:30 p.m. Compline

Sunday - February 18
Worship at Historic St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Day for departure
Some years ago a grateful employee of the Dow Chemical Company in Midland, Michigan, who wishes to remain anonymous, decided it was time to do something for the company that he served and had treated him well. As he put it, “Companies like Dow receive so much criticism, but this is a wonderful company that does so much good. I wanted to begin an endowment in Dow’s name that would give them credit for the fine things they do.” Thus the Dow Chemical Endowment Fund was begun.

The donor hoped that by creating this endowment he could encourage other Dow employees to contribute to it. All Dow employees and retirees are eligible for matching funds from Dow, so the potential for this fund to grow is significant.

Last year earnings from the Dow Chemical Endowment provided funds for the seminary to purchase some long-needed computer technology. Networking Hardware by Packeteer is an application-intelligent, traffic management solution that extends network resources and aligns application performance at the seminary. “We don’t want to expand our link to the Internet without knowing how it is used or how secure it is,” stated Jason L. Iwen, CTS Network Manager. “The equipment we have currently only tells us so much about the traffic that is using our bandwidth. This device will enable us to look beyond the network for a more sophisticated insight into our network performance tracking and resource usage,” added John A. Klinger, Director of Information Technology. The device also allows for problems to be quickly isolated and resolved. It will be able to identify and isolate potential malicious attacks on the network. This will allow for better utilization of time in the Information Technology Office. This hardware also enables the Information Technology Office to prioritize who has first use of the Internet so that those offices which have the greatest need will have the fastest service.

In addition to this hardware, additional funds will provide new laptops for a number of CTS personnel, replacing aging models that have been used for a number of years.

The total amount provided for these purchases was about $40,000, a wonderful gift provided to the seminary through grateful employees of Dow Chemical Company and the matching gifts that are added by Dow.
Matthew Leighty joined the CTS Advancement staff in September, having served previously as Associate Director of Freshman Admission at Concordia University in Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Leighty serves the Advancement team as a Field Officer. His primary responsibility is to call on active and prospective donors, build relationships, and request continued financial support for the seminary in Ohio and a number of western states. He also calls on congregations of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) to encourage direct support.

Mr. Leighty received a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Psychology from Concordia University–Chicago. It was during his time as an undergraduate student working in the Advancement Office that he discovered a passion for fundraising. Mr. Leighty explains, “At Concordia University I was able to observe a talented staff. I’m excited to be a part of another team that has a high level of experience and respect within the field.” He has attended The Fund Raising School at the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, Indianapolis, Indiana, and is a member of the Association of Lutheran Development Executives (ALDE).

“We are delighted to have Matthew join our staff. His record of success at Concordia University–Chicago and his enthusiastic spirit will be a welcome addition to our department,” commented the Rev. Ralph G. Schmidt, Vice President for Institutional Advancement. “In the short time he has been here he has become very much a part of our team and demonstrated a sense of optimism that will serve both him and the seminary well in the years ahead.”

He has been married to Kelli (Borchelt) for four years. As natives of Fort Wayne they graduated from Holy Cross Lutheran School and Concordia Lutheran High School before attending Concordia University. They are again members at Holy Cross, and Mrs. Leighty now teaches second grade at the school.

According to Mr. Leighty, this is more than just a return to Fort Wayne, “Watching my father, Fred Leighty, attend CTS and become a second career pastor allowed me to see first hand God’s will being done at this place. As a child of a seminary student, my family was grateful for the gifts and generosity of so many people. Today, I’m eager to serve and be a part of advancing the mission of the seminary.”

Please join us in welcoming this newest member to our seminary community and keep him in your prayers as he begins his work at the seminary.

Please send me information about:

☐ I would like to know more about contributing to the Dow Chemical Endowment.
☐ I would like information about establishing or adding to other endowments.
☐ I would like information about other ways to support the seminary.
☐ I would like to talk to someone about gifts through an estate plan.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: _______ ZIP:____________________

Phone: _________________________________________________________________________________

E-mail: __________________________________________________________________________

Or please phone the CTS Office of Advancement at 1-877-287-4338, ext. 2212.

Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 N. Clinton St. • Fort Wayne, IN 46825
Seminary Guild Events for 2007

The Concordia Theological Seminary Guild would like to invite you to attend the many exciting events the group has planned for 2007. Here’s a look at what’s ahead:

**January 9: Business Meeting**
The Guild will gather to discuss business beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Ambrose Hall.

**February 13: Deaconess Presentation**
Did you ever wonder what a deaconess is or what her role is in the church? Or maybe you are considering becoming a deaconess yourself. If so, the Guild’s February meeting is for you. Beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Luther Hall, several women currently enrolled in the seminary’s Deaconess Studies Program will give a presentation and answer any questions you may have about this exciting vocation. A business meeting will follow.

**March 13: Friends of Wyneken**
Come learn how you can help save the dwelling that once was the home of the Rev. Dr. Friedrich Wyneken, a founder of Concordia Theological Seminary and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. The Friends of Wyneken, a local group, has been instrumental in helping preserve this precious piece of history. A luncheon beginning at noon in Luther Hall will take place before the Friends of Wyneken presentation.

**April 10: April Shower**
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 (CCLC) they are precious. Be sure to bring these items to the Seminary Guild’s annual April Shower for CCLC. The shower will begin at 1:00 p.m. in Luther Hall, followed by a business meeting and election of Guild officers.

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.

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**Affiliate Guild Registration**

- □ Yes, we are interested in becoming an Affiliate Guild. Please send more information to:
  - Name: 
  - Organization: 
  - Address: 
  - City: __________ State: _______ Zip: __________

- □ We are enclosing a donation payable to Concordia Theological Seminary Guild, Box 8, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996.

- □ Please contact me with more information.

- □ 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.
Events
First Sunday Brunch
February 4
March 4
April 1
11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Katherine Luther Dining Hall

Lenten Preaching Workshop
January 15
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2241

2007 Symposia Series
January 16-19
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2241

Invitational Campus Visit
March 23-25
1-800-481-2155

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

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

Music
Epiphany Lessons and Carols
Seminary Kantorei
January 14
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

All Bach Organ Recital
Leon W. Couch III
Texas A&M University
January 17
12:45 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Symposia Choral Vespers
Seminary Schola Cantorum
January 17
4:45 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

Symposium Choral Vespers
Seminary Schola Cantorum
March 25
4:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

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 4-5

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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.

Tour Features
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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.

Name: __________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: ____________________________ State: ______ Zip: ________________
Phone Number: __________________________________________
E-mail: __________________________________________