Do Lutherans Do Apologetics?
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Likewise, the modern apologist says merely that if there are certain objections to the faith that can be addressed by reasonable appeals to evidence—or certain foundational facts that can be similarly established—then by all means, when speaking to the rational unbeliever, make every possible use of reason and evidence. By all means, tear down the intellectual barriers the skeptic has constructed to “protect” himself from a confrontation with the Gospel. No, doing so will not argue anyone into faith. But by means of reasonable and persuasive argument, as by means of the Law, “every mouth may be silenced” (Romans 3:19). And with mouths closed, perhaps way is made for ears to be opened.

Current Apologetic Fronts: Atheism and Islam
By Dr. Adam Francisco

Proponents of Islam and atheism know that the best way to discredit their common enemy of Christianity is to raise doubts over the object of its faith. So they have both directed their attacks to the records of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Historic and creedal Christianity, however, knows that such challenges are really nothing new. Still, this is not an excuse to ignore them, nor is it reason for Christians to further separate themselves from an increasingly hostile culture. Instead, it is a reminder that Christians must now, as always, be prepared to “make a defense” (1 Peter 3:15) for the hope that is ours in Christ as we “contend for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

The Battle for Your Mind
By Dr. Angus Menuge

Sensing the intellectual weakness of contemporary Christians, the so-called “new atheists” have mounted a ferocious attack on Christianity . . . In many ways, this has been a blessing in disguise. Bewildered and unprepared Christians have been awoken to the need to defend their faith. They have flocked to seminars on apologetics. And they have been encouraged by a torrent of articulate and scholarly replies to the skeptical onslaught. We can outdo our critics in admitting the weaknesses of individual Christians but show that God is not a delusion and that authentic Christianity has been great for civilization in many ways that have been forgotten.
The seminary’s mission statement says much in a few words: “Concordia Theological Seminary forms servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all.” These three outcomes are expressions of our one faith in Christ. They entail our confession of the Holy Trinity as expressed in the Apostles’, Nicean, and Athanasian Creeds; our commitment to the authority of the Sacred Scriptures; and our unqualified subscription to the Lutheran Confessions.

This issue of *For the Life of the World* focuses in a particular way on our mission “to reach the lost.” In fact, when one rightly understands Sacred Scripture, this mission is God’s mission. “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

One servant of this mission “to reach the lost” is to share the terrible threat posed by false alternatives. For instance, out of love and concern for the lost, we are called to name and describe the false and deceptive powers that posture themselves as “divine” but that are, in fact, deadly to soul and to body. Sacred Scripture consistently and precisely does this for the hearer and the reader.

Moses writes, “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God” (Exodus 20:3–5a).

When Job challenged the status and character of God, the Lord addresses him with a series of questions (Job 38–41) that illustrate how inadequate humanity is to challenge the true God. For example, how can Job, or anyone, answer the question: “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell Me if you understand”? (Job 38:4)

While Joshua warned the chosen people against placing their love and trust in any other place and emphatically not in the gods of the Canaanites (Joshua 24:15), by the time of Elijah, the vast majority had embraced the worship of the Baals. Elijah was called to demonstrate publicly how false and impotent were the Baals and Asherah by confronting four-hundred-and-fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of Asherah.

The challenge is satirically direct. When Baal did not answer the petitions and cries of his prophets, Elijah taunts them with the reality of his inability to answer, even his non-existence.

“At noon Elijah began to taunt them. ‘Shout louder!’ he said. ‘Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened’” (1 Kings 18:27).

This prophetic expression of love for the people continues throughout the history of God’s people. Alongside the constant call to repent and return to the true, loving, and merciful God were a warning and critique of the empty idols that only reduced and emptied human beings of their significance and status as the apex of God’s creative work (Genesis 1–2).

Isaiah similarly exhibits the mad irony of worshiping an idol.

“Half the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, ‘Oh! I am warm; I see the fire.’ From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, ‘Save me; you are my god’” (Isaiah 44:16–17).

How fitting also for our day is Isaiah’s warning! Reflect on what men and women live for today: pride, power, pleasure, possessions. To elevate any of these to the purpose of human life—to give them the place of God—is to reduce us to shallow, materialistic beings who are finally captive to death. However much we succeed and acquire and consume, it will all disappear for idols are impotent.

Indeed, God’s love for us in the gift of Christ delivers us from what is false and failing. Jesus, with the prophets, announces the one true God:


With Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, and Jesus’ own witness, Concordia Theological Seminary confesses the beauty, wonder, and oneness of the blessed and Holy Trinity: the one and only God. We invite all the lost to see the infinite mercy of God in sending His only Son to save the world. And we accompany that invitation with a loving warning against every force—whether within or without—that would represent itself as a god and thereby destroy human beings. This loving warning has been called apologetics, or rather, a defense of the truth over against all that is false.

Enjoy this issue of *For the Life of the World* with its focus on apologetics. May the Lord give us clarity of mind and charity of heart, under God’s grace, to reach the lost by unveiling to their eyes the false and revealing to their hearts the infinite love, grace, and mercy of the true God exhibited definitively in Christ.

Yours, in His service,

Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
In this issue implicitly devoted to what is known among the theological disciplines as apologetics—the intellectual defense of the faith—it is well worth addressing the often heard objection that “Lutherans don’t do apologetics.” When heard, this claim is frequently followed by a supporting statement to the effect that, “You can’t argue people into faith.” For good measure, the historically-minded might even point out that Martin Luther himself had some not very nice things to say about theological appeals to fallen human reason.
And while each of these statements might be true, each also needs to be thoroughly qualified. To say that Lutherans don’t do apologetics may be, unfortunately, largely true as a simple description of recent North American Lutheranism. Yet it is certainly not the case that Lutherans have always been averse to the project, as becomes evident even upon examining the prolegomena of many seventeenth-century Lutheran dogmatic works.

Similarly, it is indeed true that Luther, in high polemical mode, did sometimes rail against reason’s misuse and abuse. Yet in less polemical writings—the Small Catechism, for example—he is quick to point out that reason is, of course, one of God’s good gifts. And even in his more controversial writings he could admit that “we must use our reason or else give way to the fanatics” (AE 37:224).

But this is not at all to suggest that one can argue people into faith. Doing so, however, is not the task of apologetics. Given that faith is created by God Himself via the proclamation of the Gospel, the primary apologetic task might simply be characterized as addressing those intellectual objections the unbeliever raises in an attempt to dismiss a clear proclamation of the Gospel. And quite understandably, these objections are most frequently aimed at matters of empirical fact, the sorts of Christian claims that might at least in theory be verified or falsified by some logical or investigatory means. The reason this is perfectly understandable is that Christianity, unlike most world religions, is firmly grounded in objective historical events.

To ask whether Jesus existed, or whether He publicly claimed to be God incarnate, or whether He rose from death in order to establish that claim is not at all to ask an esoteric “religious” question such as, “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” It is to ask a question about objective, historical facts. It is, therefore, not surprising that the apostles themselves regularly appealed to empirical evidence in their proclamation of Christ. John insists that he writes about what he and his companions “have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched” (1 John 1:1). Peter, presenting the case for Christ to a hostile audience, not only reminds his hearers that he was an eyewitness to the events described, but refers to these events having happened “as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22).

Likewise, the modern apologist says merely that if there are certain objections to the faith that can be addressed by reasonable appeals to evidence—or certain foundational facts that can be similarly established—then by all means, when speaking to the rational unbeliever, make every possible use of reason and evidence. By all means, tear down the intellectual barriers the skeptic has constructed to “protect” himself from a confrontation with the Gospel. No, doing so will not argue anyone into faith. But by means of reasonable and persuasive argument, as by means of the Law, “every mouth may be silenced” (Romans 3:19). And with mouths closed, perhaps way is made for ears to be opened.

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Rev. Korey D. Maas is Assistant Professor of Theology and Church History at Concordia University Irvine, where he holds the 2008–2009 Harry and Caroline Trembath Chair in Confessional Theology. He is also currently a Guest Tutor at Westfield House of Theological Studies, Cambridge, England, and a Visiting Fellow in the Cambridge University Faculty of Divinity.
American Christianity has always found itself in tension with secular culture. Very recently, however, two challenges with future ambitions have surfaced within that culture: atheism and Islam. The former seeks to overhaul the theistic heritage of the West with the purportedly scientific worldview of naturalism (or materialism). The latter attempts, with great stealth, to influence—and ultimately to dominate—secular space and popular religious discourse as part of its mission to advance the “cause of Allah.”
Ten years ago, neither would have been taken too seriously. Atheism seemed to be on its way out, and Islam was viewed as a foreign, if not exotic, religion. Things changed, however, at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

On September 12, 2001, Sam Harris started writing his bestselling *End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (2004). Attempting to explain the roots of ideologically-inspired violence, he pointed at theology and religious faith in general. Other more-seasoned atheists such as Richard Dawkins seized the opportunity to publish extensive critiques of Christianity in particular. Comedian and outspoken agnostic Bill Maher went so far as to write and star in what was the most successful documentary of 2008—the portmanteau of religion and ridiculous—*Religulous*. The combined wit and sarcasm of these and other public critics of Christianity have guaranteed them an enormous amount of popularity in various media and academic environments.

Amidst this anti-Christian milieu, Muslim organizations have been busy constructing a kinder, gentler image of Islam. Counting on our general ignorance of world religions, they have been largely successful at passing it off as “the religion of peace.” And they have also moved on to fulfill the Quran’s injunction to “cause Islam to prevail over all other religions” (9:33) by advancing it as a simple, rational, and moral religion.

Proponents of Islam and atheism know that the best way to discredit their common enemy of Christianity is to raise doubts over the object of its faith. So they have both directed their attacks to the records of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. In *God Is Not Great* (2007), after suggesting Jesus may not have been a historical personage at all, Christopher Hitchens claims that biblical scholars no longer trust the canonical gospels as historical documents. Louay FATOOhI, an Iraqi-born Christian and now British convert to Islam, argues similarly in *Mystery of the Historical Jesus* (2007) and *Mystery of the Crucifixion* (2008). He goes a step further, however, and asserts that the best record of Jesus’ life is the Quran (where Jesus escapes crucifixion, ascends into heaven, and awaits His return on Judgment Day when He will denounce those who confess Him to be the Son of God). What is so interesting about all these attacks on the historicity of the Christian faith is that they all cite modern biblical scholarship—particularly that of Bart Ehrman whose books are widely used in religious studies departments across the country—to support their assertions.

This is all taking place at a time when many Christians have grown complacent of the apologetic task. This is a potential recipe for disaster. Historic and creedal Christianity, however, knows that such challenges are really nothing new. Still, this is not an excuse to ignore them, nor is it reason for Christians to further separate themselves from an increasingly hostile culture. Instead, it is a reminder that Christians must now, as always, be prepared to “make a defense” (1 Peter 3:15) for the hope that is ours in Christ as we “contend for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

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*Dr. Adam S. Francisco is Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana.*
Contending for the Faith

May 1–2, 2009
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Integral to the task of Christian witness in a secular and pluralistic culture is the ability to articulate and defend the truthfulness of the Gospel. Concordia Theological Seminary is, therefore, pleased to offer “Contending for the Faith in the Twenty-first Century.” The goal of this conference is simple: to encourage and equip Christians for the task of “always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks for the reason for the hope among us” (1 Peter 3:15). Presentations will be made on a variety of topics from atheism to Islam as well as the historical, contemporary, and practical considerations of Christian witness. Attendees can expect to leave the conference with greater confidence, understanding, and insight into the nature and task of Christian witness in the public sphere.

Schedule
Friday, May 1

6:00 p.m. Registration in Sihler Auditorium
6:45 p.m. Welcome—Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President and Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
Introduction—Dr. Adam S. Francisco, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
7:00–8:30 p.m. Three Mission Contexts: Which One Are We In?—Rev. Dr. Robert D. Newton, District President, California-Nevada-Hawaii District, LCMS
8:30–9:00 p.m. Q and A
9:00–10:00 p.m. Registration in Sihler Auditorium

Saturday, May 2

7:00 a.m. Registration in Sihler Auditorium
8:00–9:00 a.m. Contending for the Faith through the Centuries (in an Hour)—Dr. Adam S. Francisco
9:15–10:30 a.m. Cruciform Apologetics—Dr. Jeff Mallinson, Academic Dean, Trinity Lutheran College (Everett, WA)
10:45–12:00 p.m. Exposing the Materialist Delusion: How Human and Divine Agency Survive the Materialist Onslaught—Dr. Angus J. L. Menuge, Professor of Philosophy, Concordia University (Mequon, WI)
12:00–1:00 p.m. Lunch
1:15–2:30 p.m. Answering Muslim Objections to the Christian Faith—Mr. Sam Shamoun, Author and Missionary, answeringislam.org
2:45–3:45 p.m. Imaginative Apologetics: C. S. Lewis and the Defense of the Christian Faith—Rev. Dr. Steven Mueller, Professor of Theology and Dean of Christ College, Concordia University (Irvine, CA)
4:00–5:15 p.m. A Lawyer Amongst the Artists: Legal and Literary Apologetics—Mr. Craig Parton, Esq., Lawyer and United States Director of the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism, and Human Rights
5:15–5:30 p.m. Closing

Yes! I want to attend “Contending for the Faith” at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

Name: ________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: ____ Zip:__________
Telephone:________________________ E-mail address: ______________________

Seminar Fee: $50 (includes lunch and refreshments)

Registration: Mail completed form to: Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46825. Or you may call 260-452-2250; e-mail retreats@ctsfw.edu, or visit our Web site: www.ctsfw.edu/retreats

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Speakers

Dr. Adam S. Francisco
Adam Francisco graduated from Concordia University (Irvine, California) with an M.A. in Theology. Afterwards he moved to England where he studied Arabic and Islamic theology at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. He earned both the M.St. and D.Phil. for his work in the history of Christian-Muslim relations at the University of Oxford. Dr. Francisco was also the Albin Salton Fellow at the University of London from 2004–2005. He then joined the History Department of Concordia College (Bronxville, New York) until his recent appointment as Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary. Dr. Francisco’s publications include Theologia et Apologia: Essays in Reformation Theology and Its Defense and Martin Luther and Islam.

Dr. Jeff Mallinson
Jeff Mallinson serves as Academic Dean of Trinity Lutheran College, an independent and pan-Lutheran, biblically-based liberal arts college in Everett, Washington. Dr. Mallinson graduated from Concordia University (Irvine, California) and completed his doctorate with the theology faculty at Oxford, focusing on epistemology in the Reformation era. His resulting published dissertation, essays, and presentations tend to involve the application of Reformation-era thought (especially Luther’s theology of the cross) to contemporary philosophical concerns.

Dr. Angus J. L. Menuge
Angus Menuge earned a B.A. in philosophy from Warwick University; a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; and a Diploma in Christian Apologetics from the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism and Human Rights, Strasbourg, France. An adult convert to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Menuge is currently Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University Wisconsin. He is the author of Agents Under Fire: Materialism and the Rationality of Science, Science and the Savior, The Lutheran Difference: Christian Vocation, and editor of C. S. Lewis: Lightbearer in the Shadowlands, Christ and Culture in Dialogue, and Reading God’s World: The Scientific Vocation. Menuge has presented around the U.S. on Christian apologetics, intelligent design, and the vocation of scientist, and has debated a variety of skeptics, most recently P. Z. Myers.

Rev. Dr. Steven P. Mueller
Steven Mueller is Professor of Theology and Dean of Christ College undergraduate studies at Concordia University (Irvine, California). He holds academic degrees from Christ College (B.A.), Concordia Theological Seminary (M.Div., S.T.M.), and Durham University in England, where he earned his Ph.D. His numerous publications include Called to Believe, Teach, and Confess: An Introduction to Doctrinal Theology and Not a Tame God: Christ in the Writings of C. S. Lewis.

Rev. Dr. Robert D. Newton
Robert Newton, a 1977 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, served as an evangelistic missionary to the Kankanay people in the Philippines from 1977–83. He returned to the States in July of 1983 to pursue graduate studies at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. He completed his doctorate in education in 1993 at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Rev. Newton served as Professor of World Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary from 1985 until 1998. For the 1996–97 academic year, he was on sabbatical with his family serving the Gutnius Lutheran Church in Papua, New Guinea, under the Board for Mission Services. In 1998, he accepted a call as senior pastor to First Immanuel Lutheran Church, an urban, multicultural congregation in San Jose, California, and continued in that ministry until being elected President of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District in 2003.

Mr. Craig Parton, Esq.
Craig Parton is a trial lawyer and partner with the oldest law firm in the Western United States, located in Santa Barbara, California. He received his Master’s degree in Christian Apologetics under Dr. John Warwick Montgomery at the Simon Greenleaf School of Law. Mr. Parton then took his Juris Doctorate at the University of California, Hastings Law School in San Francisco. Craig Parton is also the United States Director of the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism and Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. He is the author of three books, including The Defense Never Rests: A Lawyer’s Quest for the Gospel. He has published articles in both law reviews and in numerous theological journals, including Modern Reformation, Logia–A Journal of Lutheran Theology, and the Global Journal of Classical Theology. His latest book, just released in August of 2008, is entitled Religion on Trial.

Also presenting:

Mr. Sam Shamoun
Sam Shamoun was born in Kuwait, though raised largely in the U.S. in a Christian home. During his adolescent years, Mr. Shamoun’s faith was confronted by and challenged with the teachings of Islam as the one true religion. This encounter shook Mr. Shamoun and thus began his intense study of Scripture especially in relevance to Muslim objections. Considered by scholars and theologians to be an authority on the teachings of Islam as well as Christianity, he currently writes for one of the world’s most highly recognized Web sites, www.answering-islam.org, which challenges the teachings of Islam. In addition to the countless articles he has written for the Web site, Mr. Shamoun lectures around the country and has engaged in debates nationwide as an apologist addressing many of the objections and obstacles presented by Islam against the Christian faith.

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In 1963, Harry Blamires’s book *The Christian Mind: How Should a Christian Think* warned that there was no longer a Christian mind in post-Christian Europe. There was still a reservoir of Christian values, but even intelligent Christians had lost the ability to think Christianly about the world. According to Mark Noll in *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, despite America’s greater Christian vigor, the Christian mind has suffered here as well. Starting in the late nineteenth century, universities and even seminaries were increasingly influenced by the naturalistic assumptions of modern science, doubting the miraculous and reducing Jesus to an ideal human example. Many Christians responded by withdrawing from the intellectual world, which only accelerated its secularization.

Today, this means that almost everything the academy calls knowledge is deeply conditioned by a secular outlook. This may not matter in the case of basic facts (there is no so-called Christian periodic table), but it does matter when we consider questions of meaning, value, and...
purpose. Is work simply a means to gain revenue, or is it a calling from God to serve one’s neighbor? Are human beings merely biological and sociological resources, or are they especially made in the image of a God who also redeemed them?

The abdication of Christian thought to secularism has produced the confused and divided Christians of today. In *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity From its Cultural Captivity*, Nancy Pearcey has shown that contemporary evangelicals have conflicted, two-story minds. In the lower story, one finds the realm of objective fact, scientific materialism, and secularism reign. Ethics, religion, and meaning are relegated to the upper story of subjective, personal opinion where knowledge is impossible.

This is why some Christians are afraid to confess that Jesus is the *only* way of salvation. And it is a reason some reject apologetics: if faith is like a private preference for rum truffles, how can it possibly be defended? While some argue that we should simply get on with preaching the Gospel, the great Presbyterian theologian J. Gresham Machen long ago revealed the weakness in this approach in his *The Importance of Christian Scholarship in the Defense of the Faith*:

When men talk thus about propagating Christianity without defending it, the thing that they are propagating is pretty sure not to be Christianity at all [but] . . . an anti-intellectualistic, non-doctrinal Modernism; and the reason why it requires no defense is simply that it is so completely in accord with the current of the age.

Machen has been proved correct. With no way to defend Christian doctrine as truth, say Christian Smith and Melissa Denton in *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, many of today’s Christian teenagers subscribe to an unbiblical moralistic therapeutic deism. In this vision, God is a comforting spiritual abstraction who exists to make you feel good about yourself but who does not pester you with any actual teachings or demands on your life.

Sensing the intellectual weakness of contemporary Christians, the so-called “new atheists” have mounted a ferocious attack on Christianity, which can be clearly seen in works such as Sam Harris’ *Letter to a Christian Nation* and Richard Dawkins’ *The God Delusion*. In many ways, this has been a blessing in disguise. Bewildered and unprepared Christians have been awoken to the need to defend their faith. They have flocked to seminars on apologetics. And they have been encouraged by a torrent of articulate and scholarly replies to the skeptical onslaught. We can outdo our critics in admitting the weaknesses of individual Christians but show that God is not a delusion and that authentic Christianity has been great for civilization in many ways that are often forgotten.

Really, we can see this situation as a gift, an opportunity to recapture the idea of Christian truths, and to show the world just how much Christianity has to offer. I am delighted to see Concordia Theological Seminary moving boldly in this direction.

*Dr. Angus Menuge is Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University Mequon. After obtaining his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in philosophy, he was awarded the Diploma in Christian Apologetics from the International Academy of Apologetics in Strasbourg, France, in 2003.*

*We can outdo our critics in admitting the weaknesses of individual Christians but show that God is not a delusion and that authentic Christianity has been great for civilization in many ways that are often forgotten.*
As part of the mission of Concordia Theological Seminary “to care for all,” an expansive Playscape is being constructed in the spring of 2009. This will provide an educational, safe, and fun place for families to gather and children to play. The Playscape project has been a vision for many years. The grassy east end of the 191-acre campus has always been designated for exercise and recreation. As such, it is a natural and safe setting for children to play, especially while other siblings may be playing on the soccer fields. The Playscape will be designed on the basis of some of the most well-known biblical stories. There will be a small Noah’s Ark, the Tower of Babel, the Sinai Rock Wall, Jacob’s Ladder, and other replicas.

In anticipation of the Volunteer Build Week of May 5–9, 2009, Concordia Theological Seminary hosted the “Children of the Heavenly Father” Dinner and Auction on Saturday, February 7. The temperature proved to be one of the warmest nights this winter, and how appropriate it was as the seminary and the local community were thinking about constructing a beautiful, Bible-themed Playscape!

“Everything about this evening was top drawer!” said Mr. Dennis Becker, one of Saturday night’s guests, as he departed. After a silent auction and delicious dinner, Mr. Jerry Ehle of Schrader Real Estate & Auction led the guests through an energetic live auction in which attendees bid on a number of gifts. When the evening was over, Concordia Theological Seminary raised thousands of dollars toward this project. “I wish to thank all the faculty, staff, students, and local people who supported this wonderful community event,” said Rev. Tim Puls, Assistant Vice-President of Church Relations. “Numerous people said that the evening was top notch and well done.”

On account of both the gracious donors of greater Allen County who donated gifts for the auction as well as generous bidders that evening, a net amount of over $20,000 was raised to help purchase the needed supplies to construct the Playscape in May.

“As we draw closer to May 5–9, we are looking for volunteers to build,” said Rev. Puls. “With a little help here and there from individuals, churches, and organizations, we are on our way to building an area on our beautiful campus that children and families will all enjoy.” For each of the last eight years, Concordia Theological Seminary hosted the Grand Ol’e Lutheran Fellowship (GOLF) Benefit as way to build seed money for the Playscape on campus. This Playscape is intended to further enhance the adjacent athletic fields and gymnasium that are presently utilized by a number of Allen County sports, civic, and religious organizations. It is also a viable way to increase the physical fitness and wellness of the children of the community within a safe environment and location.

We would like to invite you to find out more about Playscape by visiting our Web site at www.ctsfw.edu/playscape, e-mailing us at playscape@ctfw.edu, or by calling the Playscape Coordinator at 260-452-2223. Volunteer during build week, or just stop by to see what all the buzz is about.
We’re on our way!

To date we have raised $115,000 toward our $200,000 goal!

For more information contact:
Concordia Theological Seminary
Playscape Coordinator
(260) 452-2223
playscape@ctsfw.edu

Volunteer During Build Week!

Area(s) I’d like to volunteer (please check all that apply):

- Construction: Help with building
- Materials: Help obtain materials from local businesses
- Tools: Work on site with power tools (must be 16+ years old)
- Fundraising: Help with events to raise funds
- Child Care: Watch children of volunteers during site construction (on campus)
- Food: Prepare and/or provide food for workers

Day(s) I’d like to volunteer: [ ] May 5 [ ] May 6 [ ] May 7 [ ] May 8 [ ] May 9
I need free dorm housing: [ ] May 5 [ ] May 6 [ ] May 7 [ ] May 8 [ ] May 9

Volunteer Name:

Address: ____________________________

City ____________________ State ______ Zip ______

Phone: ___________________________

E-mail: __________________________

Contact the Playscape Coordinator with any questions:
260-452-2223 or playscape@ctsfw.edu

Please return this form to: Playscape Coordinator, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825.
In our country today, we face economic turmoil unlike any most of us have ever seen. Uncertainty and insecurity raise doubts in the minds of many, regardless of how well off they may be. Jobs, portfolios, retirement accounts, and homes all seem threatened by forces beyond our ability to influence.

In the midst of this, our Savior reminds us, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. For the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:29–31).

We live in a time of unprecedented challenges, not only for our country but for our church and, indeed, for all Christian churches. The challenges from outside are immense: a society that increasingly suggests all religions are equal; segments of our population that vociferously argue for tolerance, even of those who would destroy the most vulnerable of humanity; babies still inside the safety of their mother’s womb.
wombs; and a narcissism that suggests each person is the center of his own universe and should be allowed to make his own decisions and rules without regard for anyone or anything else.

In such a time as this, Concordia Theological Seminary stands firm in proclaiming the wonder and beauty of God’s merciful love in Christ. It never wavers or diminishes. This gives us confidence in the future and certainty in our mission.

To be sure, the seminary is not unaffected by the current economic crisis. Our endowment has suffered decline. Some of those who in the past have made very significant annual gifts have had to cut back. Already tight budgets are being trimmed even more. But the seminary is here to stay. It will continue to prepare men and women for service to the Church as pastors, deaconesses, and missionaries. It will stand steadfast against the assaults of the devil on the minds of both young and old as contemporary thought seeks to reshape the minds of all our citizens.

But the seminary cannot do it alone. It needs the partnership of thousands of those whose love for Christ propels them to undergird the work of the seminary. And thus the question, mimicking that of Mordecai to Queen Esther, “Who knows if you have not been placed into the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Perhaps you are among the many who believe the seminary still receives much of its funding from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as was the case years ago. That simply no longer is true. The Synod today no longer has the resources to assist the seminary in more than token fashion. Only two to three percent of the seminary’s budget is derived from the Synod. Today most of our budget comes from the direct gifts of God’s people. Almost $7,000,000 is needed annually to support general operations and student aid so that the seminary can continue to fulfill its mission of preparing servants for the Church. It takes the gifts of thousands of our friends every year to accomplish this.

Thus we ask you: have you been placed into the Church for such a time as this? Are you one who has never supported the seminary financially because you thought all was well and your gifts were not needed? Are you one whom God has blessed with the ability to help with a gift of $100 per year? $1,000? $5,000? Or, in a few cases, even more? Is God calling you, moving you, at such a time as this to recognize that even in times of economic crisis you are able to help? To be a partner with the seminary as it prepares those who will help our people face the most difficult times of life with the hope that that Gospel gives?

If you have never before sent support for the seminary, this is the time. Not only will your support be of great assistance, but a generous donor of the seminary will match the gifts of all new donors with a gift of two dollars for every dollar contributed.

If your answer is “Yes,” please respond with a generous gift, filling out the coupon below and sending it to the address listed. Perhaps, like Queen Esther, you will find the part you played will have a profound impact on how God moves among His people with His saving hand of grace.

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**Yes, please use my gift to help prepare pastors, deaconesses, and missionaries.**

**Use my gift of $______ for the following purpose:**

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- [ ] Student Aid  
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- [ ] Charge my credit card.

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- [ ] VISA  
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  Signature: __________________________

- [ ] Donate online at www.ctsfw.edu

- [ ] I am a Thrivent member and qualify for matching gifts.

- [ ] My employer matches gifts.

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**Name:** __________________________

**Address:** __________________________________________

**City:** __________________________ **State:** ____ **Zip:** ________

**Telephone:** __________________________________________

**E-mail address:** __________________________

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**Please detach, fill out, and mail back to:**

**Concordia Theological Seminary**

6600 N. Clinton St. • Fort Wayne, IN 46825

877-287-4338 Ext. 2212

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**S P R I N G 2 0 0 9**

15
Mission Trip to Madagascar

Concordia Theological Seminary students Geoff Boyle, Evan Goeglein, Chris Hull, Jonathan Lorenz, Ryan Ogrodowicz, Mark Steiner, as well as Professor John T. Pless returned from a spring break Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar on March 8, 2009. This was the fourth trip to Madagascar led by Prof. Pless under the sponsorship of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. This year’s trip was unique given the political unrest that has brought the African island to the brink of civil war. While the group had to adjust travel plans due to rioting, the trip was still judged a success.

While in Madagascar, the cohort visited two toby’s (villages of mercy unique to Madagascar), a leper colony, an orphanage, a school for the blind, two hospitals, an agricultural school, and a seminary all operated by the Malagasy Lutheran Church, a church body of around four million members. While in the central Malagasy city of Antsirabe, the group worshipped at a Sunday morning service attended by nearly 3,500 people. The group also witnessed a service of exorcism at a toby on the outskirts of Antsirabe.

Rioting blocked the highway to Fianarantsoa, which prevented the group from visiting the Good Samaritan Center for the Poor, a project supported by LCMS World Relief and Human Care with funds raised by the 2006 Mercy Mission Expedition. Nevertheless, this year’s group was afforded many opportunities to see the Church’s corporate work of mercy in action. It was exciting for the group to tour the newly-completed pediatrics unit at the Lutheran Hospital in Antsirabe. The unit was constructed with a grant from LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

Two days were spent visiting the seminary in Antsirabe. Prof. Pless gave a convocation lecture on “The Doctrine of Vocation in the Small Catechism.” The Concordia Theological Seminary students made a presentation of books to the seminary library purchased with funds from Student Association in Fort Wayne. Copies of Concordia: A Readers Edition of the Book of Concord and other theological books were presented to each of the Malagasy students as a gift from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Clerical shirts, vestments, and communion ware from the Concordia Theological Seminary Clothing Co-op were also distributed. Prof. Pless presented the seminary president, Rev. David Rakotonirina, a gift of $1,250.00 from Bethany Lutheran Church in Naperville, Illinois, to assist the school. A day earlier, the seminary group also delivered a gift of $1,250.00 from Bethany Lutheran Church to the Lutheran orphanage in Antsirabe.

As with past groups, the students who traveled to Madagascar have selected a project to support in partnership with LCMS World Relief and Human Care. This year’s project will provide cows for the leper colony and the toby in Antsirabe.

Reflecting on the trip, Prof. Pless commented, “In spite of the perpetual tension generated by the unstable political circumstances in Madagascar, we had an excellent trip. In many ways, this was the best of our trips to Madagascar. The students exhibited a good sense of humor, eagerness to learn from the Malagasy experience, and a real empathy for the plight of our Lutheran brothers and sisters there. I am confident that this trip will be a formative event in the lives of these future pastors. We are deeply grateful for the steady support and visionary leadership of Pastor Matthew Harrison in making this opportunity available for our students.”

Seminarian Ryan Ogrodowicz shares a laugh with a Malagasy child.

The CTS Mercy Mission Expedition Team
Over seventy-five college-aged men and women from around the United States and from each of the ten Concordia University System schools attended Christ Academy College and Phoebe Academy College on the grounds of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, from January 23–25. The academies give young men and women prayerfully considering church work the opportunity to see Concordia Theological Seminary’s chapel, classrooms, and community firsthand. Many students even came early to participate in the seminary’s annual theological symposia held earlier in the week.

Forty-five men attended this year’s academy, which brought men from around the United States together to sit in on theological lectures, attend fireside chats with faculty, and worship with the seminary community in Kramer Chapel. Of particular interest were in-depth lectures on apologetics by Guest Professor of Historical Theology Dr. Adam Francisco and on the Sermon on the Mount by Systematic Professor Dr. David Scaer. Pre-seminary students from the Concordia University System were in attendance as well.

Thirty-one women were also on campus to participate in Phoebe Academy College where they learned more about the vocation and work of a deaconess. “The success of Phoebe Academy College far exceeded my expectations,” said Phoebe Academy Director Dcs. Melissa DeGroot. “These women were so impressive. They are bright and eager to learn and discern the work of our Lord’s Kingdom as deaconesses. The sheer numbers speak for themselves; we more than doubled our attendance from last year. The word about our deaconess program is spreading across the nation. We had every Concordia University represented at the Academy, and seven other students from private and public colleges as well.”

The 2010 dates for Christ Academy College and Phoebe Academy College will be January 22–24. Registration is free, and help with travel expenses can be requested. Prospective students interested in attending can contact the Admission Department at 260-452-2155 or by e-mailing admission@ctsw.edu.
## April
- April 4–13: Concordia Theological Seminary Easter Break
- April 5: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- April 17: Lutherfest 5:00 p.m.
- April 20: Vicarage and Deaconess Internship Assignment Service 7:00 p.m.
- April 21: Candidate Call Service 7:00 p.m.
- April 24–26: Confirmation Retreat

## May
- May 1–2: Contending for the Faith Conference
- May 3: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- May 5–9: Playscape Build Week
- May 21: Deaconess Placement Service 10:00 a.m.
- May 22: Baccalaureate 10:00 a.m.
- May 22: Organ Recital 3:00 p.m.
- May 22: Graduation 6:00 p.m.

## June
- June 7: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- June 14–27: Christ Academy High School
- June 15–19: Organist Workshop-Primer Level
- June 20: G.O.L.F. Outing
- June 22–26: Church Music Week

## Jul/Aug
- July 5: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- August 2: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

## Sept
- September 8: 164th Academic Year Begins
- September 13: Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- September 13: Opening Service 3:00 p.m.
- September 24–26: Fall Invitational Campus Visit

## Oct
- October 4: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- October 16–18: Confirmation Retreat
- October 20: Seminary Donation Day
- October 28–31: Lutherhostel
- October 31: Frankenmuth Bus Trip

## Nov
- November 1: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- November 1: Organ Recital 4:30 p.m.
- November 1: All Saint’s Choral Vespers, Schola Cantorum, 7:30 p.m.
- November 1–3: Good Shepherd Institute

## Dec
- December 6: First Sunday Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Concordia Theological Seminary has established the Military Project to support LCMS chaplains and other military personnel in theaters of war as well as their families with prayers, encouragement, and items of support for both their bodies and, most especially, their lives in Christ.

In addition to sending soldiers and chaplains basic supplies, an exciting new dimension has been added to the Military Project. We are contacting each chaplain and inquiring what unique needs he encounters. Currently, our chaplains serving in the war zone have responded with exciting avenues for bringing the mercy of Christ not only to the soldiers but also to children who live with the horrors of war on a daily basis. Chaplain James Rice has requested hand warmers for the guards at the detention camp he serves in Iraq. He has also been given the humanitarian task of overseeing an orphanage outside the camp and asked for hats, mittens, scarves, and small toys. Chaplain James Lucas, stationed in Afghanistan, responded that he needed theological materials, CDs of sacred music, and a wall-mounted movie screen. For a remote base with few supplies, Chaplain Lucas requested snacks, DVDs, CDs, books, games, and certain toiletries. Another base simply needed toilet paper.

Plans for meeting these needs are already underway. However, responding to unique needs in the future will be an ongoing part of supporting our LCMS chaplains as they bring Christ to a war-torn world through Word, Sacrament, and acts of mercy.

How can you help?

Please keep our soldiers and chaplains in your prayers. They are God's instruments of protection. They leave family, home, and country so that we and our families can live in peace and security.

For information on current service projects in which your church can participate, needed supplies, or to learn how to set up a military project, e-mail militaryproject@ctsfw.edu or call 260-452-2100.

Monetary donations should be mailed to Concordia Theological Seminary, Attention: Military Project Coordinator, 6600 N. Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46825. All checks should be made payable to the CTS Military Project.


Iraqi school girls sing a song in Arabic to thank the Iraqi and American forces for their graciously during a distribution drive at the Al Kays & Al Yasameen Elementary School, one of two schools to receive goods, Feb. 19 in the New Baghdad district of eastern Baghdad. Lt. Col. Louis Zeisman, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division Baghdad, wanted to show the families back home at the unit's home station in Fort Bragg, N.C., that the gifts were appreciated by the children.

(U.S. Army photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Walter J. Pels/Released)
After two thousand years, the world remains divided over the identity of Jesus. Was He a mere Jewish peasant with religious pretensions, or was He the Messiah of Israel and God incarnate? Was His crucifixion simply an unfortunate miscarriage of justice, or was it the means by which the Lamb of God took away the sin of the world? Does He remain dead to this day, or is He the risen Lord of life? All sorts of responses are generated by questions such as these. What one thinks of Jesus, however, invariably stems from one’s opinion of the four canonical Gospels.

What one think of Jesus invariably stems from one’s opinion of the four canonical Gospels.
In previous eras, the assumption that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John painted an accurate picture of Jesus due to the Holy Spirit’s inspiration generally went unchallenged. To suggest that these accounts contain errors was virtually unthinkable. Skepticism began to emerge, however, during the Enlightenment and has progressed to this day. Now the Gospels are routinely considered flawed from the start with scholars playing fast and loose with the facts while offering the so-called real story behind biblical persons and events. Recent revisions include a Judas who was the most faithful disciple, a King Herod who never slaughtered the innocents, and a Jesus who was married with children.

Christians who ignore such challenges typically turn inward, relying on an existential experience with their own personal Jesus. But at root, these are all matters of history, which is one reason the incarnational emphasis of Lutheranism is of such vital importance. For in Christ, God definitively entered time and space, allowing His life, death, and resurrection to be observed and, subsequently, recorded (John 1:14; 14:26). Hence, Luther stressed that theology must “start at the bottom” with the tangible flesh-and-blood Jesus who alone provides knowledge of God (AE 26:30). This approach does not require Christians to presuppose the inerrancy and divine origin of the Gospels but rather invites one to examine their veracity simply as records of ancient history.

Whether or not the reports of Julius Caesar’s demise are trustworthy is determined through methods of historical, literary, and textual analysis. If these same tests are applied to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the inescapable verdict is that the Gospels pass with flying colors. Included are questions of authorship, date of composition, number and uniformity of extant manuscripts, and corroboration by external artifacts such as archaeological finds and contemporaneous writings. In nearly each of these particulars, and certainly overall, the Gospels have more evidence in their favor than any document from the ancient world. Thus, if one were to brand these biographies about Jesus as flawed, mythical, or legendary, one would first have to discard all knowledge of antiquity—something no historian or classicist is likely to do.

Some specifics are worth mentioning here. First, each Gospel was written either by an eyewitness of Jesus, or by one who knew the eyewitnesses firsthand with early sources confirming the traditional authors. Second, these four detailed narratives about Jesus were almost certainly composed before the Jewish temple was destroyed in AD 70. These points expunge the popular notions that the Gospels are from unknown sources and have questionable content—especially since hostile witnesses of Jesus would have still been around to compose corrective versions—yet none exist from this time. Third, twenty-five supplementary texts were penned by Christians during the first century, and even non-Christian historians (such as Tacitus, Suetonius, and Josephus) confirmed key elements of the Gospels. Fourth, all spurious Gospels (like the Gospel of Judas) were written no earlier than the second century by authors who never knew the eyewitnesses. Lastly, an overwhelming number of early copies of the Gospels have been found with scribal mistakes having a negligible effect on their consistency.

Unfortunately, there is no reason to think antagonistic assaults on the Gospels will let up any time soon. But thanks to the efforts of erudite apologists, Christians are able to combat these misguided criticisms and demonstrate that the Gospels are, in fact, historically reliable accounts of Jesus.

Mr. Mark A. Pierson is currently obtaining his Master of Divinity degree from Concordia Theological Seminary and has a Master of Arts degree in Reformation Theology from Concordia University Irvine.
Christ Academy is a two-week residential program for high-school-aged men, founded by Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. It is a place where students can study about Christ who is present in His Word and Sacraments and who died that their sins would be forgiven. It is a place where students can experience seminary life. It is a place where students can explore the possibility of one day becoming a pastor.

What is Christ Academy:
A two-week retreat at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Who is Christ Academy for:
High-school-aged young men of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who are (or should be) considering becoming pastors. It is open to those who have completed their freshman year through those who have completed their senior year.

What does it cost:
$500 is all inclusive (housing, meals, Christ Academy polo shirt, admission to Cedar Point and other events, etc.) Limited financial aid may be available at the recommendation of your pastor.

How do I get there:
Please arrange your own transportation to and from Christ Academy. We can offer suggestions for planning air or rail travel, airport shuttles, car pooling, directions, and the like.

For more information about Christ Academy, please call us at: 1-800-481-2155
You can also find information at the seminary’s Web site: www.ctsfw.edu/christacademy
or e-mail: christacademy@ctsfw.edu

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or e-mail: christacademy@ctsfw.edu
Faculty In Print

Not only do faculty members of Concordia Theological Seminary teach and write for the Church, but they also address the wider scholarly world. Three articles written by Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Professor of Exegetical Theology and Chairman of the Department of Exegetical Theology, were published recently in three different volumes. A paper he originally delivered at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, “Baptismal Praxis and Mystical Experience in the Book of Revelation,” was published in *Paradise Now: Essays on Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism*, edited by April D. DeConick (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006). This article examines evidence of baptismal practice and theology in Revelation. Another article entitled “The Lamb (Not the Man) on the Divine Throne” was published in *Israel’s God and Rebecca’s Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity, Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*, edited by David B. Capes, April D. DeConick, Helen K. Bond, and Troy A. Miller (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007). It examines the complimentary interrelationship between the portraits of Christ as the Lamb and the Glorious Man in Revelation. A paper that Gieschen presented at the 2005 International Enoch Seminar, “The Name of the Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch,” was published in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, edited by Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007). This article argues that the Son of Man and Ancient of Days both share the same Divine Name in the Jewish text *1 Enoch*, a phenomenon also evident in several early Christian texts.

President Dean O. Wenthe has edited the most recent volume in the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* series, published by InterVarsity Press. These volumes provide select expositions of Scripture from the Church Fathers through approximately the first thousand years of the Church’s life. President Wenthe’s volume is on the Old Testament Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Copies may be purchased from the Concordia Theological Seminary Bookstore for $40.00.

An Invitation by Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

The President’s Circle of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne provides friends of the seminary with the opportunity to express perspectives and offer encouragement, assistance, and support to CTSFW and its students and faculty, keeping in mind the seminary’s mission “to form servants in Jesus Christ who will teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all.”

The President’s Circle is hosted by Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, the President of Concordia Theological Seminary. If you are not currently a member and would like to explore the opportunity to become a part of the President’s Circle, please contact a current member or call the Office of the President at 260-452-2100 and ask about the President’s Circle. You may also e-mail any questions or expression of interest to info@ctsfw.edu. Check us out on the Web at www.ctsfw.edu/cts/presidentscircle.php
CTS’s Regional Continuing Education Programs for parish pastors and professional church workers bring the best of the seminary to you. Through these specialized courses, you will grow in your knowledge and understanding of biblical and theological matters; join with other pastors and professional church workers who, like you, are searching for biblical insights into challenges faced in the parish; and return to your congregation armed with new information after a relaxed, informal retreat to the study of God’s Word.

Wheaton, Illinois
May 13–15
MINISTRY AND ORDNATION
David P. Scaer, Th.D.
Rev. Joshua Genig
St. John Lutheran Church
125 E. Seminary Ave.
Wheaton, IL 60187-5308
630-668-0701, ext. 424
jgenig@stjohnwheaton.org

Camp Okoboji, Iowa
May 18–20
THE BOOK OF ACTS: THE CHURCH COMES INTO BEING
Peter J. Scaer, Ph.D.
Lori Gamble, DCE
Camp Okoboji
1531 Edgewood Dr.
Milford, IA 51351
712-337-3325
lori.camp@lidwlcms.org

St. Cloud, Minnesota
May 18–20
CHRISTIAN INITIATION AND CATECHETICS
Arthur A. Johns, Ph.D.
Barb Herlting
Lutheran Student Fellowship
201 Fourth St.
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-259-1577
lsf@stcloudstate.edu

Jackson, Wyoming
June 1–3
LAW AND GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUTHER’S GREAT GALATIAN LECTURES
Naomichi Masaki, Ph.D.
Rev. Terry Wiley
Christ Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 397
Rawlins, WY 82301
307-324-4168
kidwiley@hotmail.com

Bishop, California
June 1–4
SCRIPTURE AND SACRAMENTALITY
Dean O. Wenthe, Ph.D.
Rev. Kenton A. Puls
Grace Lutheran Church
711 N. Fowler St.
Bishop, CA 93514-2617
760-872-9791
glbishopca@schatu.com

Charleston, South Carolina
June 1–5
FORMATIVE INFLUENCES IN AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY
Lawrence R. Rast, Ph.D.
Rev. Timothy Sandeno
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
2518 Savannah Hwy
Charleston, SC 29414
843-814-7221
timothy.sandeno@gmail.com

Albuquerque, New Mexico
June 8–12
WILL THE REAL ISLAM PLEASE STAND UP? AN ESSENTIAL HISTORY AND THEOLOGY OF ISLAM
Adam S. Francisco, D.Phil.
Rev. Warren Graff
Grace Lutheran Church
7550 Eubank Blvd., NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122
505-823-9100
wwgraff@gmail.com

Grand Rapids, Michigan
June 15–19
PREACHING THE GOSPEL WITH MARTIN LUTHER
Cameron A. MacKenzie, Ph.D.
Rev. North P. Sherrill
Our Savior Lutheran Church
2900 Burton St.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616-581-8353
pinepark@comcast.net

Pottersville, NY/
SonRise Camp
June 22–24
THE EPISODE OF JAMES
David P. Scaer, Th.D.
Rev. Larry K. Looe, Jr.
SonRise Lutheran Ministries
8260 Route 9
Pottersville, NY 12860
518-494-2620
sonrise@sonriseministries.com

Shawano, Wisconsin
June 29–July 1
PASTORAL THEOLOGY IN LUKE-ACTS
Arthur A. Just, Ph.D.
Rev. Ron Raddatz
St. James Lutheran Church
324 S. Andrews St.
Shawano, WI 54166-2406
715-524-4815
rraddatz@charter.net

Seattle, Washington
June 30–July 2
THE LUTHERAN WAY WITH THE LITURGY
Naomichi Masaki, Ph.D.
Rev. Ernie Lassman
Messiah Lutheran Church
7050 35th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98115-5917
206-524-0024
elassman@aol.com

Concordia, Missouri
July 6–8
LUTHERAN ETHICS TODAY
John T. Pliss, M.Div.
Rev. Lee Hagan
Saint Paul Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 60
Concordia, MO 64020-0060
660-463-2291
hagante@aoa.com

Kearney, Nebraska
July 20–24
STUDIES IN THE DOCTRINE OF VOCATION
John T. Pliss, M.Div.
Rev. James De Louch
Zion Lutheran Church
2421 Ave. C
Kearney, NE 68847-4541
308-234-3410
jh.dleou@gmail.com

Wichita, Kansas
August 3–5
PAUL AND HIS OPPONENTS IN GALATIA
Arthur A. Just, Ph.D.
Rev. Daniel Myers
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
600 N Greenwich Rd.
Wichita, KS 67206-2633
316-684-5201
revdmyers@holycrosslutheran.net

Flathead Lake, Montana
August 3–7
LUTHERAN MISSIOLOGY
Klaus Detlev Schulz, Th.D.
Rev. George Draper
Trinity Lutheran Church
731 Knapp St.
Wolf Point, MT 59201
406-650-8033 or 406-653-3099
pastordraper@gmail.com

Port Charlotte, Florida
August 5–7
THE ROLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE CHURCH TODAY
Dean O. Wenthe, Ph.D.
Mr. Noel Hyde
Lutheran Church of the Cross
2300 Luther Rd.
Punta Gorda, FL 33983-2611
941-627-6060 or 941-505-2405
yachtsman@comcast.net

For directions, lodging, and meal information for each event, please contact the site coordinator directly. For all other information, contact 260-452-2100 or e-mail continuinged@ctsfw.edu. To register online, visit www.ctsfw.edu.
Luther’s bold conclusion to his explanation of each article of the Apostles’ Creed—“This is most certainly true”—is hardly in vogue today. In a world of conflicting narratives, who is to say what is true? Truth is replaced by perspective. Renouncing propositional theology, theologians who have embraced postmodernism call instead for non-foundationalist approaches to faith centered in narrative rather than doctrinal assertions. Colin Gunton rightly observed “that the anti-foundationalist song is the voice of a siren. The allusion to fideism indicates the perennial weakness of non-foundationalist epistemologies. They may appear to be attempts to render their content immune from outside criticism and so become forms of intellectual sectarianism. In other words, they may appear to evade the challenges of the universal and objective, and to run the risk of the rank subjectivism into which their extreme representatives have fallen. Theologically speaking they evade the intellectual challenge involved in the use of the word God.”

Gunton goes on to note that such approaches tend to create their own subjective foundations and hence become guilty of the foundationalism they so dread.

By way of contrast, Lutherans have learned from Luther that if you take away assertions, you take away Christianity. Luther was not shy when it came to assertions. In fact, he begins the Small Catechism with God’s ultimate assertion that critiques every human narrative: “You shall have no other gods.” In his Large Catechism, Luther unpacks what it means to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. A keen observer of human nature, Luther recognized that there are no genuine atheists. If a person’s foundation is not the true God, that is, the God and Father of the crucified Jesus, he will create an idol for himself. Indeed, the human mind is a god factory that never ceases to make substitute deities for itself. Mark Twain was right when he irreverently quipped that in the beginning God made man in His own image and ever since man has returned the compliment.

The chief task of apologetics is accurately identifying and dismantling these false gods that promise identity, meaning, and security to their makers but finally leave them alone with their sin, empty of purpose in life and defenseless against death. A Lutheran apologetic will work from the First Commandment. The First Commandment will allow for no other gods; that’s Law. But the Law is followed by the good news that Christ Jesus, crucified and raised from the dead, is the only God you need. His lordship is the Gospel. His life, death, resurrection, ascension, and the promise of His coming again are the foundation that we confess and proclaim as “most certainly true.”

A Lutheran apologetic will recognize the bondage of the human will. The will is bound and determined to create its own gods whether these deities are cloaked under images made of wood and stone or high-sounding so-called values and seemingly self-evident truths. Persuasion is futile for the enslaved will. Only proclamation will do. So we proclaim God’s Law that unerringly seeks and destroys the righteousness established by every false belief. But the ultimate Word proclaimed is the Gospel of a Savior who remains a stumbling block to the sign-seeking Jew and foolishness to the wisdom-addicted Greek, “but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24). Lutheran apologetics begins and ends with the theology of the cross.

Prof. John T. Pless is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions and Director of Field Education at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

1 Gunton, Colin. The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the Culture of Modernity. (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 134.
What would you have me do?

This is a question we as Christians often ponder. As Luther rightly stated, even changing a baby’s diaper is a God-pleasing act! No one is being asked to change diapers, but there is a variety of ways to help when it comes to the Fort Wayne Seminary Guild.

**PRAYERS:** We should never cease in praying for the saints. We can pray daily for our ministerial students and deaconess students and their families, both for their spiritual and physical needs.

**PARTICIPATION:** The Seminary Guild has several areas in which you could prayerfully consider participating. At present, we are in need of a seamstress to sew T-shirts that are given to babies born to our students. Single students enjoy receiving homemade cakes, cookies, or brownies for their birthday while they are away from home. The seminary Food and Clothing Co-op is in constant need of items. If you live within close proximity of the seminary, we would love to have you attend our meetings that take place the second Tuesday in September, November, December, February, March, and April with our annual Donation Day event the third week in October.

**PLAN ON ATTENDING** Lutherfest, which is scheduled for April 17, 2009! You will enjoy a delicious meal, and opportunity to share in fellowship with others concerned about our seminary and her students. Donations from this event will go towards our most recent project, The Tunnel Time Line, a look into the past.

The mission of the Fort Wayne Concordia Theological Seminary Guild is to serve God by communicating the needs and encouraging support of the seminary and its students. The Guild strives to be inclusive of ladies of all ages, professions, and cultures. In doing so, we reflect our student body where men, and now women, of all ages, different professional backgrounds, and diverse ethnicity study together in order to become servants of the Lord as pastors or deaconesses. We invite and 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.csfw.edu, select About CTS, and then select Seminary Guild.

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**Concordia Theological Seminary**

**Affiliate Guild Registration**

- Yes, we are interested in becoming an Affiliate Guild. Please send more information to: [Name: ____________________________]
- Organization: ________________________________
- Address: _____________________________________
- City: __________________________ State: ________ Zip: _______________
- We are enclosing a donation payable to Concordia Theological Seminary Guild, C/O Seminary Guild President, Concordia Theological Seminary, Box 8, 6600 N. Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46825
- Please contact me with more information.
- We have enclosed our yearly $25.00 check for our group to be an Affiliate Guild.
- I have enclosed my yearly $10.00 check to be an individual affiliate member.
- Donation Day gift.
Individual Subscription
Yes, please add me to the For the Life of the World mailing list!

Name: ____________________________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________________________________________________________ State: _____ Zip: __________
E-mail: _________________________________________________________________________
Home Church (name/city/state): ________________________________________________

Congregation Subscription (for pastor’s use only)
Yes, please add my congregation to the For the Life of the World mailing list!

Congregation Name: __________________________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________________________________________________________ State: _____ Zip: __________
Web site: _________________________________________________________________________
Pastor Making Request: _________________________________________________________________________
Pastor’s E-mail: _________________________________________________________________________
Pastor’s Telephone: _________________________________________________________________________
Number of Copies Requested: ____________________________

Gift Subscription
Please send For the Life of the World to my friend.

Name of Friend: ____________________________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________________________________________________________ State: _____ Zip: __________
My Name Is: ____________________________________________________________________
My Address: ______________________________________________________________________
My City: _________________________________________________________________________ State: _____ Zip: __________
My E-mail: _______________________________________________________________________

Send your request to: For the Life of the World 6 600 North Clinton Street  Fort Wayne, IN 46825
Is it time to return to the classroom and further your theological and pastoral skills? Do you need to accomplish this while remaining in full-time service right where you are? The answer may be the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program. Concordia Theological Seminary’s D.Min. program is the highest professional degree for ministry and is designed for those engaged in active ministry. Currently, two-week intensives are offered both in Fort Wayne and at Concordia University Saint Paul.

Perhaps you have considered the possibility of beginning your doctorate. To assist you in exploring this option, Concordia Theological Seminary invites you to attend the October 5–16, 2009, session on our campus. We are pleased to offer two courses taught by leading experts in liturgy and liturgical renewal. “Liturgy as Pastoral Care” will be taught by Dr. Arthur Just, an expert in New Testament and Liturgics. “Lutheran Hymnody” will be taught by Dr. Paul Grime, Professor of Liturgics and former Executive of the Commission on Worship and Project Director for the Lutheran Service Book.

For the fall 2009 session at Fort Wayne, we are pleased to offer financial assistance by reducing tuition by 50 percent. You may take these courses as a special student, and both classes can apply to the degree requirements when you apply for admission.

A full description of the D.Min. program can be found at the seminary’s Web site. You may also contact Dr. Daniel Gard at daniel.gard@ctsfw.edu or Jane Payne at jane.payne@ctsfw.edu.

Concordia Theological Seminary

FALL October 5–16, 2009
• Liturgy as Pastoral Care
• Lutheran Hymnody

WINTER January 25–February 5, 2010
• Creativity in Preaching
• Pastoral Renewal and Spiritual Care

SPRING April 12–23, 2010
• Ministering in Context
• Systematic Theology Today

Concordia University Saint Paul

FALL October 5–16, 2009
• Advanced Pastoral Theology
• Communicating Christ: Language and Meaning

WINTER January 25–February 5, 2010
• Historical Theology Today
• Christian Outreach Today

SPRING April 19–April 30, 2010
• Scripture, Christianity, and Society
• Worldview and Today’s Religious Scene
Wednesday, April 15
Trinity Lutheran Church
135 NE Randolph Ave.
Peoria, IL 61606
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 16
Zion Lutheran Church
540 Oak Park Ave.
Beecher, IL 60401
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

Friday, April 17
Concordia University Chicago
Chapel Service: 11:00 a.m.

Apostles Lutheran Church
10429 W. Fullerton Ave.
Melrose Park, IL 60164
Service Time: 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 18
Trinity Lutheran Church
420 West Blvd. S.
Elkhart, IN 46514
Service Time: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 19
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
1126 S. Barr St.
Fort Wayne, IN
8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Concordia Theological Seminary
Kramer Chapel
6600 N. Clinton St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
4:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 25
St. Paul Lutheran Church
2555 S. 300 E.
Columbus, IN 47201
2:00 p.m. Dedication of the new sanctuary

Sunday, April 26
St. Paul Lutheran Church
2555 S. 300 E.
Columbus, IN 47201
8:00 and 10:45 a.m.

Music of the Easter season presented by
the Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Concordia Theological Seminary
Kantorei Easter Tour 2009
It is with great pleasure and excitement that Concordia Theological Seminary announces “In the Steps of Martin Luther,” a tour of Germany along with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to attend the world famous Passion Play in 2010 in Oberammergau. Seminary hosts for this adventure are President and Mrs. Dean Wenthe and Kantor Richard and Dr. Barbara Resch.

The tour will take you on an eleven-day adventure (May 27–June 6, 2010) into history and the lands of central and northern Germany. You will walk in the footsteps of Martin Luther and witness sites important to his life and to the Reformation. You will also attend the Passion Play, a performance first done by the villagers of Oberammergau in 1634 in fulfillment of their promise to God for sparing them from the Black Plague. It has been presented every ten years since then!

In addition to the time spent in Oberammergau, tour participants will have the opportunity to visit Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, St. Severi Church in Erfurt, Luther’s birthplace in Eisleben, the Castle Church in Wittenberg, historic Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, and Augsburg, where the Lutherans offered their confession to the emperor.

But even if you are not a historian or a Reformation enthusiast, you will no doubt enjoy the magnificent scenery of the German countryside, towns, cities, and the experience of growing together in community, friendship, and faith with our group.

The price of the tour is $4069 (leaving from Chicago) or $4369 (leaving from Fort Wayne). This includes roundtrip airfare, first class and select hotels, private homes or pensions in Oberammergau, most meals, admission tickets for the Passion Play, the services of a professional tour director, and sightseeing in a deluxe motorcoach.

The tour promises to be a wonderful experience for all with time to enjoy the fellowship of old friends and new. Nawas International Travel is making all the arrangements and has earned a reputation for reliability and excellence in their fifty-nine years of business, many in which they have successfully served the seminary.

While the year 2010 seems a long way away, now is the time to make plans and reserve your place on the tour as space is limited. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to see the Passion Play and experience Luther’s Germany!

For more information as well as a brochure with all the details, you may contact CTS Tours via the Internet (www.ctsfw.edu), e-mail (CTSTours@ctsfw.edu), telephone (877-287-4338, Ext. 2241), or mail (6600 N. Clinton, Fort Wayne, IN 46825).
On a sunny Saturday morning, a car stops at the end of your street and a young family climbs out. They go door to door, selling attractive books and magazines. “Jehovah’s Witnesses,” you sigh. They are impossible to talk to!

What do you want to do? __________________________________________________________

What do you think you should do? __________________________________________________

Talk to Them?
Most Christians dread speaking to Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and others who challenge the foundations of what we believe. Should we? Read the following passages. What do they say about talking to such people?

1 Peter 3:14–15 ________________________________________________________________

Jude 22–23 ________________________________________________________________

God’s Mission and Ours
God wants us to speak to people who question what He teaches us in the Bible. But why?
Read the following passages. What does God want for these people? What does He do about it? What does He want us to do about it?

2 Timothy 2:3–4 ______________________________________________________________

John 3:16–17 ________________________________________________________________

Matthew 20:28 ______________________________________________________________

Luke 19:10 ________________________________________________________________

John 20:21 ________________________________________________________________

How Do We Witness?
One of the reasons Christians try to avoid talking about the faith with non-Christians is they do not like to argue. But we need not see these encounters as a debate. Read the following Scripture readings. How do they tell us to speak about God’s Word?

Deuteronomy 6:6–9 ______________________________________________________________

1 Peter 3:14–15 ______________________________________________________________

Jude 17–22 ________________________________________________________________

God loves all people, even those who attack Him and His Word. He wants us to speak to them, to defend the reasons we believe in Him. When we do, the Holy Spirit works through us.

Closing Prayer: O Christ, our true and only light, enlighten those who sit in night. Let those afar now hear Your voice and in Your fold with us rejoice. Amen. (LSB 839:1)
Grand Ol’e Lutheran Fellowship (G.O.L.F.) Outing • June 20, 2009

Have a great time while you support your choice of the CTS:
• Library Addition
• Student Emergency Fund
• Student Food and Clothing Co-ops
• Playscape Pavillion

If you cannot attend the G.O.L.F. Outing but would still like to contribute toward one of these projects, please contact us. For more information, call Nancy Embler at 260-452-2162 or LeeAnna Rondot at 452-2172.

You can now register online at www.ctsfw.edu/events/golf/register!

Hosted by Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana