Your Future Pastors and Deaconesses
By Gary W. Zieroth

On My Vicarage...
By Michael J. Roth

The Role of a Deaconess in the Local Congregation
By Christopher J. Bramich and Michelle E. Domin
Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, has been preparing pastors for service prior to there even being a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Over the course of our 170-year history, we have been blessed to send thousands of faithful servants of Christ into the congregations and missions of the LCMS and its partner churches throughout the world. We are truly blessed!

Over that time the world has seen a lot of changes. It’s hard to imagine how Friedrich Wyneken, missionary and founding father of CTSFW, might interpret present-day circumstances. He was used to the measured pace of horses and canal boats. But even during his lifetime, the pleasant pace of life increased dramatically. The advent of regular rail service was something that changed the scope of his work. Now he could travel from one end of the country to the other with relative ease. His life changed in basic ways. That’s a lot to experience in one lifetime.

But look at our world today. Global travel has become the norm, and one never knows who one might bump into while traveling. As I write this, I’m in Wittenberg, Germany, teaching an intensive course for our Gothenburg S.T.M. extension program. Just this morning I unexpectedly ran into two friends: one from Kenya and one from Ethiopia, both of whom are here attending a seminar. The last time I visited Wittenberg, the former chairman of the CTSFW Board of Regents, the Rev. Wayne Graumann, and his wife Kathy came into the Old Latin School, an unexpected yet delightful surprise. It truly is a small world!

But even with all of the changes that we experience, some things do not change—most importantly, the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ that they reveal in all of their truth and purity.

That is what gives us our focus at CTSFW. Our mission is to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all with the good news of salvation. Our students training to be pastors, deaconesses and lay leaders need, in the words of our new professor and dean of students, Dr. Gary Zieroth, “to be ready to teach the unchanging Christ and the unchanging Word to a changing world that needs the life-changing and life-healing words of forgiveness.” Rev. Michael Roth describes what this experience is like for a student on vicarage. Rev. Christopher Bramich and Deaconess Michelle Domin open a window for us to understand and appreciate a well-functioning partnership between pastor and deaconess as they support one another in their specific vocations in the Church.

All of which serves to remind us of the pressing need that the Lord saw in His own day and which applies equally today: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

With you in Christ’s Service,

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana
FEATURES

4 Your Future Pastors and Deaconesses
By Gary W. Zieroth
We want our workers to be ready to teach the unchanging Christ, and the unchanging Word, to a changing world that needs the life changing and life healing words of forgiveness. This need is always great as we require more and more to tell their stories for the next 30 years and beyond! “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

7 On My Vicarage …
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10 The Role of a Deaconess in the Local Congregation
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Update
In the Fall 2016 issue of For the Life of the World we ran an article by the Rev. Roosevelt Gray entitled, “Formed for Service: The Work of Rosa Jinsey Young.” The names of many pastors connected with St. James Lutheran Church, Buena Vista, Alabama, one of the congregations planted by Young, were listed. Since publishing we’ve learned of two more: the Rev. Willie Stallworth, Unity Lutheran, East St. Louis, Illinois, and the Rev. Benjamin Stallworth, Concordia Lutheran Church, Daphne, Alabama, and Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Atmore, Alabama. We thank God for the work of faithful servants like Young who have encouraged so many future church workers.
As I was sitting in the Kramer Chapel on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, on an early Friday morning in September with the first year student’s orientation day, CTSFW President Rast, after a few preliminary remarks, looked at me with a glint in his eye and asked, “You know what I am going to say, don’t you?” Yes, I knew exactly what he was going say as I was thinking the same thing. With a smile and a nod I said, “Yes” and he went on to explain that it was 30 years ago that we were both first year students at CTSFW, sitting in the same place as these students. 30 years? Can that be true?

A lot has happened in that time by the grace and blessing of God. A very fine vicarage year spent in Edmonton, Alberta. Serving two congregations, also in Alberta, Canada, my first eight years out of seminary. The birth of four children. Accepting the call to serve as an associate pastor to a medium-sized congregation and school in Kingsville, Maryland. Eleven years later accepting the call to serve as the senior pastor of a very large church and school in Chaska, Minnesota, before coming back to CTSFW. Four years of seminary education and 26 years serving four very different congregations in different settings. It all totals 30 years of education and ministry experience.

I have come full circle it seems. The obvious question becomes, what has changed in the ministry these past 30 years? What has remained the same and what might the future hold for our future pastors and deaconesses?
What has changed?

Many things can be listed here as to the changes in North American society in the last 30 years, too numerous for this article. For one thing, the Internet and social media have made it somewhat easier to communicate and minister to others, especially within the church, as I have found over the years more time spent sharing God’s Word and praying for people via the Internet. While useful to an extent, I also grieve those opportunities to minister in face-to-face situations. It seems to me that we keep wandering away from what is termed an incarnational ministry where people are communicating in the same place at the same time. Where Christ is enfleshed in the presence of person we can see, hear and touch. I believe that increased usage of technology in this case can create greater isolation and loneliness among our people and not the kind of community where people actually engage with each other. Yes, the powerful Gospel is spread electronically, but another challenge lies in trying to separate fact from falsehood on the Internet and the temptation to trust and believe in almost any source of information. Nothing can replace a purposeful visitation ministry where pastor or deaconess spends time with the flock one on one or in small groups bringing God’s Word to bear on circumstances in an incarnational way.

Other challenges that can be mentioned are the increased need to minister to an ever-growing aging population and the special skills needed in ministry to those others close to death. As abortion has shown our society’s disregard for life at the earliest stages, so do we see an increasing disregard for life at the last stages of living. End of life ethical issues will continue to present great challenges to our church workers.

Over the years I have noted an increased biblical illiteracy among the general population and within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) over these past several years. Perceived roles of men and women have further eroded, evolved and changed. We have become a more highly sexualized culture, and the definitions of what constitutes a family are further eroding. We must instruct our people on God’s original design for marriage so the members of our congregations can be prepared properly to defend the wave of changing views on gender distinctions. We want to remain a church body that is unafraid to speak up and speak out on these types of issues.

Some of this, of course, can be seen in the ways which postmodernism has influenced and reshaped people’s views of separating religious and spiritual faith.

We want our workers to be ready to teach the unchanging Christ, and the unchanging Word, to a changing world that needs the life changing and life healing words of forgiveness. This need is always great as we require more and more to tell their stories for the next 30 years and beyond!
This emphasis on the spiritual has led to a further distrust of organized religion as a whole and a lack of identity with denominations in particular. I have noticed that denominational loyalty is a thing of the past, which has made our own confessional identity weak or non-existent. The rise of the special class of people who have no religious affiliation, called the “Nones,” is one evidence of this change. Because of the influence of a creeping postmodernity I have noticed the change where universal or observable truth becomes highly individualized, where subjective feelings can often trump objective facts. This became an increasing issue with those entering my confirmation and new member classes both young and old.

What has remained the same?

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). The common mission of the community at CTSFW is to “form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.” In 30 years, what has never changed is a person’s need of a Savior, to be forgiven of one’s sins. The tools made available to extend this gift of life haven’t changed, the Word of God and the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Essentially my tasks and duties, my vocation as a pastor, remained the same in these past years. Yes, there were many temptations along the way not to trust in these Means of Grace, especially when numbers were down or other problems entered the congregation.

The temptation for any church worker is to look outside of these appointed Means to other ways to help the Church succeed or grow. The temptation is to forget that the Gospel is the power that brings salvation to all who believe (Rom. 1:16). This is not a 30 year perspective, but a 2,000 year perspective that we all do well to remember that in teaching and reaching and caring, the message of Christ crucified and risen for you is the power behind all that happens within a congregation and community. A sinner’s need for a Savior and the Gospel message in Christ alone, faith alone, grace alone and Scripture alone has never changed.

What might the future hold?

Paul would instruct young pastor Timothy to “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:2). There is no substitute for the diligent work studying church history, exegeting Scripture in the original languages, working through the depths of Systematic Theology, using and upholding our Lutheran Confessions and applying all these in practical ways.

Faithful teachers, deaconesses, pastors and theologians alike will do well to continue their education post-graduation. I believe strongly that now and into the future the health of our church workers should be the top priority, as I have seen many leave the ministry due to stress and/or anxiety. Can the motto hold true that a healthy pastor will lead to a healthy church?

Our future pastors and deaconesses need to be supported and encouraged by the church-at-large to take those opportunities to be refreshed and renewed through the same Means that are given out through Word and Sacrament—the Gospel of Christ. This includes continuing education opportunities, time given for worship and study, opportunities to be in supportive communities and a return to the ancient practice of sabbaticals for all those whose job it is to bring the gift of salvation and life to others. Part of “being ready” is not only the focus on continual study but also the focus on rest, real rest in Christ.

We want our workers to be ready to teach the unchanging Christ, and the unchanging Word, to a changing world that needs the life changing and life healing words of forgiveness. This need is always great as we require more and more to tell their stories for the next 30 years and beyond! “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

The Rev. Dr. Gary W. Zieroth (Gary.Zieroth@ctsfw.edu) serves as dean of students, director of Vicarage and Internship, and assistant professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
One of the most formative experiences for a pastor is his vicarage year. I make this statement confidently, not because I have been a vicarage supervisor for many years, but because I can recall numerous conversations with pastors over the years who included the phrase, “On my vicarage” in their stories. It is almost inevitable when a group of pastors get together at a district pastors’ conference or a circuit Winkel, the phrase will be heard, “On my vicarage,” followed by some sage advice from their vicarage supervisor, some experience they had, and even at times, some disaster that took place. These vivid recollections are expressed, usually with great fondness, by pastors of all ages even if vicarage was 50 years ago. As I said, vicarage is one of the most formative experiences a pastor has while being prepared for the ministry.
So what is it about this year that leaves such a deep impression? This impression seems to be made regardless of the particular congregation or supervisor of the vicarage. Students begin their vicarage ready to put into practice all the head knowledge they have been packing in over the last couple of years. Their professors have been sharing their own parish experiences and relating the subjects of discussion to parish life, but until one is actually in the field it is all rather theoretical. Vicarage is the time when students are anxious to apply in the field what they have learned in the classroom.

Many students arrive on vicarage with relatively little behind-the-scenes parish experience. Sure, they have been in the pew hundreds of times. They have listened to sermons and attended youth group and Bible study. If they are a second career student, they may have even served on a board or as an elder. But, for the most part, students get their first peek behind the curtain while on vicarage. This is their opportunity to find out what goes on in the board room, the elders’ meeting, with the Ladies Aid, the Altar Guild and in the pastor’s study. They will learn about church governance and finances, about stewardship drives and building programs. They will be involved in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, youth outings, adult instruction classes and nursing home visits. In settings like mine, they will be involved in a Christian day school and an early childhood center. They will work at the soup kitchen, the food pantry, the community dinner and with people who are struggling to survive in general. They will work with little children and aged members, with the mature Christian and the searching inquirer. They will rub shoulders with the affluent widow and the homeless man. Most vicars, by design, will be pushed to step out of their comfort zones. They will be asked to do a host of things they have never done before.

The vicar is likely to have more time to prepare his sermons and Bible studies than he will ever have again. And, he will need it! The student who was so adept at writing papers for class might be surprised to find his first sermon drafts covered in red ink. He will hear things like, “Where’s the Gospel?” “Nice essay brother, but you can’t preach that from the pulpit.” “Where were you going with this sermon?” “What application does this have to the person in the pew?” In other words, he will be challenged to apply all his theological training to a biblical text and then shape a message that will communicate Christ to the diversity of people sitting before him on Sunday morning. Here is the great value of vicarage; he will have a mentor helping him evaluate his own preaching from start to finish, from exegesis to delivery. It may very well be the only time in his entire ministry that someone, other than his wife, gives him honest and constructive feedback on his preaching.

What the vicar has for a year is a one-on-one mentor. The vicarage supervisor is there to guide and coach, encourage and criticize (constructively, of course), model and instruct the student through the labyrinth of activities, assignments, obligations and experiences of parish life.
life. In this relationship the vicar is able to observe the intersection between theology and practice. He will go with the supervising pastor into the hospital room and the funeral home, into the meeting room and classroom, into the home of a lifelong member and the rundown apartment of a derelict alcoholic. As time goes on he may be sent into those situations by himself. No matter where he goes, what he does or with whom he does it he will learn that he has but one goal—to proclaim Christ! He will quickly discover that despite his education, intelligence, IQ and GPA the only thing he really has to offer, that is of any value, is the Word of God. St. Paul’s words will begin to make sense:

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:1-5)

Maybe this is why vicarage is such a memorable experience; it teaches the aspiring pastor that he has only the Word of God and the power of the Spirit to do his work. Up to this point, while preparing himself for ministry, it has been mostly focused on him; what he can learn, how he can perform, where he might serve, how he might make the finances work out and (rightly so) how proud his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois are of him. Now, by the grace of God he may, in all humility learn that he is but a vessel, a clay pot, in the hands of the Lord of the Church.

He will likely learn from an experienced pastor that God can and does use those He has called, despite their limitation and in spite of their talents, to bring the saving message of Christ to poor sinners just like him.

By the end of his vicarage year the student will most likely have a completely different perspective of the Lord’s work than he did when he began. The student who arrived ready to take on the world will be anxious to go back to the Seminary for one more year, realizing he has a lot yet to learn.
A Pastor’s Perspective

In early 2010, our congregation faced a dilemma. We had a large graduating confirmation class but difficulty in finding someone to lead our youth group. Like many congregations, we understood the importance of having a place for the confirmands to go following graduation. Our dilemma was that we couldn’t find anyone in the congregation whose schedule would allow them to serve in this position.

With timing that can only come from the hand of our Lord, I received a letter from a nearby Concordia University which promoted their director of Christian education (DCE) internship program. Following some discussion among our leaders, we applied for and received DCE interns for the next two years. In 2012, however, we were informed that there were not enough interns to place. We had since learned about the deaconess internship programs at our Synod’s seminaries and Concordia University Chicago, and that June we received our first deaconess intern.

For the next several years, deaconess students from both Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, and Concordia University in Chicago spent a year at our congregation overseeing our youth group. They also became involved in many other areas of ministry such as hospital and shut-in visits, Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, women’s ministry, social ministry, confirmation, counseling and outreach.

As a pastor, I found that the addition of a deaconess intern greatly extended the congregation’s ministry to places and people that I may have missed. A pastor’s weekly routines of preparation for Sunday worship along with numerous other responsibilities can sometimes overly tie him to his office.

Furthermore, there are admittedly some areas of congregational life, such
as women’s and youth ministry, where the pastor may not have a very strong presence.

A deaconess serves in an auxiliary position to the office of the Holy Ministry. She supports the ministry of Word and Sacrament through a vocation of service, support, education and human care. She also brings the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the various contexts in which she serves. Deaconesses show a special dedication to acts of service which embody the love Christ shows for His Church and the love the Church is called to show to those in need (Heb. 13:1–3).

It may surprise many laypeople (and pastors) to learn of the degree of education and theology the deaconesses of our Synod possess. Such gifts certainly help to provide many interested youth (and pastors) to learn of the degree of education and theology the deaconesses of our Synod possess. Such gifts certainly help to provide many interested youth and women with a sound Lutheran understanding of the faith. In a day and age when we are constantly guarding our sheep against the encroaching beliefs of others, it is reassuring to know that what I teach as a pastor is reinforced by what our deaconess teaches. The Good News of our Lord’s death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins is always maintained clearly in our congregation. The deaconess helps to support in her service and teaching what the pastor proclaims from the pulpit.

I’ve also found the deaconess’ ministry to others to be invaluable for the health of our congregation. In fact, I’m not always directly aware of all of her contacts and acts of service. Often times, a deaconess, like a pastor, cannot be forthcoming about some of her responsibilities. She may be involved in confidential counseling or providing assistance to someone in need who wishes to remain anonymous. Ministry in such cases, while unknown to most, often times ends up preventing crises or losing congregation members.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul begins Chapter 16 with these words, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae.” Since the earliest days of our faith there have been deaconesses serving our Lord in His Church. Paul’s letter to the Romans, which Luther loved so dearly and referenced so often in his works, was originally placed into the hands of a deaconess to be delivered to the congregation at Rome (v. 1). Ferrying the Sacred Scriptures from the hand of their author, St. Paul, to the church to whom they were originally written was no small honor. As Paul himself once valued the service of Phoebe in those earliest of times, so we continue to do so today.
**A Deaconess’ Perspective**

“When I was a student at CTSFW I was taught that a deaconess was to point people toward the pastor, but I never understood fully how that would work until it played out in my internship. As a two-year part-time intern and full-time mom, I had the joy of growing and learning under the headship of the pastor. Now as a deaconess I have that same joy.

There are so many ways a deaconess can serve. At Holy Shepherd, I am called primarily to lead the youth group. This involves teaching Wednesday night Bible study, planning servant events, fun events and fundraisers. I also teach Sunday School, direct Vacation Bible School, help out in women’s ministry, visit our shut-ins and those in the hospital. I have sung in the choir, led Christmas programs and planned special activities for Advent and Lent.

Yet, I have found that the work of a deaconess is often wrapped up in relationships. As you build relationships with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, you share in their joys and their sorrows. The times of joy are wonderful and they are an opportunity to teach the faith. For example, after I hosted a youth party at my house, there were a few youth who stayed late. We were caught up in conversation as they had questions about everything from evolution to homosexuality to life and death. A deaconess is blessed to teach in these informal settings as well as the classroom setting.

On the other hand, the times of sorrow are an opportunity to share the love of Christ. When people are in need, the deaconess can do what she does best: serve. Whether serving through visitation, bringing someone a meal or simply listening as someone pours out their pain, a deaconess is working through acts of mercy. She cares for the burdens of others, reminding them that Christ carried everyone’s burden to the cross. Our suffering unites us to His suffering, and through His suffering there is restoration and joy. This restoration is given to us through Word and Sacrament, which the pastor gives to us each Sunday.

The deaconess does not have her own ministry but a ministry under the headship of the pastor. She serves the congregation as needed and is constantly pointing people towards those precious gifts the pastor gives.

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The Rev. Christopher J. Bramich (pastor@holy-shepherd.com), a 1999 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, serves as pastor of Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church and Preschool, Haslet, Texas.

Deaconess Michelle E. Domin (deaconess@holy-shepherd.com), CTSFW 2016, serves as preschool director and youth director at Holy Shepherd.
“The Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the truth faith” (Small Catechism, Explanation of Third Article of the Creed). “I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command . . . this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself” (Small Catechism, Confession, Office of the Keys section).

Your future pastors are gifts from the ascended Lord Jesus (Eph. 4:11). He will send them to be servants of the Gospel, the Gospel by which you and others are called and summoned by God to receive His gifts of salvation. The Gospel and Sacraments are the way through which God calls people to Himself, and your future pastors are being trained and formed to do this, to be godly men who are apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2), who will serve God and Church by making sure the Word of Christ dwells among us richly (Col. 3:16).

This formation of future pastors is not so much filling their heads with right knowledge as it is shaping their hearts and souls to be imbued with God’s Word and holy wisdom. C. F. W. Walther therefore defined pastoral theology as “the God-given, practice-oriented disposition of the soul, acquired by certain means, by which a minister is equipped to perform all the tasks that come to him in that capacity validly, in a legitimate manner, to the glory of God, and for the advancement of his own and his hearers’ salvation” (Walther, American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology, ed. by David W. Loy, trans. by Christian C. Tiews [St. Louis: Concordia, 2017], ch. 1, art. 1). What is curious about Walther’s definition, but completely in line with how Luther conceived of theology, is the emphasis on it as a practice-oriented disposition of the soul, rather than being primarily head knowledge. (This point, accepted by Walther, was still under discussion by Lutherans in the 17th century. Some conceived of theology as a God-given disposition, which necessarily results in piety and the helping of others toward salvation, while others thought of it more as doctrine, or a body of knowledge accessible to the unregenerate and regenerate alike.) As opposed to those who would see theology as merely knowledge, Walther argues that it must go deeper. Theology must become a part of the heart and soul of future pastors, giving them wisdom for making hard decisions and leading them in love to guide and guard Christ’s precious sheep.

On the other hand, knowledge and study are needed, too. St. Paul says so in 1 Tim. 4:13–16: “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . . . Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (NKJV).

Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, was founded to do this, to be a community where men become pastoral theologians, apt to teach, prepared to proclaim the Gospel and lead people out of this evil world to eternal salvation in Christ.

This formation occurs in and out of the classroom, online and in person, at multiple daily chapel services and informally at coffee, meals and conviviality (our times of Gemütlichkeit).

But this saving Gospel and theology is not a secret. Our theology is public and belongs to the whole Church, not just to future pastors. Therefore the CTSFW community fosters learning also for women and men who will not be pastors, but will serve God, Church and neighbor in other vocations. We cherish our other programs, such as M.A., Ph.D. and deaconess studies, confident that these men and women will serve and aid the Church in a variety of ways.

What does this mean? The Gospel does not proclaim itself. It requires servants. Your future pastors are being formed to serve the Gospel. Join us with your prayers and support. Help us to carry out this vital task.

The Rev. Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes is assistant professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, assistant editor of Concordia Theological Quarterly and co-general editor for Luther’s Works: American Edition (Concordia Publishing House).
Lenten Preaching Workshop

Monday
January 16, 2017
8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Preaching the Penitential Psalms in Lent: “Lord, Have Mercy”

Drawing on Luther’s work on the Psalms this workshop will seek to equip pastors to preach on the penitential Psalms for the midweek Lenten services. In this year, which marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we will be especially attentive to Luther’s treatment of these Psalms as they proclaim repentance and faith, contrition for our sin and Christ’s unmerited forgiveness. In preparation for the workshop, participants may wish to read Fruit for the Soul: Luther on the Lament Psalms by Dennis Ngien (Fortress Press, 2015).

Presenter: Prof. John T. Pless

Fee: $40.00 per person, includes lunch. You may register online at www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/lenten-workshops.

For additional information email LeeAnna.Rondot@ctsfw.edu or phone 260.452.2204.
1:00 p.m. Christ as Gift: Reflections on a New Testament Theme
Dr. Mark A. Seifrid
Professor of Exegetical Theology
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri

2:15 p.m. Luther’s Lectures on Hebrews: The Headwaters of the Reformation
Dr. Arthur A. Just Jr.
Chairman and Professor of Exegetical Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

3:15 p.m. Break

3:30 p.m. Panel Discussion

4:45 p.m. Vespers

Wednesday, January 18, 2017
7:45 a.m. Short Exegetical Paper Sectionals (see “Call for Papers”)

9:00 a.m. Waiting Is the Hardest Part: Isaiah’s Motif of Waiting in Light of God Hidden and Revealed
Prof. Ryan M. Tietz
Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

10:00 a.m. Chapel

11:00 a.m. Break

11:15 a.m. Wittenberg University: Intellectual Servant of the Reformation and Model for a Lutheran University
Dr. Dean O. Wenthe
Professor of Exegetical Theology; President Emeritus
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

12:00 p.m. Lunch

The 40th Annual Symposium on The Lutheran Confessions
The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation: Continuing the Celebration

Wednesday, January 18, 2017
1:15 p.m. Welcome

1:30 p.m. Luther in America
Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

2:30 p.m. Luther’s Use of Apologetics
Dr. Adam S. Francisco
Chairman, Department of History and Political Thought
Concordia University, Irvine, California

3:30 p.m. Break

3:45 p.m. The 95 Theses and Why They Are Still Important
Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie
Chairman of Historical Theology; The Forest E. and Frances H. Ellis Professor of Historical Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

5:00 p.m. Choral Vespers

Thursday, January 19, 2017
8:45 a.m. Old, Cold, Lame and One-eyed: Luther’s Last Year
Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, St. Louis, Missouri

10:00 a.m. Chapel

10:30 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Will the Real Luther Stand Up?
Dr. David P. Scaer
Chairman of Systematic Theology; The David P. Scaer Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:15 p.m. How Did Luther Preach: A Plea for Gospel-Dominated Preaching
Rev. M. Hopson Boutot
Pastor
Poquoson Baptist Church, Poquoson, Virginia

2:30 p.m. Confessing Grace and Holiness: Augustine and the Church of the Reformation
Dr. Phil Anderas
Priest, Anglican Church in North America, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

3:30 p.m. Break

3:45 p.m. Luther’s Ecumenical Connections
Dr. Derek R. Nelson
Chairman and Associate Professor, Department of Religion
Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana

5:00 p.m. Vespers and Organ Recital

5:30 p.m. Reception (Library)

6:30 p.m. Banquet (Dining Hall)

Friday, January 20, 2017
8:45 a.m. Demonology in Luther’s Theology and in the Presence
Dr. (Major) Harold Ristau
Lutheran Church–Canada Chaplain with the Canadian Armed Forces
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

10:00 a.m. Panel – Expectations at the Half Millennium of the Reformation
Panel Participants: Dr. Andreas, Rev. Boutot, Dr. Francisco, Dr. Harrison, Dr. MacKenzie, Dr. Ristau, Dr. Scaer

11:00 a.m. Chapel

For more information go to www.ctsfw.edu/Symposia or call 260.452.2204.
What’s your background?
I was born and raised in Marion, Indiana. I met my husband Mike at Purdue University. We have been married for 23 years and have two adult sons. Before coming to Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, I was a high school Japanese language teacher in Louisville, Kentucky. I have also taught English as a Second Language, English and Humanities. My hobbies include running, cycling, cooking and reading. Mike is also a student at CTSFW, currently in his second year of the M.Div. Program.

Who influenced you to study to become a deaconess?
Three years ago my husband Mike, who at the time was working in healthcare finance, told me that he felt the Lord calling him to serve as a pastor in the Lutheran Church. When I asked him how long he had sensed the Lord calling him into the ministry, he told me that he had felt the call since high school but had ignored it and that he just couldn’t ignore it anymore, since the call was getting stronger and more persistent. I recall referring to him as “Jonah” in a lovingly joking way! I knew I should not get in the way of the Lord’s plans, so we agreed to investigate the possibility of his studying to become a pastor.

One day as I was exploring the CTSFW website, I saw the link for more information about the Deaconess Program and I clicked on it. After reading that information, my interest was piqued. I had been serving my congregation, Our Savior Lutheran Church in Louisville, Kentucky, in Stephen Ministry and with the Lutheran Church Charities Comfort Dog Ministry, and began to contemplate how God might use me in service as a deaconess. After visiting CTSFW and learning more about the Deaconess Program from Deaconess Amy Rast and Dr. Bushur, I knew that this was the new path for me. Mike was very happy about my decision and has been very supportive of my studies here.

Why did you choose CTSFW?
From the moment we stepped onto the campus in Fort Wayne, it felt like home. The admission counselors, professors and students here were all so welcoming and friendly during our campus visit that we felt at ease right away. The quiet beauty of the campus made an impression on us. We also considered the fact that the geographical location of CTSFW would allow us to be closer to family in northern Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio.
You have an interesting situation in that your husband is also studying here. What have been some of the unexpected joys and challenges of studying together at CTSFW?

One challenge of studying together has been when we have the same classes and have reading assignments that we both need to get done with one set of textbooks! We sometimes have to schedule who gets which book when.

Some of the joys include being able to ask each other theological questions related to class discussions and coming away with a better understanding of the topic/issue based upon our mutual digging into God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

I have also gotten great joy out of watching Mike grow as a fieldworker during the past year. I can definitely see that this is what the Lord has called him to do!

How would you encourage someone who is considering studying to become a deaconess?

First, I would encourage her to pray about it. I would also encourage her to explore the CTSFW website for more information and then to make a personal visit to the campus to speak with an admission counselor. The campus visits are great because you can sit in on classes and speak with current students about their experiences.

What are your personal goals for your future service as a deaconess?

I am leaning towards serving as a deaconess in an institutional setting, such as a Lutheran nursing home, hospital, hospice or Recognized Service Organization. However, I am open to whatever the Lord has in store—I don’t want to put God in a box! Mike and I are even open to serving in international missions, since we both have a heart for outreach.

To learn more about Deaconess Formation at CTSFW, go to www.ctsfw.edu/Deaconess, email Admission@ctsfw.edu or phone 800.481.2155.
Planning Ahead for Summer 2017

In December it may be difficult to think about your family’s plans for the summer, but it’s always a good idea to have a plan for the summer so your time doesn’t slip away. What kind of plans are you and your family going to be making for Summer 2017? Sports may be part of the plan or maybe camp, perhaps a nice long vacation to regroup and refocus your family after the school year is over.

Have you made any plans for you or your children to grow in the faith? Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, can help with your summer planning. We offer two summer academies for young men and women who will be entering high school in the Fall through those who will graduate in Spring 2017. Registration for both academies opens January 1, 2017.

Phoebe Academy High School
June 19–25, 2017

Participating in Phoebe Academy High School (PAHS) is an excellent way for young women interested in the faith to grow in the faith and learn more about a life of service as deaconesses or lay women in the Church. Attendees will explore God’s Word on mercy and what it means for us today, develop friendships with like-minded women that can last a lifetime and meet deaconesses who are serving in the Church.

In addition to classes taught by CTSFW faculty and deaconesses, there will be a service project and plenty of time to socialize to get to know your fellow participants.

“Both Christ Academy and Phoebe Academy focus on the growth and development of students,” said Deaconess Gina Teeple, director, Phoebe Academy High School. “It is amazing to watch the faithful young men and women who attend both academies engage actively in the classroom and participate in worship. They are truly interested in learning more about Christ and how to serve Him and one another.”

The registration fee of $400 includes housing, meals, PAHS shirt and admission to any off-campus events. For more information or to register, go to www.ctsfw.edu/PAHS, email ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu or phone 800.481.2155.

Christ Academy High School
June 19–July 2, 2017

Christ Academy High School (CAHS) is a great opportunity for young men who are interested in a growing in their faith, delving into the study of theology or wanting to learn more about the vocation of pastor. CAHS will strengthen young men in their faith and equip them for lifelong service in the Church as a church worker or as a layman.

When not in the classroom, participants will have the opportunity participate in group sports, the Academy choir and a Tin Caps baseball game.

“High school can be a difficult time in students’ lives, especially if they don’t have people their age in their congregation. The academies can change that,” said the Rev. Matthew Wietfeldt, director, Christ Academy High School. “Through their time together on campus, our students grow closer to each other and form friendships that last a lifetime.”

The registration fee of $600 includes housing, meals, CAHS shirt and admission to any off-campus events. For more information or to register, go to www.ctsfw.edu/ChristAcademy, email ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu or phone 800.481.2155.
Christ Academy High School and Phoebe Academy High School

Christ Academy and Phoebe Academy High School events are great opportunities for young men and women to dig deeper into the theology and practice of the Church.

Phoebe Academy
For high school aged young women
June 19–25, 2017

Christ Academy
For high school aged young men
June 19–July 2, 2017

Registration Opens
January 1, 2017

Contact: Rev. Matthew Wietfeldt
■ ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu
■ 260.452.2178
He’s a lifelong Hoosier, attended college on a basketball scholarship and has a vast knowledge of and interest in the early church fathers … what’s not to like? The Rev. Dr. James G. Bushur is in his tenth year of service at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, where he is associate professor of Historical Theology. He has a M.Div. (1993) and S.T.M. (1998) from CTSFW and chose to pursue his Ph.D. in Patristic Theology from Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom. He earned his Ph.D. in 2010 after successfully defending his thesis, “Joining the End to the Beginning: Divine Providence and the Interpretation of Scripture in the Teaching of Irenaeus of Lyons.” Since 2010 he has served as director of Deaconess Formation.

**Tell us a little about yourself.**

I was born and raised in Indianapolis; indeed, one could say I am a Hoosier through and through, since I have lived in Indiana my whole life except for the one year I served as vicar at Trinity Lutheran Church in Palo Alto, California. I attended Calvary Lutheran School and Southport High School, both in Indianapolis. I received a basketball scholarship to attend Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, where I received a B.A. in Biblical Literature.

Before coming to CTSFW, I served as pastor in two parishes: Trinity Lutheran Church in Goodland, Indiana, from 1994 until 1999; and Immanuel Lutheran Church in Decatur, Indiana, from 1999 until 2006.

I have been married to my wife, Lori, for 26 years and together we have been blessed with three wonderful children: Lydia, Jacob and Luke.

**As director of Deaconess Formation, what do you think folks need to hear most about the service of deaconesses?**

Many think of the deaconess vocation as merely a practical service that consists in certain functions to be performed or various works of mercy to be done; and, it is true that there is a practical and concrete dimension to deaconess service that is essential to the vocation and must never be diminished. However, what is foundational from my perspective is that the deaconess vocation is, before all else, a theological vocation. In other words, the life of mercy, which deaconesses seek...
to live, has its origin in God Himself. “God is love,” says St. John (1 John 4:8). This divine love manifests itself in the feeding of the hungry, care of the sick, friendship toward the stranger and the outcast, visitation of the prisoner and suffering together with the needy. Thus, the deaconess vocation must always be connected to its root in the life of the Holy Trinity and the mission of Christ “not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28). It is this conviction that guides the Deaconess Formation Program here at CTSFW; for us, to train deaconesses is first of all to train them theologically.

What has been your favorite course to teach and why?
My favorite course is History 1, which covers the history of the Christian church from its apostolic origins through the fifth century and the first four ecumenical councils. This class is especially gratifying for a number of reasons. First, it is a required class, which means that it allows me to get to know every student. Second, the story of the early church is generally not well known to our students. As Lutherans, they are somewhat familiar with the story of Martin Luther and the Reformation; but, the history of early Christians, the struggle with the Roman world, the endurance of martyrdom and the theological controversies that led to the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds are new and fresh areas of study for many of our students. It is like informing a person of an entirely unknown dimension of their genealogical tree. Thus, it is truly gratifying to see students come to a deeper appreciation for the profound genealogical roots of their Christian identity and for the lively faith underlying the Nicene Creed they have confessed from their youth. Finally, this class is a favorite because of its relevance for our contemporary situation. As we face an increasingly hostile state, it is helpful to draw students into the story of the ancient church, which certainly faced similar circumstances.

The contemplation of the Gospel of Christ is a calling I experience at the very depth of my being. In this contemplation there are, to be sure, challenges, frustrations, failures and sorrows to be endured; but, there is also enlightenment, joy, divine blessings and the hope of true fulfillment in the age to come. I feel most like my true self when I am engaged in the contemplation, teaching and preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

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What has been the most rewarding to you as a professor?
Most rewarding for me is simply the privilege to contemplate, teach and preach the Gospel of Christ as proclaimed in the Scriptures and as it has been lived, practiced and confessed in the Church throughout the ages. The truth is that I would do what I have been given to do for free. The contemplation of the Gospel of Christ is a calling I experience at the very depth of my being.

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SMP Students Complete Courses at CTSFW

Congratulations and God’s blessings to the men who have completed their studies in the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSWF), Fort Wayne, Indiana, and were recognized during the morning chapel service on November 8, 2016. The SMP Program is a distance-education program designed to meet the need to train pastors in context for ministry and mission opportunities in the church.

“We take wholesome Christian pride in these men and the ways God uses them in His kingdom,” said the Rev. Dr. Carl C. Fickenscher II, director of Pastoral Formation Programs at CTSFW. “We stress that our SMP students are an important part of the total effort of CTSFW to prepare men for the Office of the Holy Ministry. They study for four years, much of their coursework by distance, but also coming to campus each fall for an intensive, residential course as well. Now having completed the SMP Program, these men will continue under the supervision of a general ministry pastor, serving for the most part in callings that could not otherwise be filled by an ordained man.”

Completing the SMP Program are:

- **Michael W. Dixon**, SMP pastor, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Corinth, Mississippi, Southern District
- **Nathan D. Erb**, SMP assistant pastor, Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Garden City, New York, Atlantic District
- **Jeffrey E. Meinz**, SMP pastor, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Rocky Mountain District
- **Roney C. Riley**, SMP pastor, Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Forest Park, Illinois, Northern Illinois District
- **Timothy L. Sallach**, SMP pastor, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Burnett, Wisconsin, South Wisconsin District
- **Steven F. Scharnell**, SMP associate pastor, St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, South Wisconsin District
- **Robert G. Scott**, SMP pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, Grand Blanc, Michigan, Michigan District
- **Gleason G. W. Snashall**, SMP pastor, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, San Diego, California, Pacific Southwest District

To learn more about the SMP Program at CTSFW, go to www.ctsfw.edu/future-students/pastoral or connect with our Admission team at Admission@ctsfw.edu or 800.481.2155.

CTSFW 2017 Wall Calendars Available

The 2017 wall calendar from Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSWF), Fort Wayne, celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with photos of the Seminary community, CTSFW events for 2017 and the lectionary for the year. The calendars were mailed to all CTSFW alumni and all congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in mid-November. A limited number of additional copies are available to individuals and congregations by phoning 260.452.2150 or emailing Colleen.Bartzsch@ctsfw.edu. There is a $5.00 mailing charge for quantities of one to 10 calendars.
Epiphany 2017

Music of the Christmas and Epiphany seasons presented by the Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Friday, January 6  Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church
645 Poplar Street
Terre Haute, IN 47807-4203
www.immanuelevluth.org
Divine Service for the Festival of the Epiphany of Our Lord
7:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 7  Messiah Lutheran Church
2727 5 Mile Road NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525-1709
www.messiahgr.org
Epiphany Vespers
7:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 8  Our Savior Lutheran Church
2900 Burton Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-5153
www.oursavior-gr.org
Divine Service
8:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Formation as a deaconess can be a humbling experience because many times the people whom you are called to serve, also serve you. It’s the life of mercy found in the body of Christ. A woman, who is now resting in Christ, always reminded the people she met that “on good Friday they put Jesus on the cross, and on Easter Sunday He rose from the dead.” She was a strong woman of faith, who happened also to have a disability. She witnessed to Christ’s life, death and resurrection to all she met and pointed many people to Christ.

During my time as a deaconess at Bethesda Lutheran Communities, I have learned about what it means to serve and to be served in the body of Christ. “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12). I have seen the joy that can come with all the members of the body being present, and it is wonderful. People with disabilities have much to add to the body of Christ, as we live a life of mercy together.

Formation at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, laid the foundation for my theological understanding of mercy in the body of Christ. CTSFW gave me a well rounded and diverse learning experience that has framed how I engage in ministry with people of all abilities. During fieldwork, I served at a congregation where I worked with children during Sunday School and assisted in visitations to adult shut-in members. Alongside my congregational fieldwork, I served in the Emergency Department at a local hospital to gain experience in ministering to people in the midst of crisis. Internship provided me the opportunity to grow in the skills I learned during fieldwork and added to them by serving in an acute stabilization psychiatric unit at a hospital. Ultimately, all of these experiences prepared me for my first placement as a deaconess with Bethesda Lutheran Communities.

I have been a deaconess at Bethesda Lutheran Communities...
Communities for a little over four years, and am now serving as the vice president of Religious Life. I began my service at Bethesda as a ministry consultant where I provided faith supports to people we support, staff and congregations. Bethesda Lutheran Communities, a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, has existed for over 100 years to enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I have a passion for seeing people be actively involved in the life of their church, and at Bethesda I have been blessed to witness the Church welcome people with disabilities into the body of Christ. Yet, we can always be better at being intentional in how we include people in the Church. Being formed as a deaconess through CTSFW nourished a strong foundation to point people of all abilities to Christ and where we can find Him daily, in His Word and Sacraments.

If you would like to learn more about how your congregation can be more welcoming to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, feel free to email me at Kimberly.Trombley@mailblc.org.

Deaconess Kimberly E. Trombley (Kimberly.Trombley@mailblc.org), CTSFW 2012, serves as vice president of Religious Life at Bethesda Lutheran Communities (www.bethesdalutherancommunities.org).

Save the Date

2017 Alumni Reunions
May 18–19
More info coming soon!

Christ Academy Confirmation:
A Retreat for Confirmation-Aged Boys and Girls

March 17-19, 2017

The Lord’s Supper:
Where Heaven and Earth Converge

Leader: Rev. Michael Frese, associate pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Retreat Fee: $110/person, includes on-campus housing and meals.

Register: Email Retreats@ctsfw.edu or phone 260.452.2204.
Thinking or talking about the future can cause some interesting contemplation. Sometimes, it is pleasant, but it can also bring up fears and worry. One of the areas of speculation on the future is what will happen to our church, as evil seems so prevalent in this present world. Included in this would be worrying that there will not be preachers and teachers of the Word to keep His light alive. The Word of our God tells us that we are not to be concerned with the future; He will take care of us. In faith, we trust this promise and can rest assured that God the Holy Spirit is working right now and will continue to work in those who will come to the Seminary to become the new pastors and deaconesses for His kingdom.

Consider joining the Guild of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, to support current students and prepare to nurture those who are to come.

Joyce West (joycie43@gmail.com) serves as president of the Concordia Theological Seminary Guild.

UPCOMING GUILD EVENTS

December 13
Christmas with the Kantorei and Cookie Exchange
Luther Hall
1:00 p.m.

February 14, 2017
Missionary Focus
Rev. Dr. K. Detlev Schulz
Luther Hall
1:00 p.m.

March 14, 2017
Reformation Historical Information
Rev. Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes
Luther Hall
1:00 p.m.

April 11, 2017
Spring Luncheon
Focus on the Seminary Deaconess Program
Luther Hall
12:00 p.m.

Affiliate Guild Registration

☐ Yes, we are interested in becoming an Affiliate Guild. Please send more information to:
Name: ____________________________
Organization: __________________________________________________________________________
Address: ____________________________
City: __________________ State: _______ Zip: ___________
Email: ______________________________

☐ We are enclosing a donation payable to Concordia Theological Seminary Guild, c/o Linda Scicluna, 6600 N. Clinton St., Box 8, Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996.

☐ Please contact me with more information.

☐ We have enclosed our yearly $25 check for our group to be an Affiliate Guild.

☐ I have enclosed my yearly $10 check to be an individual affiliate member.

☐ Donation Day gift.
In addition to many members of the CTSFW faculty, several prominent theologians, including the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be presenting during this year’s Symposia Series. For online registration, schedule and speaker information, go to www.ctsfw.edu/Symposia.

500th Anniversary of the Reformation Service

OCTOBER 31, 2017

Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will serve as preacher.

Kramer Chapel
7:30 p.m.

CTSFW Tours

NOVEMBER 11–21, 2017

Lands of Luther & Eastern Europe: Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Hosted by President and Mrs. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

More information available at www.ctsfw.edu/CTSFWTours.

Throughout 2017:

Find resources for Bible studies, sermons, classroom helps, devotions, historical information and more by visiting www.ctsfw.edu/Reformation-500.

All issues of Concordia Theological Quarterly will focus on the significance of the Reformation.
When a wealthy individual dies, a question frequently arises: “How much did he or she leave behind?” The answer, according to the Bible, is always the same: “All of it!” On the basis of Holy Scripture we understand and believe that we came into this world with nothing and we will leave it with nothing. As we enter the final phase of our lives, we have reflected not only on our life achievements, but even more upon our family legacy. We have been blessed richly with children, and now grandchildren, and successful medical careers. We also value and appreciate the numerous faithful Lutheran pastors and teachers who have served us and our family. Because of that we desire to leave a legacy both for the good of our family and the Church, including Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne.

We chose to remember CTSFW in our will and estate plan because we know the endless value of retaining and training biblically prepared pastors. Who will rightly teach and preach God’s Word to our family and grandchildren and many others if we do not have good pastors? Congregations with solid pastors are important to us, our children and our grandchildren. We know that everything we possess isn’t really ours—it’s simply on loan from our Maker and Creator. The heavenly Father is the owner and we are only earthly managers of what belongs to Him. In numerous parables Jesus indicates that we have an obligation and a responsibility to manage the assets entrusted to our care on His behalf (Matt. 25:14–30 and Luke 12:13–48). As a result, we realize that all of our time, talent, treasure and life (Rom. 12:1) are gifts to be shared and utilized in response to our Lord’s sacrifice on the cross for our sins.

As we’ve reflected consciously upon the assets entrusted to us and made final estate decisions, we understand more fully that being good stewards begins with having a solid plan. Our personal estate plan includes gift endowments to the church and the creation of charitable remainder trusts through the LCMS Foundation, which will provide annual payments for our grandchildren and will ultimately benefit CTSFW and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). We also have a family-directed donor advised fund to support special individual charitable endeavors. We have weighed the factors of taxation to our assets as well, a very important consideration.

The foundation and cornerstone of our estate plan is the will. It is a legal document which is typically designed to specify who gets what property at the time of death. When the Lord calls each of us from this world to the next, everything we “own” will be left behind and distributed. However, the manner in which this distribution occurs will be determined by the will and if we did not have our will completed, it would be distributed by another entity (such as the government). Since we are given this privilege to make such decisions, we wanted to do this while we have good health and good minds. Our will is the legal document which specifies our
Your gift of support TODAY will keep on giving eternally as the Gospel is shared!

Enclosed is my gift of:
☐ $5,000 ☐ $1,000 ☐ $500 ☐ $250 ☐ $100 ☐ Other $ _____

In support of:
☐ Pastoral and Deaconess preparation ☐ Student Aid
☐ Other Seminary approved program: ____________________________

Giving methods:
☐ My check is enclosed, payable to: Concordia Theological Seminary
☐ Please charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Card #: __________________________ Exp. Date: ______
Signature: __________________________

Or donate online at www.ctsfw.edu/Support-CTSFW

Name: __________________________
Address: __________________________
City, State, Zip: ___________________
Telephone: __________________ Email: __________________

Gift matching opportunity:
If your employer matches charitable contributions, remember
to request matching funds from your company.

Please send me information on:
☐ Endowments ☐ Estate planning
☐ Including CTSFW in my will ☐ Gift Annuities

Please detach and mail to Concordia Theological Seminary,
6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825-4996.

intentions and it will do the following:
• Dispose of property which is acquired unexpectedly or at some time in the future.
• Transfer property subject to probate.
• Name an executor for the will.
• Name a personal guardian for minor children.
• Name heirs and possibly disinhereit others.
• Make a statement—a testimony regarding one’s wishes, beliefs, experiences and/or philosophy.

It is a relief and satisfying for us to know that our will meets the lawful requirements of the State of Indiana and that the supporting documents to implement our will are organized for those who follow us after us.

We have had a good experience in completing our estate plan. We encourage you to complete your estate plan and remember CTSFW. It will be a great source of satisfaction, comfort and joy for you. By entrusting our life’s assets to our family, others and the church we pray that more good may happen for them and God’s kingdom. We also eagerly look forward with hope and faith, knowing that eternal salvation is ours as God’s free gift through our Savior, Jesus Christ. By His grace alone we wait with anticipation to hear the Lord say those words each of us would so very much like to hear: “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:21).

The Liebners have both retired from careers in medicine. They are the parents of five children and have eight grandchildren. They currently reside in Monticello, Indiana. For more information about including CTSFW in your will, or other giving opportunities, go to www.ctsfw.edu/Support-CTSFW, email Advancement@ctsfw.edu or phone 877.287.4338.
Isaiah 6:1–13 functions in a pivotal place within the book of Isaiah. This narrative gives us a picture of Isaiah’s call and commission to a rebellious people. This chapter features prominently within the liturgy and hymnal including the Sanctus, “Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old” (Lutheran Service Book [LSB], 960), and is even quoted in “Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying” (LSB, 826), albeit somewhat out of context. The prophet can function as a paradigm for the faithful who are living in faithless times.

Isaiah 6:1–4
The date formula is significant at the start of this chapter. King Uzziah was a monarch during a time in which the Assyrian Empire was comparatively weak, and Israel/Judah experienced a last Golden Age. Thus, his death foreshadows tough times ahead that become exemplified with the Assyrian interventions in the Levant.

What do you observe about what Isaiah sees? What is particularly surprising?

Isaiah sees the Lord sitting on His throne. Why is this troubling? See Ex. 33:20.

The purpose of the temple was so that a holy God could dwell with an unholy people. Note also that Yahweh’s presence overflows the temple and the presence of the seraphim. Isaiah is no longer in the earthly temple, but is given a vision of the heavenly reality.

The seraphim appear whose name is connected to the Hebrew word for fire. They are acting as attendants in the court of Yahweh. They present themselves modestly. Note their response to the presence of Yahweh. To be in the divine presence is to overflow with joy and praise. The image is that of antiphonal singing in which they participate in the heavenly song. They use the name YHWH Sabaoth when addressing God. This divine name is important. Sabaoth here refers to God as the general of heaven’s armies who acts decisively to save. It also emphasizes God as a warrior battling evil.

Where is Is. 6:3 used within the Divine Service?

How does the use of “holy, holy, holy” inform our understanding of the Eucharist? During the Sanctus, some people make the sign of the cross. Why?

Isaiah 6:5–7
In the divine presence, the prophet is utterly terrified. In the year that the earthly king dies, he sees King YHWH, the general of heaven’s armies. He falls upon his face because he realizes he is no better than the rest of the people. Here “Lips” is used to show that the people are corrupted to the point where only unclean things come out of their mouths. Note how the theme of uncleanness interacts with his confession. Look at Is. 52:1–6; this passage gives us an image of restored Zion. How does this inform our understanding of uncleanness in Isaiah?

How does God respond to Isaiah?

The weight of the divine presence is crushing to the prophet. However, God addresses sin. The coal comes from the altar. It is only through sacrifice that sin is removed. The altar functions as a type for Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. God consistently intervenes to redeem and restore. Isaiah hears the absolution from the altar. The word kapar, covered, connects us to the language of the Day of Atonement.

In the WORD

Here I Am! Send Me?

By Ryan M. Tietz
Isaiah can only do his ministry because he has first received forgiveness. Why is confession and absolution important for pastors?

Isaiah 6:8–13

In Is. 6:8, the Lord finally speaks. God never orders Isaiah to be a prophet. God uses indirect questions to point out the need for one to be sent. After experiencing forgiveness, the prophet cannot help but respond with “Here I am! Send me!” As we experience God’s unfathomable forgiveness, we too cannot help but respond. Interestingly, the lectionary readings tend to stop at Is. 6:8.

In Is. 6:9–10, the prophet learns his mission. Isaiah does not respond perhaps as we would with shock, dismay or doubt. Rather, we do not learn of his reaction. How do these verses strike you?

The issue of divine hardening is difficult. The best way to understand it here is that God gives people what they want as a form of judgment. After pleading with them and their refusal, God turns them over to their desire not to hear (Rom. 1:24–25).

The prophet asks the obvious question, “How long?” He warns that it will be until the divine judgment is complete, but it ends with a positive note. How do we ask this same question in our own lives?

Even in the midst of coming destruction, God promises to preserve the seed, the faithful remnant. Thus, we as forgiven people living in a land of unclean lips also cling to the promise that God will always preserve the remnant. This promise gives us hope as we face adversity knowing also that we, like the prophet, are God’s forgiven people redeemed by sacrifice.

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