Come Join Us

as we celebrate the wonderful heritage of Concordia Senior College

and

Concordia Theological Seminary

for the 50th Anniversary of the dedication of our award-winning Saarinen campus!

Opening Service Sunday

50th Anniversary Celebration

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Brunch

September 9, 2007

Music on the Plaza
Shepherd’s Brass
Concordia High School Combo

Activities
Campus Tours
Bookstore open
...and more!

3:00 p.m. Opening Service
In Kramer Chapel

4:00 p.m. Reception
On the Upper Plaza hosted by the Seminary Guild

Please RSVP for brunch by August 17, 2007 to
Denita Krause at 452-2223 or krauseds@ctsfw.edu
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The Chinese have a suggestive proverb that goes, “Bad Bible, good Christian; good Bible, bad Christian.” The obvious point is to encourage use of the Bible. At the same time, such encouragement can become a law that hovers over the prospective reader with the result that he or she feels inadequate and unable to ever do enough reading and studying.

A far better invitation to read and to study sacred Scripture is this: “Christ is the center of the Bible.” Indeed, some Church fathers spoke of Scripture as “the living voice of Jesus” (viva vox Jesu). The wonder and beauty of viewing the Bible in such a manner is immense. It is also truthful since Scripture’s purpose is to offer Christ. Like a rich and multifaceted tapestry, the narratives and texts are woven together so that one beholds the face of Christ, and when one beholds the face of Christ, he also beholds the Father and the Holy Spirit.

And the face of Christ speaks the Absolution, “Your sins are forgiven,” and in those words are life and salvation. “I have come that you might have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

In our historical context, there have been great debates on the accuracy of the Bible. In fact, as the sainted Dr. Martin Franzmann commented, “The Bible is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.”

Yes, emphatically, the Bible is true. But its truth is not abstract. Rather, it is the living Word of Christ that defines who we are and who God is, and, wonder of wonders, here we poor sinners experience the expansive mercy of God in Christ, the incarnate Son of God.

Here is proper motivation to read and to reflect and to immerse ourselves in God’s mercy. It is simply inadequate to reduce the Scriptures to nothing more than true information. Rather, as Psalm 1 so beautifully invites us, we are to delight in the Torah, in God’s good and gracious Word. Sadly, it is the case that many who believe the Bible fail to enjoy it.

When we realize that Christ is the center and that His voice through prophets and apostles speaks Absolution, it is a delight to read and to relish the gracious character of God.

Our seminary community invites you to delight in and to enjoy the voice of Jesus. Our students and faculty devote themselves to the study of Greek and Hebrew so that they might hear Jesus’ voice clearly and speak it faithfully to His Church and to all the world.

“He who hears you, hears me” (Luke 10:16).

In this issue, we focus on carrying the voice of Jesus to the men and women of our armed forces, firefighters, and other service communities. Many of our seminary graduates have distinguished themselves as faithful chaplains. Indeed, scholars have suggested that a key and culminating verse in Mark’s Gospel is the following confession of the centurion: “And when the centurion who stood there in front of Jesus heard His cry and saw how He died, he said, ‘Surely this man was the Son of God!’” (Mark 15:39)

May that confession be yours as you delight in the living, absolving voice of the resurrected and ascended Lord.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
one of this world attempted to destroy the chosen nation and her monotheistic faith. The heroes of faith may have found it difficult to believe that their God would be known in all the earth. The ancient prophets spoke, generally speaking, an eternal thing. They spoke, and then time seemingly stood still until it finally makes up and moves on. The powerful once think that all the power is in their hands. Therefore they occupy, enslave, and kill cities in their name. They build monuments and memorials for themselves. But in the end, it turns out that time is not on their hands. Time is on God's hands.

A day comes when what seemed unattainable and unmoveable are given. What seemed to be great knowledge of God, acquire faith, come to church, are baptized, and bring their children. The church grows—the how God acts in our lives.

Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is 12:6)

Brothers and sisters, the Lord is in our midst. We are able to hear his word and partake of him. He comes so close to us in the sacrament of Eucharist that we can even touch him.

Eucharist does not only connect us to Christ, but also unites us with each other.

It is so wonderful to have spiritual fellowship with the brothers and sisters who share a common faith. Because the special character of this day for an Estonian people is that they have been able to move. In the Church of Estonia, but, for a long time, we have been a part of her. Now we become the autocephalous church. Though we are independent, the Church of Estonia will always maintain a spiritual brother in us. No matter what happens, we will always remember the many years in which you cared for us.

No matter what happens... We went through a number of things together. And she knows what she will have to go through. We know how the church buildings, even those that are large and sturdy, are destroyed. We know also how temples of human lives are destroyed. It happened often—and it may happen again. Who knows what the future has in store for us. Global warming, mutations, most extremes. Atlantic storms, About Kosovo... there are so many terrifying and deadly things around us.

But Christ is among us. From here and forever. Neither death nor hell nor the devil may change that. We will receive forgiveness of sins, rest, and a blessed eternity in Christ. Amen.
I began my theological education at Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne in the fall of 2004. My wife and I moved to Fort Wayne from Boulder, Colorado, where I had been a member of the Colorado Army National Guard since 1998. I was an enlisted soldier at the time. I originally trained as a 13-B (Canon Crewman in the Field Artillery).

When we prepared to make the move to Indiana so that I could attend CTS, I immediately thought of becoming an Army National Guard chaplain. It made sense as a natural complement to the parish ministry for which I would soon be studying and preparing.

At that point, I became acquainted with the Chaplain Candidate Program. The Army’s basic description of this program reads, “The Chaplain Candidate Program is another means by which the CCH (Chief of Chaplains) procures qualified chaplains for the Active Army, ARNGUS (National Guard) and the USAR (Army Reserves). The program provides basic orientation and introduction to the duties and responsibilities of an Army chaplain. It also provides practical training experiences on installations, specialized military settings, and/or unit training, and evaluates the suitability of the candidate for commissioning as an Army chaplain (Army Regulation 165-1).”

I soon found myself assigned to train with an Indiana Army National Guard unit, the 1/293rd Infantry, just two miles down the road from CTS. The troops of the 1/293rd are the quintessential citizen-soldiers of the post-September 11 era. They were called up for the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003 and have since received the alert for a second tour in early 2008. Thus, my time spent with the 1/293rd could be described as the calm before the next storm.

For two and a half years, it has been my privilege to serve these soldiers as their chaplain candidate. One of the hardest things for me to deal with these past few drills has been training with these men and women as they prepare to deploy while knowing full well that I will not be going with them. In August, I will be moving to Albuquerque, New Mexico, in order to serve Grace Lutheran Church as its vicar. I will transfer to a new unit in the New Mexico Army National Guard. The 1/293rd will be in good hands, however, as the UMT (Unit Ministry Team) that will go with them to Iraq is comprised of dedicated individuals that I have had the pleasure of training and growing alongside.

Essentially, serving as a chaplain candidate while attending CTS has functioned like an extension of my field work. As a chaplain candidate, I am governed by two regulations that limit what I can and cannot do. First, since I am not yet a chaplain, I cannot formally counsel anyone who comes to me with an issue. I can listen, pray, and share Scripture with a soldier in this setting, but I cannot yet prescribe formal advice on what the soldier should or should not do. Secondly, I am not allowed to freely maneuver during training without the supervision of an actual chaplain.

Although as many as 80 percent of our soldiers register themselves as non-denominational Christians, the basic knowledge of the Christian faith can sometimes be limited. For example, if asked what role Jesus plays in our salvation, many soldiers might respond that He is simply our example to emulate or a teacher of wisdom that can help us earn salvation on our own. For those who do confess a more traditional Christian faith, the question “How can I know for sure that I am saved?” predominates. Without fail, at least one soldier asks me at almost every drill how he can know for sure that he is truly a Christian.
Despite these limitations, I have had ample opportunity to apply what I have learned at CTS. I have been hit by many flashbacks of Dr. Schroeder’s Pastoral Care and Counseling class as I have listened to the worries and issues that some of the soldiers have shared with me. I was surprised at the amount of training from Dr. Schroeder’s counseling class that was similar or even identical to what I was taught at my Chaplain’s Officer Basic Course (CHOB).

I completed the thirteen-week CHOBC course at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, in 2006. I attended the course with my classmate Leroy Laplant as well as four Concordia Seminary candidates. To be one of six Missouri Synod candidates sprinkled among one hundred twenty-eight students from every denomination imaginable was quite an experience. It ended up functioning as a case study in how to operate within the confines of a highly pluralistic and politically correct environment.

Unfortunately for me, I took Dr. Muller’s Religious Bodies in America course and Dr. Moeller’s World View: Culture and Religion class after I had returned from CHOBC. Many times I found myself nodding my head and thinking, “Yeah, I could have used that last summer.”

Despite that, the CHOBC experience was informative and beneficial. Over the course of time, we made many friends. We also found ourselves engaging in spirited discussions from time to time. There seemed to be something about going to the field that brought out the spirit of debate and discussion between chaplain candidates of varying views and confessional loyalties. On one occasion, we listened in on a Greek Orthodox candidate as he used the story of Luther and Zwingli at the Marburg Colloquy to refute the denial of the bodily presence in the Lord’s Supper, a belief espoused by some of our more stridently antisacramental classmates. On another occasion, it was my turn. During the same field exercise, I was confronted point-blank over chow by a classmate who found the practice of closed Communion offensive. Fortunately, I was fresh off of reading Werner Elert’s Eucharistic and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries. It ended up being a great exercise in slowing down, keeping emotions and feelings out of the discussion, and explaining what Lutherans believe and confess in truth and love.

Upon my return from CHOBC, I rejoined the 1/293rd. Each month, I eagerly look forward to serving as their chaplain candidate. There are a few critical convictions that motivate me to serve these soldiers at each drill I attend. First, the words of C. F. W. Walther constantly remind me that the Gospel assumed is the Gospel denied. Although as many as 80 percent of our soldiers register themselves as non-denominational Christians, the basic knowledge of the Christian faith can sometimes be limited. For example, if asked what role Jesus plays in our salvation, many soldiers might respond that He is simply our example to emulate or a teacher of wisdom that can help us earn salvation on our own. For those who do confess a more traditional Christian faith, the question “How can I know for sure that I am saved?” predominates. Without fail, at least one soldier asks me at almost every drill how he can know for sure that he is truly a Christian.

While there are challenges, they are outweighed by the many opportunities to share the Gospel with a group of people who are eager to hear it. The vocation in which these soldiers are serving, with all its risks, dangers, and struggles, has prompted many to become interested in what the Word of God has to say to their situation today.

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While there are challenges, they are outweighed by the many opportunities to share the Gospel with a group of people who are eager to hear it. The vocation in which these soldiers are serving, with all its risks, dangers, and struggles, has prompted many to become interested in what the Word of God has to say to their situation today. I have found Luther’s short treatise Whether Soldiers, Too, Can be Saved to be a timeless and indispensable tool in presenting the theologies of the two kingdoms, two kinds of righteousness, and Law and Gospel to the soldiers. These concepts are practical and relevant for the operational climate of today’s military.

As I look to the near future and the day when I will become a chaplain, the words of Luther in 1526 will endure in my heart as my personal motto: “For whoever fights with a good and well-instructed conscience can also fight well.”

While there are challenges (as a Chaplain Candidate), they are outweighed by the many opportunities to share the Gospel with a group of people who are eager to hear it. The vocation in which these soldiers are serving, with all its risks, dangers, and struggles, has prompted many to become interested in what the Word of God has to say to their situation today.

Chaplain Candidate 2LT Shawn Found is a 3rd Year Delayed-Vicar at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
Seminary Schola Cantorum Premiers “Passion”

The Seminary Schola Cantorum presented the premiere of “The Passion According to St. John” by noted Lutheran composer Carl Schalk. This major work, commissioned by Concordia Theological Seminary, was the musical centerpiece of the March 25, 2007 Passion Choral Vespers at Kramer Chapel. Set for mixed choir and soloists, Schalk’s setting presents John’s Passion narrative in musical form.

Dr. Schalk, Distinguished Professor of Music Emeritus of Concordia University, Chicago (River Forest), and his wife, Noel, were present for the premiere of the work. “Dr. Schalk’s contributions to the song of the church are considerable, and those contributions continue with this significant work,” remarked Kantor Kevin Hildebrand, who directed the Schola Cantorum for this service. Kantor Richard Resch served as organist, and Dr. Arthur Just was the preacher.

Save the Date-August 24, 2008

Come explore The Splendor of God’s Creation! Concordia Theological Seminary Tours will be offering an Alaskan Cruise sailing out of Seattle, WA on August 24, 2008. Join us on the cruise ship Westerdam in front of one of their spectacular glaciers or with whales breaching off the bow. More information to follow, but save the date for this upcoming event.

Mark Your Calendars Now for the 2008 Symposia Series

January 15-16, 2008
23rd annual symposium on Exegetical Theology

January 16-18, 2008
31st annual symposium on The Lutheran Confessions “Atonement: Biblical, Confessional, Ecumenical Perspectives.”

Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS) in Fort Wayne, Indiana is once again hosting its annual Symposia. The four-day event is highlighted by presentations on Exegetical Theology and the Lutheran Confessions. Scheduled speakers and topics include:

Dr. Charles P. Arand - “Atonement as Underpinning for the Lutheran Concept of Righteousness”

Dr. Simon J. Gathercole - “Atonement in Contemporary Biblical Thought”

Dr. Jeff Gibbs - “Son-Substitute, Servant, and Sacrifice: Atonement in the Gospel according to Matthew”

Rev. James Massa, Ph.D. - “Eucharist and Eschatology in the Thought of Pope Benedict XVI”

Dr. John A. Maxfield - “Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin on the Significance of Christ’s Death”

Dr. Michael Root - “The Work of Christ and the Deconstruction of Twentieth Century Lutheranism”

For the most current information about Symposia 2008, please visit www.ctsfw.edu/events/symposia
Some say that there are no atheists in foxholes. CTS deaconess student and Army Captain Leslie Haines knows just how wrong that saying is. Atheists often remain unbelievers—and some Christians become atheists—because of what they witness in war.

Leslie brought back more than physical injuries from war. It was the hurts that run deeper than physical pain, ones suffered by Leslie and others in military service that have led her to the deaconess program. Her desire for soldiers and their families to receive appropriate spiritual care is shaping her hopes for her future service in the Church.

A life of service is more than a concept for Leslie; it has been her way of life since joining the Army right after college in 1983. She currently commands the 384th MP (military police) battalion, rear detachment, in Fort Wayne. The Army has so become Leslie’s home that she says she’s from “wherever the Army sent me,” which includes Germany, Kuwait, Cuba, several locations in the United States, and Iraq.

Leslie’s journey to the seminary began with her mobilization Christmas 2001. She was part of the second battalion of MPs sent to handle enemy detainees at the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This year-long deployment was followed a month later by a back-to-back...
deployments to Iraq. Leslie describes this type of deployment as especially destructive to soldiers. The spiritual pain that gripped Leslie during her time in Guantanamo Bay had only deepened by the time she was medically evacuated during her tour in Iraq.

That was when she met Chaplain (LTC) James R. Cotter, a CTS Fort Wayne graduate, who had a life-changing impact on her. Leslie often says that what struck her about Chaplain Cotter was how he lived his faith, that he always had time for the soldiers regardless of the time or how tired he was. Chaplain Cotter showed Christ’s mercy to Leslie and countless others through his daily life and teaching.

During Leslie’s recovery from surgeries, she volunteered her services and became Chaplain Cotter’s administrative assistant. As she healed, Leslie began to counsel other soldiers as they mobilized, deployed, and returned from war. She also realized that she could no longer in good conscience remain an Episcopalian. The more Leslie researched and studied what The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod taught, the more convinced she became that it matched biblical teaching. On April 25, 2004, Chaplain Cotter confirmed Leslie through his civilian congregation, Praise Lutheran Church, in Fort Wayne.

Leslie first heard of the deaconess program during her service with Chaplain Cotter. She began to think it might be the way for her to continue serving her brothers and sisters in the military when her active duty ended in January 2005. “Somebody must care for our soldiers; I know how bad I was and how badly I needed Christian care,” Leslie says. After prayerful consideration and much discussion with Chaplain Cotter and Rev. Robert Smith of CTS, Leslie formally interviewed and applied to the deaconess program at CTS. “I’m not sure Dr. Just knew quite what he was getting when he accepted me, but he has been very supportive of me as I have cut a nontraditional path towards becoming a deaconess,” Leslie commented.

Because of the injuries Leslie sustained in Iraq, she is eligible for the Veterans Affairs Educational Program. This program has paid tuition and other expenses related to Leslie’s training. Mike Busher, her Veterans Affairs educational counselor, has been especially supportive of Leslie’s mission focus.

Leslie plans to make veteran-specific care programs her focus as a deaconess. She hopes to help develop a mission program that would provide appropriate spiritual care to veterans, their families, and the families of those killed in war. Leslie sees the need for society, especially Christians, to be aware of the needs of veterans. “These veterans are our neighbors and our responsibility,” Leslie said. No other church body has launched a major ministry targeting these veterans, and it’s Leslie’s prayer that the LCMS will seize this opportunity to be a leader in this area of ministry; developing and implementing a veterans mission, to enabling our church body to reach military men and women with Christ’s mercy.

Leslie’s mission is to develop a program that could deploy care teams to help pastors provide care to veterans and their families as they begin the healing process. Although focusing on spiritual care, the team would also address psychological and physical issues and assist the veterans in accessing help from available agencies such as the Veterans Affairs Administration (VA). Sometimes veterans just need someone to help them fill out the forms or walk with them through their first few visits to the VA. But the VA cannot provide the necessary spiritual care. Without Christ, all care is just a band-aid and remains incomplete.

Some might think that combat military service in war is an odd way to begin service in the Church. Leslie, however, believes her life is unfolding exactly the way God intended. “War is hell, and there are a lot of atheists in the foxhole. However, though I have witnessed firsthand this hell, I wouldn’t take back a single moment because God allowed me to have this unique insight, and now I get to figure out how best to use it for Him. Thanks be to God!”

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**Plan Ahead!**

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

**Fall Invitational Campus Visit**

**September 19-22**

For additional information on this and other events please call the CTS Office of Admission 1-800-481-2155.
As a long time church worker and one who has for many years been concerned about wellness for our church workers, their families, our church and its members, I want to share some challenges for our readers. One might wonder why this article about wellness at this time. Why all the hype about wellness and what, if anything, should we do about it?

Wellness involves our entire life in Christ and who we are in Him. Who we are in Him determines how we live in relation to others and how we serve God and our neighbor. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19).

I have the privilege of serving on the staff of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. One of my responsibilities is the wellness program at our Seminary. Our goal is to provide a wellness program for our Seminary families as they prepare to serve our church as pastors, vicars, and deaconesses. To do this effectively there are some specific things we all should know and do. We need to give some serious thought to what wellness means to God’s crown of creation - every man, woman, child - and how we respond to our spiritual and physical wellness as Children of the Heavenly Father.

Wellness involves our entire life in Christ and who we are in Him. Who we are in Him determines how we live in relation to others and how we serve God and our neighbor. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19). These bodies are vessels or tools that God uses so that we may serve Him. The choices we make with our bodies and minds and our lifestyle choices may positively or negatively affect our ability to serve Him. Lifestyle choices begin at birth and stay with us until death. It is a proven fact that when we make the proper lifestyle choices, they affect our quality of health and life.

Listen to the radio or the television, read any newspaper or magazine, and before long wellness and the family will be discussed. What kind of program is needed to get Americans into a wellness lifestyle? This is equally true for the church worker, his family, and his church. Statistics point to the fact that 61% of Americans are overweight, and this leads to many other health issues.

Health insurance costs continue to escalate putting many employers in a position where they are no longer able to provide a health plan they can afford.
Some churches today can only cover the worker and not the family. This creates a real hardship for the worker and stress on the family. What can our church do to alleviate this problem that is and can become extremely harmful to our church and its mission?

We know that our workers, their families, and our church members live in a high tech, high stress world; a world where jobs, school sports, and social demands are impacting our children, youth, married couples, families, and our senior citizens.

God has placed the church and its workers here at this particular time in its history to serve Him. This means we must be spiritually and physically well if we are to use the gifts that God has given us as we share the Gospel message that God was in Christ reconciling Himself to the world and not counting our sins against us (II Corinthians 5:19).

The real problem is that God’s crown of creation lost paradise - Spiritual Wellness - when our first parents sinned and thus were exiled from the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15-17 tells us, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it and the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’” They lost their privilege of walking and talking with God, and they lost their privilege of being one with all of nature. Having destroyed their perfect spiritual relationship with God, they also experienced the physical effects of the fall.

In Genesis 3:23 we read, “So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.” Adam and Eve’s perfect health and diet were lost and death and dying became a part of the human experience.

God still loved His separated children and promised a way back to a right relationship with their Heavenly Father. Isaiah 53:1-3 tells us the way back: “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.” Verses 5 and 6, “But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

The meaning of the second article in Luther’s Small Catechism gives us the simple good news of getting our spiritual wellness back.

I believe that Jesus Christ, True God, begotten of the Father from eternity and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord. Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

This is God’s plan for complete spiritual wellness. His Son, the God man Christ Jesus, would make us spiritually well. Galatians 4:4-5 tells us, “But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.”

We receive these full rights through holy baptism, which God Himself instituted. We read in the Book of Matthew, Chapter 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Through baptism we were brought back into a proper relationship with God our Heavenly Father. What benefit does baptism give to the person receiving it? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this as the words and promises of God declared to us in Holy Scripture.

What about the Lord’s Supper? Luther tells us on page 31 of the Small Catechism what the benefits are of this drinking of these words, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Holy Scripture shows us that in the Sacrament of Holy Communion there is forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. A professor once told me that people could be around the Word all of their lives and still be lost. I was startled at the time but the point he was making is that we can become so busy with important and good things that we neglect the one thing needful. Remember Martha in Luke 10:41-42, “Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed.’” The point is that God wants His children - pastors, teachers, mothers, fathers, children, and all adults - to be good stewards of their time as Children of the Heavenly Father.

I recently asked a wellness class that I teach to outline a plan for spiritual wellness. Every student’s shared concern was not having enough time during the day to take care of themselves spiritually. If we are not spiritually fed in the proper way, it affects the body as an individual and each family member in some way. Are we so busy that we do not have time for family devotions, Sunday School, Adult Bible Class, and worship?

A pastor tells this account of his lifestyle. “I thought I had to do everything, lead all the meetings in our church, teach all of the classes, etc. I was
afraid to delegate any responsibility. My elders were wallflowers, and I expected the church council to give me a rubber stamp. I had little or no time for hospital calls and home visits. The rest of my time was spent on my computer. My church missed me and my family missed me.” The pastor went on to say it took him and his elders a year to get him and the congregation functioning in Word and Sacrament ministry.

Because of this congregations may want to assess spiritual wellness in their congregation in the following way:

1. Is every member in Adult Bible Class? If not, why not? What do we need to do to get every member in Bible study?
2. What are we doing about our members who attend church and the Lord’s Supper infrequently? What do we mean by infrequently?
3. Do we have an active evangelism team? How active?
4. Is there scope and sequence in our Sunday School curriculum and does the pastor go over the lessons with our teachers every month?
5. How does each group in our church tie into Word and Sacrament ministry?
6. Are your seniors a part of Word and Sacrament ministry? If so, define how.
7. Do you have a wellness committee and how does it function?
8. Do you have an elementary school and/or high school, how does the school fit into Word and Sacrament ministry?
9. Have you as a congregation identified what Word and Sacrament means to you as individuals, families, and as God’s church?

A health care physician recently pointed out that we all know very well the importance of wellness for our church workers and individual family members. We know that living a healthy lifestyle is important at every age in our lives. We are told that obesity is a national epidemic at all levels in our society. For the first time in a decade, life expectancy has declined rather than increased. The culprit is unhealthy lifestyles.

The Federal Government has finalized rules that govern the way companies can encourage employees to develop healthier lifestyles. Why? Because it is widely recognized that there is a serious health problem in America. The question is, where does wellness and healthy lifestyles rank with us, our families, our church and its workers? Most congregations have no plan or valuable tools other than the parish nurse program. Those congregations that have a parish nurse are very blessed. These angels of health and wellness are doing an outstanding job. However, they have limited resources and most are volunteers. They need more resources and tools to work with their congregations.

As a synod our districts and local congregations need to identify the issues in our lifestyles that are causing the challenge and then address them.

I want again to point briefly to the two areas of our wellness challenge. First, the spiritual health means what my relationship with God is as I relate to Him through Jesus Christ my Savior by the power of the Holy Spirit, working first through baptism, water and the Word, and then through the Word and Holy Communion. In other words, spiritual wellness comes to God’s children, and being God’s children makes us members of His divine family. Family devotions, attendance at Sunday School, Bible Class, and Christian Day school are the tools God provides for our spiritual wellness.

Our Heavenly Father also wants us to take care of our physical wellness, and there are some tools we need to use. Health care workers tell us there are some things we inherit in our genes. A disposition to high blood pressure or high cholesterol may come from grandfathers and grandmothers. The first good lifestyle choice is a yearly physical, and that means knowing your doctor and how to talk to your doctor. After the physical, what is the next step toward a healthy lifestyle? There are six areas that an individual can and should control.

1. Blood pressure – It can be controlled. It must be controlled. Ideal blood pressure should be below 120/80.
2. Cholesterol – It can be controlled. It must be controlled. Ideal cholesterol counts are:
   - Total – Below 200
   - LDL – Below 100
   - HDL – Above 40
3. Smoking – NO exception, NO excuse, STOP NOW.
4. Diet – Portion control is the key. Use a 6” plate. Portions need to be the size of a deck of cards. Vegetable servings should be ½ cup.
5. Exercise – The American Heart Association says we need to exercise one hour per day seven days a week.
6. Body Mass Index – Normal BMI is 18.5-24. We are overweight when our number is 25 and over.

These are six areas that are excellent ways to take care of the temple (our body).

If the reader would like to know more, the Seminary would like to bring a team to your church, school, or community and conduct a complete wellness seminar. We would like to train people, along with your parish nurse or designated wellness person, to have an on-going wellness program in your area. Please contact me by email at al@alwingfield.com or by mail at Rev. Al Wingfield, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46825. For a set of wellness materials, e-mail or write for them available through CTS Family Press via the above e-mail address or mail address.

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Rev. Albert Wingfield is Vice President of Business Affairs at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
Let’s Support Our Military

What is the project?
As a way of showing our support, we send care packages to our military forces engaged 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 Renee Moshier, Concordia Theological Seminary Military Project, 6600 N Clinton St, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825

What can I donate for the care packages?
★ Personal hygiene items: baby wipes, toothbrushes, solid stick deodorants, books, magazines, devotional materials, hometown newspapers, stationary, sun screen lotion, Clorox® wipes, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, conditioner, mouthwash, eye drops, Chapstick®, 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, hard candy that will not melt, snack cakes, gum, Rice Krispie® Treats, Kraft® Easy Mac, microwave popcorn, granola bars, power bars, dried fruit, Chex® Mix, scanned soup, tuna, oatmeal, salsa, lollipops, marshmallows, instant soup, fast food condiments

Who do I contact to help with this project?
Contact Renee Moshier at moshierrc@ctsfw.edu or 260.492.8739

How do I start a military support project at my church?
The seminary’s military support project has been successful due to the outpourings of donations from seminary families and the Fort Wayne community. Your congregation can also be involved in showing our troops love and care. Contact Renee Moshier at moshierrc@ctsfw.edu or Linda Scicluna at sciclunalinda@hotmail.com for information on how to start your own military project.
Kneeling in The Ministry of a Missionary to the Military

It was a chilly and damp Easter morning in North Carolina. The sailors of a Reserve Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (Seabees) were far from their Midwestern homes and families for combat training. Their mission was to carry out construction projects while simultaneously defending against a Marine aggressor force, but for three hours on Easter morning, the war came to a stop. As the battalion chaplain, I gathered all who would come to an Easter sunrise service where the glorious news of a risen Lord was proclaimed. For some, it was the first time that they had heard what Christians sometimes take for granted. They heard that because Jesus died and rose again, we are at peace with God, and forgiveness and life are given to all the children of Adam.

After the sunrise service had concluded, the Lutherans gathered around a makeshift altar. The spring rain had flooded the dirt floor of the tent, yet one by one they came to receive the body and blood of the Lord, kneeling in the mud. One Chief Petty Officer, a veteran of combat, came to me after the Benediction and said, “Pastor, you cannot understand the Eucharist until you kneel in the mud.” What a simple but powerful thought. The fact is that the Son of God comes into our world right in the midst of the muck and mire of our own making. Yet He comes not to condemn us but to bring His own righteousness and peace to those who know only sin and warfare.

Of course, that trip to the field with my Seabees was only a training exercise. Since September 11, 2001, the lives of our citizens and especially those citizens in uniform have radically changed. Training exercises continue to occur but now focus on the hard and cold fact that our armed forces are engaged in a global war on terrorism. Christians may differ on the political issues of that war. But what cannot be debated is that those who serve in the armed forces are more than cogs in a military machine. Instead, they are human beings that need the great Good News of Jesus Christ.

To answer that human need, our Synod sends pastors to serve as missionaries to the military. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a long and honorable
tradition of providing pastors to care for those who serve in the armed forces, a tradition that extends back to the Civil War and continues today. But what exactly is a Missouri Synod chaplain? He is first and foremost an ordained minister who has served in parish ministry and whose first identity is that of a Missouri Synod pastor. He meets and maintains all commissioning requirements just as any other military officer. Additionally, he is endorsed by the Synod’s Ministry to the Armed Forces to serve as a missionary in either the active duty or reserve components of the Navy, Army, or Air Force.

This immediately places a unique tension upon a pastor who wears the uniform of his country. On one hand, he is completely identified with the Church as a called and ordained servant of the Word. Thus, his life is to be one of dedicated service to the preaching of the Gospel in its purity and the administration of the Sacraments as Christ has instituted them. These things do not change whether a pastor serves in the parish or in the military.

But he is also a commissioned officer who lives and works in the environment of the military. As such, he also is identified completely with a secular institution whose purpose is to defend and protect the American people.

While deterrence is always preferable to war, it is the duty of elected civilian leaders to determine when the use of force is necessary. And it is the duty of the members of the armed forces to obey the orders of those elected by the American people.

If the ultimate purpose of the military is to wage war against the enemies of our nation, then the ultimate purpose of a chaplain is to bring the presence of God to those who serve as our nation’s defenders. The chaplain is a noncombatant, and he carries no weapon, even in a war zone. His ministry is to be a pastor to those who are warriors. He goes with his flock into every place and every circumstance, yet he carries only the spiritual weapons of the Word of God and the Holy Sacraments. He heralds the grace of God to the young men and women who put their very lives at risk to protect the freedom and lives of their fellow citizens.

As I write this and as you read it, our armed forces are engaged in combat operations. Far from our shores, our fellow Americans face an
enemy determined to destroy them. These Americans are young, gifted, and dedicated men and women who conduct themselves with honor, courage, and commitment. They come from every city, town, and countryside across America. They are fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, neighbors, classmates, and friends. They are loved, and their absence is never far from the hearts and minds of those they have left at home.

The military is indeed a huge institution, but it is an institution comprised of unique and precious human beings. It is to that institution that our Synod sends missionaries. In my own military ministry, I have seen the power of the Gospel in places that few other pastors have. Like any Navy family, my loved ones and I have faced long and lonely deployments. I was a part of the recovery and family support operations at the Pentagon following the September 11 attacks. I have stood at the graves of sailors and Marines and held the hands of nineteen-year-old widows and eighty-year-old grandfathers. I have been privileged to bring the grace and mercy of God in the blessed Sacrament to warriors who have done their duty and now wonder how they will get beyond the things they have seen and done. This ministry is often trying and difficult, but it is one for which I am grateful to the Lord.

The need for chaplains will continue as long as our nation faces threats and young people wear the uniform of their country. Seminarians can enter a chaplain candidate program and complete much of their training while still in seminary. Pastors with ninety semester hours of graduate theological education can apply for a direct commission in the active duty Navy, Army, Air Force, or any reserve or guard component. The Board for Mission Services’ Ministry to the Armed Forces (1-800-433-3954, ext. 1337) will assist the seminarian or pastor in obtaining the appropriate endorsement of the Synod and provide guidance on entering the chaplaincy.

The United States is at war, and that warfare is being fought with aircraft, rifles, and tanks. Yet the Church is also at war with a very different enemy and very different weapons. Around us are the forces of an evil far greater than terrorism. It is the old evil foe who seeks to work us woe. The spiritual battle we fight is with weapons that are not of this world but that are given into this world. It was into the midst of this fallen and war torn world that the mighty Lord of heaven entered as the gentle child of the Virgin Mary. It was in the midst of this rebellious and hate-filled humanity that the incarnate Son of God lived. It was in the place of all sinful humanity that He, the great High Priest, offered Himself as the perfect Lamb of God. And it was from the tomb, that ultimate symbol of sin and death, that He rose victorious on Easter morning.

This is the Christ who still comes to our world and seeks out all people through His blessed Gospel and His Holy Sacraments. He has given to His Church these means of grace and within that Church calls men to a lifetime of service in the pastoral vocation. Through the ministry given to redeemed sinners, the Holy Spirit calls and keeps us in the faith. He empowers us to reach out to all humanity, wherever people are found, with the Gospel that is to be preached to the very ends of the earth.

And that is where our chaplains are found. They are at the ends of the earth. In drab and dangerous compounds or city streets in Iraq or Afghanistan, there the Gospel is proclaimed by pastors in uniform. On ships at sea, there God Himself is present, and His presence is made known by pastors in uniform. In hospitals, brigs, and barracks, the eternal Gospel is brought to mortals. In the homes of the families of our fallen heroes, pastors in uniform bring a message of hope in the darkest hour those families will experience.

That Chief Petty Officer who said, “Pastor, you cannot understand the Eucharist until you kneel in the mud” offered as profound an insight into the heart of theology as I ever have heard, even from those who bear the title theologian. Christ came into the muck and mess of a world that has chosen the way of hate and war. He brought His amazing message of peace as He knelt in the mud of our lives as our brother. And He still comes to His redeemed creation right in the place where we find ourselves. There is no place too far, too dark, or too lonely that His love cannot reach, even if it is covered with the deepest mud.

Rev. Dr. Daniel Gard is the Dean of Military Chaplaincy Candidate Program and Professor of Exegetical Theology.
CTS Welcomes New Faculty

It is with great joy that Concordia Theological Seminary welcomes three new faculty members: Dr. Paul Grime, Rev. Jeffrey Pulse, and Dr. Adam Francisco. They will begin their duties during the summer months in preparation for the 162nd academic year.

Bringing with him experience both in parish ministry and music, Dr. Paul Grime has accepted the call to serve as Dean of Chapel and Associate Professor in the Department of Pastoral Ministry and Missions. He will also teach in the area of systematics. Dr. Grime served as senior pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in West Allis, Wisconsin before serving as Executive Director of the Commission on Worship. He played a major role in shaping the new Lutheran Service Book.

Rev. Jeffrey Pulse has accepted the call to serve as Associate Professor of Old Testament in the Exegetical Department. He will also lend his expertise in pastoral theology after 23 years of parish experience. Most recently, Rev. Pulse served as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church and School in Bremerton, Washington.

Coming to us from Concordia College, Dr. Adam Francisco will serve as Guest Professor of Historical Theology. Dr. Francisco is an expert in Islam, having received a Ph.D. from Oxford University where he wrote his dissertation on Luther and Islam. Dr. Francisco recently taught in the History Department at Concordia University.

Each of these three men brings unique expertise to our faculty. They will prove to be invaluable to our community as they help prepare men for pastoral ministry and women for deaconess service.

October 30-November 3, 2007
Lutherhostel Retreat: “Living with Luther”

Come join with the faculty of CTS as we delve into the real life of Luther. During this week-long retreat we will examine his life in two arenas: Luther’s public life including the subjects of vocation, worship, politics and theology, as well as Luther’s private life including issues surrounding prayer and family. We will help to bridge the gap between the time of the Reformation and today as we discuss several of Luther’s Table Talks and compare Luther with modern day Lutheranism. Enjoy a tour of the hidden histories of Fort Wayne’s rich Lutheran past and how this informs our present. Join other local Lutherans in worship and song for a Reformation service at historic St. Paul’s Lutheran Church and an All Saints service at Redeemer Lutheran Church. This week will be full of learning, fellowship, music, and worship. Participants have the option of registering only for those days that they will be able to attend. Registrations are due by October 15, 2007.

Retreat Fees: Registration – $150 (five days); on-campus meals – $140 (five days, includes the Evening Out); Registration for one day – $37 (includes lunch); Evening Out – $15; on-campus housing – $25/day.

Now available: Catechism Posters

The Small Catechism of Martin Luther is available on beautiful large posters. One poster for each of the six chief parts. They come as a six poster set. Ideal for Lutheran school classrooms, Sunday School and Christian homes to reinforce the essential teachings of the faith. Contact the seminary admission office for this free gift at (800)481-2155. Limited supply available.
Bringing the Word to God’s People
By Pam Knepper

Unlike some men who are not sure what they want to do with their lives, the Rev. Dean Kavouras always knew he wanted to serve God as a minister.

“I was raised a Roman Catholic and had a great interest in becoming a priest,” remembers Kavouras. “I never experienced a great moment of clarity from God saying I should become a minister. I just knew that this is what I wanted to do.”

His plans to become a Catholic priest ended when he met his future wife, Barbara, a Missouri Synod Lutheran. “One of the things that had always bothered me about the Catholic Church was the absence of forgiveness. It was Law-driven with no Gospel,” explained Kavouras. “When I started attending Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cleveland with Barb, it was the first time I heard the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed.”

Wanting to know more about Lutheranism, Kavouras began to study Luther’s Catechism and had frequent conversations with Barbara’s pastor. Over time, the two men became very good friends, and Kavouras eventually joined the Lutheran Church. “I had great respect for Barb’s pastor, not only because he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ week after week, but because he was also a man’s man, and I believe the ministry to be a very masculine profession.”

Always keeping his desire to become a minister at the forefront, Kavouras was accepted in 1975 to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Four years later when he graduated, Kavouras’s first call was to serve as a missionary-at-large in Vermilion, Ohio. Given the task of starting St. Matthew Lutheran Church, this new pastor went door-to-door introducing himself and inviting people to come to worship on Sunday. “It was a slow process at first because there were not a lot of Lutherans in Vermilion,” remembers Kavouras. “But when I accepted another call two years later, we had fifty members, and the church is still in existence today.”

His next call was to teach religion classes at Lutheran East High School in Cleveland. Two years later, he accepted a call to serve Immanuel Lutheran Church and St. John Lutheran Church, both in the farming community of Caroline, Wisconsin. “I loved my time in...
Caroline,” remembers Kavouras. “The people were good Lutherans who loved hearing the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ preached.”

In 1989, Kavouras decided to leave his dual parishes in Caroline and ended up serving as a vacancy pastor in the greater Cleveland area for a number of years until he was called in 1999 to serve Christ Lutheran Church in Cleveland as their assistant pastor. “I wasn’t necessarily looking for a permanent position in a church, but when the call came, I knew it was the right call for me,” remembers Kavouras.

While serving as a vacancy pastor, Kavouras also formed Cleveland Lutheran Radio. Running from 1996 to 2001, the radio show featured confessional Lutheran teachings and traditional Lutheran hymns. “I started the Cleveland Lutheran Radio program because Lutherans in the area expressed their desire to hear confessional Lutheran teachings and hymns. The people were not hearing those teachings and hymns in their own Lutheran churches, so I brought confessional Lutheranism to them on the radio.”

It was during this time that Rev. Kavouras also began doing volunteer chaplaincy work. “I had a friend who worked as a fireman with the Cleveland Fire Department,” remembers Kavouras. “The department was looking for a new fire chaplain, and my friend encouraged me to apply for the job. I did and got the position.”

Rev. Kavouras says the main duties of a fire chaplain are to visit sick and injured firefighters, and to be there with them when a civilian fatality has occurred.

A few months after becoming a chaplain for the fire department, Rev. Kavouras was asked to serve as the chaplain for the Cleveland EMS, the police department, as well as the FBI. After some consideration, he accepted. “The fire department, EMS, police, and FBI are all part of the safety forces in any city. The people who work for these departments work in the middle of black darkness. They encounter situations where no hope is found. This type of work can be very trying,” explained Kavouras. “My job as chaplain is to bring them the Word of God, which provides them great comfort and light in the middle of so much darkness. These people, though they could never express it this way, have a sacramental understanding of the ministry. They know that when the pastor is there with them, God is there, and this brings them a tremendous amount of comfort.”

This sacramental understanding of the ministry became even more important on September 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked the United States. As an FBI chaplain, Rev. Kavouras was immediately sent to Shanksville, Pennsylvania, to bring ministerial comfort to the military and safety forces working on the recovery, and to the families of the victims’ families of Flight 93.

“As I walked around the crash site in Shanksville, my clerical collar served as a magnet for people,” remembers Kavouras. “Not only were they looking for spiritual comfort, but they wanted answers as well for why this atrocity had happened. I simply told them that it was because of human sin, and surprisingly, everyone found that to be a very satisfying answer. They instinctively knew that sin had led to this event in history.”

Another question people wanted answered was what good would come of such a horrible event. Again, Rev. Kavouras answered simply, “This type of event turns us away from our vanity and drives us to seek help from God, and it’s at times like this that a clear Gospel message is most important.”

Two weeks after leaving Shanksville, Rev. Kavouras was asked to go to New York and help out at a garbage dump located on Staten Island. This was the site where all the debris from Ground Zero was taken to be sifted through by FBI agents, NYPD detectives, and other law enforcement agents. “As chaplain, I helped sift through the debris. It wasn’t fun. Not only were we looking for evidence like airplane black boxes, but we were trying to identify human remains,” remembers Kavouras. “Again, my presence brought peace to the agents because they knew God was with them even when they were working in hellish conditions.”

To further describe the enormity of what happened on September 11 and document how the Word of God truly brings comfort to people in such disastrous situations, Rev. Kavouras wrote a book entitled *Nine One One—The Aftermath: The Word Works*. The book is a compilation of chaplain field reports Rev. Kavouras wrote while ministering to the people during September 11 recovery efforts.

“I felt it was necessary to write this book because it shows so clearly how the Word of God makes a difference in people’s lives during times of immense grief,” explained Rev. Kavouras. “My instincts were right because after the book was released, the responses from people were overwhelming. They were able to read firsthand the Word of God at work and how it performed perfectly in the lives of people who had been affected in such a tragic way. Many said that it helped them understand how God was there to help them too, not only in this national calamity but in bearing other crosses in their lives.”

“**These people, though they could never express it this way, have a sacramental understanding of the ministry. They know that when the pastor is there with them, God is there, and this brings them a tremendous amount of comfort.”**

*The Rev. Dean Kavouras is married to Barbara and has two sons and five grandchildren. Currently, he serves at Christ Lutheran Church in Cleveland, Ohio, as assistant pastor and is a volunteer chaplain for the City of Cleveland Safety Forces, and for the Cleveland Division of the FBI.*
Seminary Announces Calls, Vicarages, Deaconess Internships, and Deaconess Placements.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, is pleased to announce its Spring 2007 calls to the pastoral ministry, vicarage assignments, deaconess internships, and deaconess placements.

CALLS
April 24, 2007

DUSTIN L. ANDERSON
Trinity Lutheran Church
Marseilles, IL

WARRENS E. BERGER
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Shokoshish, WA

DEAN S. BERTSCH
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Birnamwood, WI

MARK C. BESTUL
Calvary Lutheran Church
Elgin, IL

KENT A. BORGLUM
Zion Lutheran Church
Springfield, MN

MICHAEL D. BOYER
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Sebewaing, MI

JASON M. BRAATEN
Concordia Theological Seminary
Admission Counselor
Fort Wayne, IN

DANIEL G. O. BURHOP
University Lutheran Church
Boulder, CO

BRIAN T. CRANE
St. Peter Lutheran Church
Hilbert, WI

RUSSELL L. DEWELL
Trinity Lutheran Church
Part-time Assistant
Fort Wayne, IN

JACOB W. EHRHARD
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Associate/Education and Evangelism
Dwight, IL

MICHAEL O. FEUER
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Indianapolis, IN

L. JOE FICKTNER
Our Hope Lutheran Church
Principal and Assistant Pastor
hunturtown, IN

STUART N. FLOYD
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Warsaw, IN

STEVEN J. FRANK
St. John Lutheran Church
Madison, MN

MIKE S. GRIEVE
Holy Cross & St. Paul Lutheran Churches
Golden and Bowen, IL

PHILIP W. HALE
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Bancroft, NE

STEPHEN M. HAND
Atlanta District Board of Directors
(Director of Communications)

JASON C. HARRIS
St. James Lutheran Church
Scottsbluff, NE

DAVID S. HASSELBROOK
Messiah Lutheran Church
Missoula, MT

EUGENE W. HAUGEN
Ebenezer Lutheran Church
Greensboro, NC

JOSHUA A. HAUGEN
Concordia Theological Seminary
Assistant/Youth and Education

DANIEL J. HERB
Messiah Lutheran Church
Middletown, OH

ALAN R. HILTON (AR)
Our Savior, First, & St. Luke Lutheran Churches
Chester, Greeneville, and Portola, CA

MATTHEW K. JEFFORDS
Incarnate Word Lutheran Church
Florence, SC

MICHAEL F. JOYNT
Calvary Lutheran Church
Yuma, AZ

STEVEN J. KELTNER
Trinity Lutheran Church
Albany, GA

THAINE L. KISTER
St. Peter & Trinity Lutheran Churches
Bellingham, MN

ERIC A. KLEINSCHMIDT
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Highland, IN

KEVIN M. KOESTER
Mount Calvary & Zion Lutheran Churches
Belle and Owensville, MO

JESSE E. KRUSEMARK
Grace Lutheran Church
Stockton, MN

CHARLES R. LEHMAN
Peace with Christ Lutheran Church
Assistant/Youth and Education
Fort Collins, CO

DANIEL J. LEPELEY
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Seymour, IN

DENNIS M. MEEKER
Spring of Life Lutheran Church
Kibera, Kenya

JEREMY H. MILLS
Advent Lutheran Church (Evangelism Pastor)
Zionsville, IN

RICHARD A. MITTELSTADT (AR)
Trinity Lutheran Church
Eden, TX

MICHAEL S. MONTERASTELLI
First Lutheran Church
Lufkin, TX

MARCUS J. NELSON
St. John Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Wheaton, IL

STEVEN R. J. PARKS
University Hills Lutheran Church
Denver, CO

LAWRENCE W. PAUL
Saving Grace Lutheran Church
Chino Valley, AZ

PEETER PIRN
Unity Lutheran Church
Cleveland, OH

MARTY L. PORTER
Zion Lutheran Church
Sauk Centre, MN

ROBERT M. PORTIER
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Savannah, TN

NATHAN R. RADDATZ
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
St. Paul, MN

CHRISTOPHER L. RAFFA
Pilgrim Lutheran Church
West Bend, WI

JEREMY D. RHODE
Faith Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Capistrano Beach, CA

PETER A. RICHERT
The Lutheran Church of Our Savior
Mount Pocono, PA

KERRIT P. RICKENBERG
Bethel Lutheran Church
Kansas City, KS

JOHN D. SCICLUNA (AR)
Mount Olive & Peace in the Valley Lutheran Churches
Tucson and Benson, AZ

TROY D. SCROGGINS
Hope Lutheran Church
Topeka, KS

MATTHEW D. SHIVE
St. John Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Mayville, WI

BRIAN T. STARK
Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church
Defiance, OH

THOMAS CLINTON STARK
St. John Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Topeka, KS

TIMOTHY D. STORCK
Messiah Lutheran Church
Associate Pastor
Grand Junction, CO

TIMOTHY L. STOUT
St. Petes & Grace Lutheran Churches
Devils Lake and Lakota, ND

JACOB R. SUTTON
Faith Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Plano, TX

JOHN S. TURNER
Faith Lutheran Church
Craig, CO

BRADLEY A. VOGT
Emmanuel & St. Peter Lutheran Churches
Barnum and Moose Lake, MN

JEFFREY W. WARE
Living Word Lutheran Church
Assistant Pastor
The Woodlands, TX

GERRY L. WEAVER (AR)
Trinity & St. Peter Lutheran Churches
Howells and Snyder, NE

ROBERT C. WEINKAUF
St. Martin Lutheran Church
Basehor, KS

STEVEN D. WICHENDAHL
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Guthrie Center, IA

LARRY D. WRIGHT
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Midland, MI

LARRY R. YAW
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Assistant Pastor
Rockford, IL

STEPHEN K. ZEHNDER
Loving Shepherd Lutheran Church
Hiram, GA

VICARAGES
April 23, 2007

DAVID A. ABUYA
St. John Lutheran Church & St. Mark Lutheran Church
Massillon and Steubenville, OH

ROY S. ASKINS
Luther Memorial Chapel
Shorewood, WI

RONALD J. BACIC
Risen Savior Lutheran Church
Buffalo, IL

MARCUS J. BAJIE
West Portal Lutheran Church
San Francisco, CA

GEOFFREY R. BOYLE
St. John Lutheran Church
Wheaton, IL

J. D. BROWN (AR)
Faith Lutheran Church
Vista, CA
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For the Hand that Wields the Sword

Lutherans are uniquely positioned for military chaplaincy. Not only does Luther’s down-to-earth theology affirm that Christ Jesus comes to sinners in the very sewer of sin where suffering and shame abound, but Lutherans have the legacy of the two governments as set forth in the Reformer’s “Whether Soldiers Too Can be Saved” of 1526. (See Luther’s Works 46:93–137.) Luther addresses the conscience of Christian soldiers whose vocation it is to use violence. In short, Luther’s essay is an exercise in pastoral theology for both chaplains and pastors whose calling it is to bring the consolation of the Gospel of peace to those whose office it is to make war.

Luther’s tract is pastoral in that it addresses the conscience of the soldier. Rather than delving into matters of casuistry that would attempt to justify participation in battle on the basis of a sure and certain knowledge of the rightness of the cause, Luther speaks to the conscience in the context of vocation. To serve as a soldier is to serve in a necessary office for the good of the neighbor. Richard John Neuhaus once quipped that pacifism is bad for peace. Luther would agree. “For if the sword were not on guard to preserve peace, everything in the world would be ruined by lack of peace. Therefore, such a war is only a very brief lack of peace that prevents an everlasting and immeasurable lack of peace, a small misfortune that prevents a great misfortune” (LW 46:96). The Christian can serve as soldier with a good conscience—with “boldness and courage”—for God has instituted this office (Romans 13:1) as His mask. “For the hand which wields the sword and kills with it is not man’s hand, but God’s; and it is not man, but God who hangs, tortures, beheads, kills and fights” (LW 46:96).

While the office of soldier is instituted by the Creator of heaven and earth, the person who fills the office may indeed corrupt and abuse it. Luther was well aware of how greed and wantonness inflame unnecessary warfare and destruction. Nevertheless, the abuse of the office does not undermine its place in creation. Drawing on the preaching of John the Baptist in Luke 3:14, Luther reminds his readers that John the Baptist exhorted the soldiers who came to him for the baptism of repentance not to rob by violence or false accusation and to be content with their wages. John the Baptist did not moralistically challenge them to beat their swords into ploughs or join the first-century equivalent of Amnesty International.

Rather, in the fear of God and with faith in the righteousness of Christ alone, the soldier is to receive the office praying, “Dear Lord, you see that I have to go to war, though I would rather not. I do not trust, however, in the justice of my cause, but in your grace and mercy, for I know that if I were to rely on the justice of my cause and were confident because of it, you would rightly let me fall as one whose fall was just, because I relied upon my being right and not upon your sheer grace and kindness” (LW 46:123). The conscience of the Christian soldier must finally rest at the same place where the believer in every calling must find peace: the righteousness of Jesus Christ alone. All of our callings are the places where sin demonstrates its invasive power. None is righteous in himself. Our vocations continually drive us back to Christ and the forgiveness of sins that is in Him.

Military chaplains are there to deliver that forgiveness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. The weaponry of their warfare is spiritual. The Word of the cross they proclaim and the gifts of the Baptism and the Lord’s Supper they serve strengthen men and women in uniform to do their work with faith in Christ and love for the neighbor in the messiness of war.

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.
Life in the parish presents itself with many interesting theological challenges. After years of study for personal growth and the pursuit of academia, the parish pastor now studies for the sake of his flock and its eternal salvation. He pours over Pieper with a newfound interest and fervor. As new topics arise, he studies with enthusiasm that which seemed unimportant and mundane in the classroom. Every church has its own unique challenges and opportunities to proclaim the Gospel that demand further study.

The military chaplaincy is indeed unique. It is like no other. The military chaplain does not see his flock on Sunday for a few hours. He lives among his flock, carries the same pack, eats the same food, and faces the same dangers as his flock. He gets to know his people in a way that no other ministry affords. He knows everything about his flock, and they know everything about him. There are no secrets.

When people ask me about my tour in Iraq serving with a Marine infantry battalion (the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines), I describe it as condensing twenty years of ministry into seven months. There was no time to second-guess the theology I learned and studied. There was no time to go back to the books. It was a matter of life and death.
When people ask me about my tour in Iraq serving with a Marine infantry battalion (the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines), I describe it as condensing twenty years of ministry into seven months. There was no time to second-guess the theology I learned and studied. There was no time to go back to the books. It was a matter of life and death.

Soon after our arrival, we saw our first casualties. Two Iraqi soldiers died from a roadside bomb, and I quickly had to decide what to do. How would I treat these dead? Should I treat them any differently? What would be the effect on my Marines? I knelt by their bodies and prayed. “Are they going to heaven, Chaps?” asked one of my corpsmen. “That’s not my call. I’ll leave that one for God to decide,” I answered. I said the same prayer for all of the men who died. “Lord, into Your hands I commend this, Your child. Be merciful to him according to Your loving-kindness. Judge him not according to his works but according to his faith. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

There were many issues that arose. I had to deal head-on with death and killing in the line of duty. I had to deal with combat stress and homesickness, dear John letters and infidelity, and the weeks of uncertainty following Hurricane Katrina when many of my Marines worried about loved ones back home or whether there even be a home for them when they returned.

As I spoke with other chaplains, I found that our orthodox Lutheran faith offered the greatest hope and comfort to our men and women in combat. In particular, Luther’s discussion of the two kingdoms helped beyond measure. While other chaplains struggled to help their Marines who had to fire their weapons in the line of duty, the doctrine of vocation gave great comfort and peace.

Without a doubt, military chaplaincy is incredibly physically, spiritually, and emotionally demanding. Physically, I am reminded constantly of how young my Marines are as we carry our gear through the mountains or go for a five-mile fun run. Spiritually, it is demanding to be the voice of reason and hope in the midst of chaos.

God calls each and every one of us to be sons and daughters, wives, husbands, pastors, teachers, and the like, and each have specific duties and responsibilities. He also calls men and women into service in the Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard. We serve God in our vocation in the armed forces. We serve God as chaplains, nuclear operators, builders, electricians, storekeepers, administrative professionals, artillery, and infantry. At times, those duties are rather mundane. At other times, they are downright dangerous and exciting.

The two kingdoms help the members of our armed forces to see their service to our country as simultaneous service to God. In the kingdom of grace, God cares for His children through Word and Sacrament. He forgives our sins and showers us with His loving-kindness. In this kingdom, our sins are not held against us, and we are declared to be righteous and holy. In the kingdom of power, God cares for His children through public service. God feeds us through farmers, grocers, and cooks. God heals us through doctors, nurses, healthcare professionals, and medicines. God protects our homes through firemen and civil engineers. He protects the innocent through police on a local level and the military on a national or world level. The list is endless. We serve God by serving our neighbor in faith.

In Iraq, this theology helped many Marines and sailors. In the mind of a Marine, there is no greater honor than to serve in combat. They look down on those who never leave the wire, that is, they look down on those who stay in the safety of camp. Knowledge of the two kingdoms helped those who felt guilty about working in supply or administrative jobs and those who felt guilty for taking a life in combat. Those stuck in garrison realized that every job helps the overall mission of the Marine Corps and at the same time offers service to God. Those in battle were comforted to know that they were serving...
God in the kingdom of power by protecting the innocent and eliminating the bad. I even went so far as to pray with my snipers before a mission, giving them God’s blessing upon their missions.

The many memorial services also presented a unique challenge. There has been a lot of talk about the alleged restrictions put on Christian chaplains. However, by understanding the objections to Christian prayers, many chaplains freely pray in the name of Jesus. The objection is that a prayer in Jesus’ name does not account for the faith of others. By simply introducing himself as a Christian and asking non-Christians to find comfort according to their own faith, the chaplain is given permission to pray. Never apologize for the faith, but pray boldly allowing others to opt out if they desire. I approached every memorial assuming that one or more of the Marines was a Christian. Therefore, I had many opportunities to proclaim justification by grace through faith in Christ.

Without a doubt, military chaplaincy is incredibly physically, spiritually, and emotionally demanding. After returning home, I had to spend a lot of time at the VA hospital dealing with my own Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It is something with which I am learning to deal. Physically, I am reminded constantly of how young my Marines are as we carry our gear through the mountains or go for a five-mile fun run. Spiritually, it is demanding to be the voice of reason and hope in the midst of chaos.

At the same time, military chaplaincy affords rewards beyond measure. As God carried me and my Marines through the worst we could imagine, I saw faith grow. As I was called upon to go into combat without a weapon, I again saw faith grow, both mine and others. My Marines told me daily of how God saved them from certain death.

Throughout my travels, I have seen a number of churches that proclaim a theology of glory. It comes as no surprise that many chaplains also preach a theology of glory. When times are good, people flock to hear how their affluence and success are evidence that God has blessed them. But in the midst of war, that theology collapses under its own weight. Many believers will lose faith as they are led to believe that if they have enough faith, nothing bad will happen to them or their loved ones. On the contrary, our orthodox Lutheran doctrine provides comfort and peace in all situations.

The military chaplain has the opportunity to live out this life of faith every day. We take the Gospel where it is needed most. Now after returning home, God has called me to a new task. As the headmaster of Zion Lutheran Academy in Fort Wayne, Indiana, I was presented with a new set of challenges. But no matter what the future might hold, I will cling to the orthodox faith I learned in the catechism and the Lutheran Confessions. For it is this faith that provides comfort, peace, strength, and joy in good times and bad.

Lt Richard E Malmstrom (FMF), CHC, USN, is Battalion Chaplain serving NMCB Two Six.
Seminary Guild Looks Ahead

The Concordia Theological Seminary Guild would like to cordially invite you to attend the many exciting events the group has planned for the 2007–2008 school year. Here’s a look at what’s ahead.

September 11:  
Deaconess Presentation

Did you ever wonder what a deaconess is or what her role is in the Church? Are you considering becoming a deaconess yourself? If so, the Guild’s September meeting is for you. Beginning at 1 p.m. in Luther Hall, several women currently enrolled in the seminary’s deaconess program will give a presentation and answer any questions you may have about this exciting vocation. A business meeting will follow beginning at 2 p.m.

October 16: Donation Day with The Friends of Wyneken

This annual tradition at Concordia Theological Seminary will take place on Tuesday, October 16, from 9 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. The day will feature tours of the seminary campus and co-ops, a chapel service in Kramer Chapel, a coffee break with the students, greetings from the seminary president and the Indiana and Ohio LWML presidents, lunch, and a presentation by The Friends of Wyneken who will describe 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.

Thanks to the efforts the Friends of Wyneken, this local group has been instrumental in helping preserve this precious piece of history. If you are bringing donations, please plan to drop them off at the Food and Clothing Co-ops. Workers will be available to assist you.

November 13: Learn about Islam

Beginning at 1 p.m. in Luther Hall, the Guild’s November meeting will focus on the religion of Islam. CTS faculty member Dr. Adam Francisco will be the presenter.

December 11: Christmas Concert and Fellowship

Celebrate the birth of our Savior by attending a concert performed by the Seminary Kantorei in Kramer Chapel beginning at 1 p.m. A reception at the home of Linda Wenthe will immediately follow the concert.

January 8: Business Meeting

The Guild will gather to discuss business beginning at 1 p.m. in Ambrose Hall.

February 12:  
Program to Be Determined

March 11: Appreciation Luncheon

April 8: April Shower and Election of Guild Officers

Diapers, baby wipes, tissue, toys—these items may not sound like a lot, but they are precious to the children who use them at the seminary’s Christ Child Learning Center. Be sure to bring these items to the Seminary Guild’s annual April Shower for the Christ Child Learning Center. The shower will begin at 1 p.m. in Luther Hall and will be followed by a business meeting and election of Guild officers at 2 p.m.

The Seminary Guild strives to be inclusive of ladies of all ages, professions, and cultures. In doing so, 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. For additional information about the Seminary Guild, go to www.ctsfw.edu, select About CTS, and then select Seminary Guild.

□ 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.

□ Donation Day gift.
**Events**

50th Anniversary Kick-off Celebration
September 9
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2223

Opening Service
162nd Academic Year
September 9
3:00 pm.
Kramer Chapel

Sunday Brunch
Katherine Luther Dining Hall
11:00 am to 1:30 pm.
September 9
October 7, 2007

Prayerfully Consider Invitational Campus Visit
September 19-22
1-800-481-2155

Creation Museum Bus Trip
September 29
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2266

Seminary Donation Day
October 16
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2204

Good Shepherd Institute
November 4-6
1-877-287-4338, ext. 2204

**Music**

Organ Recital
November 4
4:30 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

All Saints Choral Vespers
November 4
7:30 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

**Continuing Education**

The Lutheran Way with the Liturgy
Kearney, NE
July 9-13
Naomichi Masaki, Ph.D.
Rev. North Sherrill
Zion Lutheran Church
2421 Ave. C
Kearney, NE 68847
308-234-3410
PastorSherrill@zelcs.org

History and Theology of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Austin, TX
July 23-26
Lawrence R. Rast, Ph.D.
Rev. Bryan Sullivan
Grace Lutheran Church
801 W. 11th St.
Elgin, TX 78621-2006
512-281-3367
graceelgin@totalaccess.net

The Gospel of Mark: A New Approach
Flathead Lake, MT
July 30-August 3
Peter J. Scaer, Ph.D.
Rev. George Draper
Trinity Lutheran Church
731 Knapp St.
Wolf Point, MT 59201
406-650-8033 or 406-653-3099
frgeorge@midivers.com

God’s Word in our Language – The Story of The English Bible
Fairhope, AL
Aug. 6-8
Cameron A. MacKenzie, Ph.D.
Rev. Ross Johnson
Re Redeemer Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 411
Fairhope, AL 36533
251-928-8397
pastor.johnson@hotmail.com

Are Today’s Ears Hearing the Timeless Message? Communicating Law and Gospel in Today’s Culture
Port Charlotte, FL
Aug., 13-15
Carl C. Fickenscher, Ph.D.
Rev. Kenneth Redmann
Lutheran Church of the Cross
2300 Luther Rd
Punta Gorda, FL 33983-2611
941-627-6060
pastor@lccross.org

**Retreats**

Lay Leadership Retreat
“Equipped to Serve”
October 5-7

Confirmation Retreat
“Saving with Water – God’s Work in Baptism”
October 19-21

Lutherhostel Retreat
“Living with Luther”
October 30 - November 3
Concordia Theological Seminary rejoiced on May 6, 2007 at the Consecration of the Rev. Vsevolod Lytkin as Bishop of The Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church. Archbishop Andres Podor of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church was the chief consecrator at the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Tallinn, Estonia. President Wenthe, Dr. Timothy Quill, and Dr. William Weinrich represented the seminary. Concordia Theological Seminary has supported Bishop Lytkin’s leadership in establishing a seminary program by deploying the Rev. Alan Ludwig and sending professors as needed to Novosibirsk, Siberia. This seminary has become the source of faithful Lutheran pastors who have established preaching stations and congregations throughout Siberia. What a wonderful day for this exciting missionary work to be recognized by all the bishops of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Concordia Theological Seminary is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate and partner with Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin and his pastors.

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
I remember, I was silly and young,
I heard from my parent
How my parent destroyed
The Church of Christ the Savior.

You know that this is not black Russian humor. There is history in these words, history of my country of Russia as well as history of your country of Estonia, since by evil destiny you were forced to share our sufferings with us. For over fifty years, you were part of the Soviet Union, the country that was founded by hangmen and tsar-murderers.

This country is no more. We now live in free democratic countries. Still, almost all of us have come out of that Soviet time. Some people were touched more by this, others less. Some tried to oppose the regime, others have realized all the terror of the Soviet system only after its fall.

“I remember I was silly and young.” From a Christian perspective, one realizes that the most terrible thing was that such a great multitude of people was born in unbelief. They lived all their life in unbelief and the most terrible thing is that they also died in unbelief. I don’t like to speak about politics, particularly while preaching, but it’s impossible to forget those times. I remember them especially when I visit Estonia, as it was here that all my Christian life began at that time.

Just like many others, I was looking for God. I remember how “silly and young” I was, yet, gradually, little by little, I began to seek answers to eternal questions. My family was not Christian. Nevertheless, my parents taught me not to trust Soviet propaganda, and so I did not. Since Soviet propaganda said that God did not exist, it seemed quite likely that he did. Thus my Christian faith began due to my parents, though they did not tell me about God directly.

Like many other people at that time, we also understood that it was impossible for God not to exist. What would one live for if one’s life were limited to earth, not even in a sense that we were just temporary dwellers on this earth, but, as one priest said, it was impossible for God not to exist. What would one live for something besides this material world, in which we live, only at the time, and I tried to find quotations from the Bible in them, words about God, and I found them and tried to understand. Obviously, the atheists quoted the word of God only for critique. But, we were Soviet people—we got used to interpreting all things official backwards.

Finally, God’s grace led me to Estonia. Here I met Christians for the first time in my life. I will never forget how I talked to an old man who was the guard at the Holy Spirit Church. Then I spoke with the wife of Pastor Jaan Kiivit, and finally with the pastor himself.

I was twenty when I came here for the first time in order to find the Lutheran church. I did not know anybody. I had virtually no money, and I lived at the train station for a week and memorized Luther’s Catechism.

I would never dare do that now. But then I came back to the train station every evening and tried to find a seat on a bench in the waiting hall area. There were a limited number of seats. I was surrounded mostly by similar poor travelers, and also alcoholics and homeless people. It is so strange to recall it now. But I learnt the Catechism, and then Jaan Kiivit baptized me. This is how my Christian life began here in Estonia during the old Soviet era.

You know, these words are perfectly descriptive of the Soviet life! Certainly, my parents did not participate directly in the destruction of Christianity, but a number of people participated on a global scale in the construction of society with no room for God. Wily rulers deceived them by promises of earthly paradise, and they gullibly followed them.

Afterwards it was too late. Millions of Christians were tortured in prison camps; thousands of churches were blown up and demolished. To be sure, the Orthodox Church suffered the most, but other confessions also shared in that horrible slaughter.

As you know, we have no Lutheran church buildings left in Siberia. All that could be destroyed was destroyed. The last Lutheran church building—St. Peter’s in Barnaul—was destroyed in the early seventies.

So, what a grace has been given to us that this regime did not outlive us, but, rather, we outlived it! And we have not become only passive witnesses of its end but rather participants of building a new life.

It is so, because God placed us in the ministry in his church. We save people’s souls through the word of God and the holy sacraments. Can there be anything more wonderful than this task? This, nevertheless, is not of us; it is only due to Christ. It is he who came to us with his word. However little this word was to be seen in the articles in the atheistic books, nevertheless, God helped us to see his word there.

And he called us through this word, just as we read in today’s Gospel:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden . . .

(Matt 11:28a)

The word of God always fulfills that for which God sends it. One believed secretly, and then he began to believe openly.
Another remembered the faith of his parents, and yet another began to seek and he found. You can meet such people, laymen and priests, in every parish. One of my colleagues almost joined the Communist Party, but he heard the gospel and was captivated by this news to such an extent that he finally left everything, took his wife and children and a box of potatoes, and went to work as a missionary, and then he became a priest. This is how miraculously God acts in our lives.

Today’s sermon is based on the Old Testament reading in our church lectionary. It is taken from the twelfth chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah. This chapter describes the joy of deliverance, but it is not limited to description; it is rather a praise song of God’s people, gratitude to God for his miraculous gifts.

It is obvious that this song of praise had a liturgical meaning because one may see a number of parallels here with the other hymns of praise, most notably with the Hallel psalms that the Old Testament church was signing at the Passover (and other celebrations) while thanking God for the gift of deliverance.

Our chapter has much in common with Psalm 118. As you may remember, we sang this Psalm on Easter Sunday.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. . . . I thank thee that thou hast answered me and hast become my salvation.

(Ps 118:14, 21)

Salvation is a major theme of both the Psalter and today’s text from Isaiah. The key word here is yoshuakh, which is related to the name of our Savior:

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

(Is 12:2)

We also sing another part of Psalm 118 every Sunday. We sing “Blessed is he who comes in the names of the Lord!” when we greet Christ who comes to us in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

God comes to save us. Just as the people of old were saved from Egyptian slavery, so also have we been saved from the slavery of sin and death through the death and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Christ—Joshua—has become our salvation. He has come to us in order to bring liberty to the oppressed and to give rest to all who labor and are heavy laden:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

(Matt 11:28–30)

That is:
Come to me, all who carry heavy burdens of life, And I will give you rest…

Take my yoke, not yours. Take my burden, not yours.

The yoke that our Lord gives to us is quite unlike those yokes to which we are accustomed to bearing in this world. There is no violence and oppression here, as Christ is gentle and lowly in heart.

It is not difficult to see here an idea of blessed exchange, so loved by Luther. Those carrying their burdens may take them off their shoulders and take another one, which is of Christ. Those tired and looking for rest may find it with Christ, Son of God who humbled himself, took the form of a servant, and also took our sins upon himself so that he could present his righteousness to us.

He brings salvation to us as a gift. He does not require from us to redeem our own sins but grants forgiveness to repentant sinners at every liturgy. It is only in him that a soul of a sinner who is thirsty for forgiveness and reconciliation with God may find rest:

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

(Matt 11:29–30)

As children we were taught that only obedient children receive the gifts. However, the gifts of God are given to us without any qualifications or conditions. God does not postpone his grace until people do something. God freely gives his blessings. (If I have to become somebody or do something for my salvation, if I have to earn salvation, then there is no grace here but only unrealizable Law.)

We can do nothing to be saved. The Lord does not require it from us. He came and died for us and rose even before we were born. He still continues to come and serve us by giving his true body and blood to us at the Eucharist. Through these he strengthens our faith and gives us power to follow him into the kingdom of his Father.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

(Is 12:3)

Remember your baptism now. Remember how God accepted you and how you became a Christian. Maybe, we do not remember it often, but today God gives us a new opportunity to thank him and rejoice that water from the wells of salvation was poured also on us, that we are saved, and that nobody may snatch us from the hands of Christ.

And you will say in that day: “Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name; make known his deeds among the nations, proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.”

(Is 12:4–5)

God always makes great things, even if it seems to us at times that he is idle. Isaiah wrote at a terrible time, when her enemies were threatening to destroy God’s people. The strong
ones of this world attempted to destroy the chosen nation and her monotheistic faith. The hearers of Isaiah may have found it difficult to believe that their God would be known in all the earth. The ancient prophecies are, generally speaking, an unusual thing. They are spoken, and then time seemingly stops for ages until it finally wakes up and resumes moving. The powerful ones think that all the power is in their hands. Therefore they create empires and call cities in their honor, they build monuments and mausoleums for themselves. But in the end, it turns out that time is not in their hands. Time is in God’s hands.

A day comes when that which seemed indestructible and unshakeable is destroyed. People in all the earth are given knowledge of God, acquire faith, come to church, are baptized, and bring their children. The church grows—this is how God acts in our lives.

Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is 12:6)

Brothers and sisters, the Lord is in our midst. We are able to hear his word and partake of him. He comes so close to us in the sacrament of Eucharist that we can even touch him.

Eucharist does not only connect us to Christ, but also unites us with each other.

It is so wonderful to have spiritual fellowship with the brothers with whom we share a common faith. However, the special character of this day for us Siberian people is that not only have we been one in faith with the Church of Estonia, but, for a long time, we have also been a part of her. Now we become the autocephalous church. Still, though we are independent, the Church of Estonia will always remain a spiritual mother to us. No matter what happens, we will always remember the many years in which you cared for us.

No matter what happens . . . We went through a number of things together. And who knows what else we will have to go through. We know how the church buildings, even those that are large and sturdy, are destroyed. We know also how fragile temples of human lives are destroyed. It happened often—and who knows—it may happen again. Who knows what the future has in store for us. Global warming, materialism, street extremism, Islamic terrorism, liberal theology: there are so many terrifying and deadly things around us!

But Christ is among us, both now and forever. Neither death nor hell nor the devil may change that. We will receive forgiveness of sins, rest, and a blessed eternity in Christ. Amen.

Rev. Charlie Ravelonjato received his M.Div. from CTS in November, 2001. He was born and raised in Madagascar. He received his university education in Russia. During his time at CTS, he traveled to Haiti for his vicarage. He now serves at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Brampton, Ontario. He is married to Tanya and they have four children: Steve, Emilio, Veronica, and Christian.

Presenters from all over the world and even our own church body address our students over lunch in the Katherine Luther Dining Hall or the Student Commons.
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as we celebrate the wonderful heritage of Concordia Senior College and Concordia Theological Seminary for the 50th Anniversary of the dedication of our award-winning Saarinen campus!

Opening Service Sunday 50th Anniversary Celebration 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Brunch

September 9, 2007

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In Kramer Chapel
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Kneeling in the Mud
Dr. Daniel Gard

Chaplaincy in Action
Lt Richard Malmstrom

Spiritual & Physical Wellness
Rev. Albert Wingfield

For the Life of the World
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

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17 Kneeling in the Mud
by Dr. Daniel Gard

Since September 11, 2001, the lives of our citizens and especially those citizens in uniform have radically changed. Christians may differ on the political issues of the war in Iraq, but what cannot be debated is that those who serve in the armed forces are more than cogs in a military machine. They are human beings who need the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Son of God comes into our world right in the midst of the muck and mire of our own making. Yet he comes not to condemn us, but to bring us his own righteousness and peace to those who know only sin and warfare.

18 Bringing the Word to God’s People
by Pam Knepper

Rev. Kavouras serves as the chaplain for the Cleveland EMS, the police department, as well as the FBI helping to provide comfort and light in the middle of so much darkness by bringing the people who work in those departments the Word of God. The sacramental understanding of the ministry became even more important on September 11, 2001.

23 Chaplaincy in Action
by Lt. Richard Malmstrom

Without a doubt, military chaplaincy is incredibly physically, spiritually and emotionally demanding. Spiritually, it is demanding to be the voice of reason and hope in the midst of chaos. At the same time, military chaplaincy affords rewards beyond measure. As God carried Lt. Malmstrom and his Marines through the storms they could imagine, he saw faith grow. Every church has its own unique challenges and opportunities to proclaim the Gospel. The military chaplaincy is indeed unique. It is like no other.

4 Chaplain in Training
by Shawn Found

8 A Life of Service...Continued
by Valerie Kister