Distinctively Lutheran Worship
By Jon D. Vieker

Distinctively Lutheran Teaching
By Charles A. Gieschen

Distinctively Lutheran in Word and Practice
By Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
I am always struck by the immediacy of Jesus’ ministry. In Matthew’s Gospel this immediacy takes on a more mundane but no less important character. “He healed him”—implicitly Jesus did so immediately. That is what Jesus does.

Jesus healed a person. And the object of His action is an unnamed man who is blind and mute. This man is utterly passive in the entire story. Personally, he is demon possessed—he is controlled by satanic impulses. Clearly, someone has led him to Jesus. He didn’t do it himself—he couldn’t have found the way. Someone else had to lead him because of his challenges. He is totally dependent on others—and ultimately he is healed by Jesus.

And it all happens in an instant. Can you imagine the change in this man’s life? Blind and mute, he is now seeing and speaking. No doubt those around him were amazed; but what about him? His life has fundamentally changed from here forward.

This text is about each of us—we who were blind and mute. Jesus has been working both quickly and slowly in each of us. Quickly in Baptism; slowly in continually opening our eyes and loosing our tongue. The Lutheran Service Book baptismal liturgy captures this sense of immediacy. “Do you renounce the devil? Do you renounce all his works? Do you renounce all his ways?” Yes! is the strong answer to all three. But for those of us baptized as infants, we had others answering with us there. And we have not brought ourselves to the font. Others have done so. Why? Because we cannot. Conceived and born in sin, we cannot free ourselves. We are spiritually blind and unable to confess.

Christ heals us. He does so immediately—through the means of water and the Word; and immediately by His action we become the children of God. Our eyes are opened and our tongues are loosed.

The playing out of that healing takes place over time. Our sight gets clearer and our tongues learn to speak the language of the Scriptures and the Church. Little by little we see and speak more fully of the wonders of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Now that playing out is about to take on a new intensity as we begin yet another year together. Here’s the good news: what our students are learning is preparing them to fulfill the words of this text. They will be the ones going forth to heal those who are blind and mute—even as they continue to have their eyes and mouths opened wider. This is Christ’s promise to each one of us.

We don’t know anything about this formerly blind and mute man. He shows up and he disappears. What did he do after this? Who knows? What we do know is what Jesus did for him. And what Jesus did for that man, He is doing now for each of us as members of His Church. That is His promise today—at the opening of the 172nd academic year of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana—that is His promise always.

With you in His service,

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana
4 Distinctively Lutheran Worship
By Jon D. Vieker
The seminaries of our Synod do well in preparing future pastors when they teach and model for their students a distinctly Lutheran approach to worship. It begins with a faculty that fully and passionately understands and embraces what it is to be distinctively Lutheran in a 21st century context. It is reinforced by a vibrant and healthy worship life that regularly and consistently trumpets a full-throated Gospel proclamation into the ears of seminarians and their families.

7 Distinctively Lutheran Teaching
By Charles A. Gieschen
Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, has become known internationally as a bastion of faithful biblical teaching that is boldly Lutheran. We even have been referred to as the Wittenberg of the 21st century! The reason for such a reputation is the distinctively Lutheran teaching and learning that happens in our pastoral and deaconess formation programs.

10 Distinctively Lutheran in Word and Practice
By Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
A seminary is more than an academic institution. It is a community that brings together uniquely gifted individuals—future pastors and deaconesses eager to serve in works of mercy, and lay leaders committed to Christ’s mission—who will go forth in dedicated service with the Gospel of Christ for the life of the world.

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But what is it about these gatherings that makes them distinctively Lutheran? What is distinctively Lutheran about the way we worship? And what does such distinctively Lutheran worship mean for the training of future pastors at our Synod’s seminaries?

Every Sunday morning, some 6,100 congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) open their doors for worship. In the life of our congregations, this is the single most important gathering of the week. This is where “the rubber meets the road”—where Jesus comes to be with His people to deliver His Calvary-won forgiveness of sins through Word and Sacrament (Matt. 18:20). As the Augsburg Confession declares: “The Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered” (AC VII 1).

It’s About the Gospel
This year we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. By now, you’ve probably encountered Reformation historians and theologians in print and on video waxing eloquent on a variety of Reformation events and

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doctrine (e.g., invocation of the saints) or opposite. In his liturgical reforms, Luther drastically affected the way that Luther and his compatriots taught from Scripture that worship was completely the opposite.

The main point of worship is not about what we do for God; it’s about what God does for us and gives to us through His Means of Grace. The German word that early Lutherans coined to describe this was Gottesdienst, that is, God’s service. Gottesdienst went into English as Divine Service, that is, the delivery point where God serves us, His people, with His forgiveness of sins week after week. Worship as Divine Service is distinctively Lutheran!

It’s Biblical
You might think that such a radical Reformation understanding would have drastically affected the way that Luther and the Wittenbergers worshiped. You would think that they would have thrown out the entire Latin Mass and written up something fresh and new. But, in fact, it was quite the opposite. In his liturgical reforms, Luther removed only the portions that taught false doctrine (e.g., invocation of the saints) or promoted salvation by works (e.g., the Mass as an unbloody sacrifice). The rest he left as is.

Luther recognized and rejoiced in the utterly scriptural basis on which the vast majority of texts of the Latin Mass were grounded (e.g., Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Creed, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, etc.). The texts that you find in Lutheran Service Book (LSB) today (e.g., Divine Service, Setting Three) very much follow Luther’s reform of the Latin Mass. In LSB there are also Scripture references throughout to show just where in the Bible these magnificent texts are grounded. Distinctively Lutheran worship is biblical!

It’s Catholic
Luther had an “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” approach to worship reform. His approach was conservative in the sense that he sought to conserve the best of what had been received from those who had come before him. But more profoundly, Luther’s approach was also catholic. By catholic I do not mean Roman Catholic, but rather universal, or literally “according to the whole.” This means that Luther valued what had come before him, from the church catholic in time, that is, the services and hymns from the past, some of which needed reform but not wholesale rejection.

We see this approach not only in Luther’s reform of the Latin Mass mentioned above, but also in the hymns that he wrote for use in the Divine Service. Of the 37 hymn texts Luther wrote during his lifetime, only nine can be considered completely original creations. The other 28 hymn texts were either paraphrases of Psalms or canticles from the Bible (11) or translations/reworkings of existing hymns or liturgical texts (17).

All of this suggests that Luther valued highly the Psalms, hymns and liturgy that had come before him, and that he worked to reform and preserve these treasures. He wanted them to serve as vehicles for proclaiming the Gospel into people’s ears and hearts. As he wrote toward the end of his life: “For God has cheered our hearts and minds through his dear Son, whom he gave for us to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. He who believes this earnestly cannot be quiet about it. But he must gladly and willingly sing and speak about it so that others also may come and hear it” (Luther’s Works, vol. 53, p. 333).

Now that’s distinctively Lutheran worship!

What Does This Mean?
One of the objectives of our Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers . . . ” (2016 Handbook, p. 11). Toward that end, the members of Synod have established two seminaries whose primary purpose is to fulfill the Synod’s objective of recruiting and training of pastors for service in the congregations of Synod.

The seminaries of our Synod do well in preparing future pastors when they teach and model for their students a distinctively Lutheran approach to worship. It begins with a faculty that fully and passionately understands and embraces what it is to be distinctively Lutheran in a 21st century context. It is reinforced by a vibrant and healthy worship life that regularly and consistently trumpets a full-throated Gospel proclamation into the ears of seminarians and their families; by a worship life that is enlivened by a rich and wide-ranging exploration of the biblical texts in real time worship; and by a worship life that values and upholds our liturgy and hymnody as treasures of the church.

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catholic and as vehicles for the proclamation of the Gospel today and for future generations.

One of Luther’s favorite hymns as a young man was a one-stanza prayer to the Holy Spirit. Luther once quipped that it must have been “composed by the Holy Ghost himself, both words and music” (Luther’s Works, vol. 53, p. 265). Luther added two more stanzas, and today we know the hymn as “Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord” (LSB 497). This hymn was sung to open every LCMS convention for at least the first hundred years. Its final stanza is particularly appropriate during this Reformation anniversary year:

Come, holy Fire, comfort true,
Grant us the will Your work to do
And in Your service to abide;
Let trials turn us not aside.
Lord, by Your pow’r prepare each heart,
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to You, our Lord, ascend.
Alleluia, alleluia! (LSB 497, stanza 3)

For Further Reading
Peter C. Reske, The Hymns of Martin Luther (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016).

The Rev. Dr. Jon D. Vieker (Jon.Vieker@lcms.org) serves as senior assistant to the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. From 1998–2010 he served as assistant director for the LCMS Commission on Worship.
Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, has become known internationally as a bastion of faithful biblical teaching that is boldly Lutheran. We even have been referred to as the Wittenberg of the 21st century! The reason for such a reputation is the distinctively Lutheran teaching and learning that happens in our pastoral and deaconess formation programs. So what shapes this strong and unabashedly Lutheran teaching?
As with our Lutheran forefathers, we approach the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God that reveal God’s Son as well as salvation through Christ alone, by grace alone and received by faith alone. This distinctively Lutheran teaching of the Scriptures permeates all our courses, especially the many that are devoted exclusively to the study of the Scriptures.

At the ordination and installation of a pastor and the commissioning of a deaconess, a sacred vow is taken to be faithful to the Scriptures as the only source and norm of Christian faith and life and to the Lutheran Confessions as a correct exposition of the teaching of the Scriptures. This vow sets the tone for the distinctively Lutheran teaching that takes place at CTSFW. First and foremost, as it was with Luther and our Reformation fathers, the focus of this formation is on the study of the Scriptures. As at Wittenberg, we go back to the sources, namely, to the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testaments. As with our Lutheran forefathers, we approach the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God that reveal God’s Son as well as salvation through Christ alone, by grace alone and received by faith alone. This Lutheran focus on Christ’s atoning death as the source of salvation is vividly displayed on campus with the presence of a crucifix in each of our classrooms.

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Second, as Luther and our Reformation fathers confessed what the Scriptures taught by affirming the ecumenical creeds and writing foundational documents for the Lutheran Church that make up the Book of Concord, so our students thoroughly study these Lutheran Confessions so that they are each brought to the personal conviction that these writings are a faithful and correct exposition of the Scriptures. In times where the faithfulness of Lutheran Church bodies has waned or wavered, so has the diligent study of the Lutheran Confessions. These Confessions are not studied at CTSFW as dusty, historical documents of a bygone Church or the basis for the name of our seminary, but are studied as the living confession of our Church and all of its pastors and deaconesses. The thorough study and unconditional commitment to the Lutheran Confessions at CTSFW is an important factor that shapes the distinctively Lutheran teaching and learning that happens here.

This Lutheran teaching is also present and confessed in the worship and preaching that takes place daily on campus. The theology of the Scriptures and Confessions is practiced in liturgy and hymnody as well as preaching that reflects the Lutheran emphasis on the proper distinction between Law and Gospel, with Gospel predominating. Luther and our Lutheran forefathers had a deep appreciation for the historic liturgy, but purified it from false teaching.
of the Roman church that had come into the service. They restored preaching to a central prominence in the service. They also brought congregational singing of hymnody back into the service. These are all practiced in the daily chapel life of CTSFW and are a vital part of the Lutheran teaching that takes place here.

Another important basis for the Lutheran teaching that happens here is the fact that it is embodied and taught by learned faculty members who are totally committed to the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions. Each faculty member is an ordained Lutheran pastor who takes his ordination vows very seriously. In addition to their undergraduate degree and Master of Divinity degree, most faculty members have done advanced studies in fields like Biblical Studies or the Lutheran Confessions that has resulted in a doctoral degree. All of them have at least five years of parish experience and some have over 20 years. All of them have a strong Lutheran identity that they seek to impart to the next generation of pastors and deaconesses whom they teach and mentor at the seminary.

One of the most striking impressions that I took away from a visit to Wittenberg in 2016 was how God had used a few faculty members studying the Scriptures at a new and very small university in an insignificant German town to impact the whole world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Wittenberg of the 16th century became a vibrant center for Lutheran teaching and publication. It reminded me that a similar thing can happen at a seminary like ours, with a faculty like ours, in a city like ours. And, by God’s grace, it is happening with each pastor and deaconess who is formed here and sent forth in the 21st century.

How is this Lutheran teaching that happens in the classrooms and chapel at Fort Wayne seen in the church today? It is seen in the worship services of our LCMS where pastors formed at this seminary are committed to Lutheran liturgy and hymnody that confess the teaching of the Scriptures as has been expressed in the Lutheran Confessions. It is heard in the preaching of the Word of God where people are convicted of their sin and comforted by the forgiveness won by Christ’s death and resurrection. It is seen in the sacrificial service of pastors and deaconesses ministering to spiritual and physical needs at hospitals, nursing care facilities, homes and soup kitchens. It is seen in congregations blessed by the faithful proclamation of the Word of God and faithful administration of the Sacraments. In these actions, we see that the teaching that was trumpeted out by Luther and our Reformation fathers some 500 years ago continues to be taught and practiced today by faculty at CTSFW and by our graduates throughout the LCMS and world! 

The Rev. Dr. Charles A. Gieschen (Charles.Gieschen@ctsfw.edu) serves as academic dean and professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

CALL FOR PAPERS: The Wittenberg Reformation held the classical languages in high esteem and fostered the study of ancient Greek and Latin literature, including philosophy. While Martin Luther distrusted meretricious reason if it supplanted faith, nonetheless he and other reformers regarded Plato and Aristotle highly. The conference organizers seek individual papers (or panels with at least three participants) on such topics as follow:

- Reformation-era Perspectives on Ancient Latin/Greek Philosophers
- Early Christian Philosophers (Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, etc.)
- Cicero: Stoicism, Epicureanism, the Middle Way
- 500th Anniversary of Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation
- Luther’s Supposed Hatred of Philosophy: Real or Imagined?
- The Relationship Between Rhetoric and Dialectic
- The Logic of the Liturgy
- Does Philosophy Contribute to Lutheran Hymnody?
- How Might Christian Children Learn Logic?

Our subject is broadly conceived and considerable latitude will be given to cogent abstracts. Proposals should exemplify philological excellence, contribute to the conference theme however broadly and avoid overspecialization. Individual presenters should plan for their papers to be 18 minutes in length. Selected papers from this conference may be published.

WHO: Keynote addresses by Dr. Roland Ziegler (Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne), Dr. Angus Menuge (Concordia University Mequon), Dr. Sarah Byers (Boston College) and E. Christian Kopff (University of Colorado)

WHEN: Abstracts of no more than 250 words should be submitted by electronic attachment to Carl P. E. Springer, Professor, SunTrust Chair of Excellence in the Humanities, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, at springercarl@ymail.com by November 1, 2017.
As a church historian, I receive a lot of invitations to speak at anniversaries. In the last two months I’ve spoken at a 90th, a 100th and a 150th! It is a great privilege to spend time with the people of God in very specific locations as they recall their heritage, celebrate their present, and prepare for a vibrant future in mission.

One thing I nearly always say in these settings is that anniversaries are, in fact, more about the future than they are about the past. A focus on merely the past can lead to reflections on a “golden age” when things were at least perceived to be better. That can result in a passive pining for happier days.

But God’s Church is about Christ in action. The Church’s culture is unique. It is the dynamic setting of the Spirit’s activity in calling, gathering, enlightening and sanctifying the whole Christian Church on earth (Luther’s Small Catechism, Explanation of the Third Article). As such the Church is always at work—and more than that, Christ is always at work through His Spirit in the Church.

When the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, revised the Master of Divinity curriculum several years ago, it very intentionally used this understanding of the Church as the basis of its work. Knowing that the Church is unlike any other institution, the faculty sought to organize the formation of pastors around the distinctive pastoral acts of preaching, baptizing and celebrating the Lord’s Supper. That is to say, pastoral formation occurs within the context of the means that Christ uses to birth, grow and sustain His Church here in the United States and throughout the world.

In many ways this is not a new departure; rather it recaptures the best of Lutheran practice from its inception. Born in the context of higher education, the Lutheran tradition has always focused strongly on the fides quae, “the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), recognizing that such knowledge finds its application in the fides qua, personal faith that trusts in Christ as Savior. As one of the great theologians of Lutheranism put it:

Theology proceeds from God, teaches us about God, and leads us to God. Only theology is the light of our mind, the healing remedy of our will, the antidote against sin, and the most effective stimulant for true piety. Only theology unites us with God and God with us. It is the stairway from earth to heaven. By it we ascend to heaven, and God descends to us and overwhelms us with heavenly gifts of every description. And so earth becomes to us a heaven, and heaven and earth are the same to us, and God becomes our portion. In theology we who are on earth teach those things,
the knowledge of which continues even in heaven. By means of theology the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dumb speak, the dead are given life; men are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Such is the high value we place on the study of theology. “The declaration of Thy words giveth light and giveth understanding to little ones.” Psalm 119:130.1

Of course, academics are of great importance in any institution of higher education, and the faculty is at the center. Daniel Aleshire, recently retired executive director of the Association of Theological Schools, captures the central role that a faculty plays in the life of a seminary. These people, in their own ways, did not merely teach the theological curriculum, they became the curriculum. In them, there was a “wisdom pertaining to responsible life in faith.” They had studied hard for years and grappled with ideas and texts, and in the end, they had more than the sum of the intellectual work they had done—Christianity’s hopes and longings had taken up residence in them. The theological curriculum does not consist merely of courses and degree requirements. Perhaps more importantly, it consists of teachers and others who so embody theological wisdom that they form a cloud of witnesses who have become texts worthy of study. Theological schools are full of faculty like these.2

But a seminary is more than an academic institution. It is a community that brings together uniquely gifted individuals—future pastors and deaconesses eager to serve in works of mercy, and lay leaders committed to Christ’s mission—who will go forth in dedicated service with the Gospel of Christ for the life of the world. Faculty are first and foremost pastors, who model pastoral practice in their engagement with the students. The entire community—the Board of Regents, the faculty, the staff and the students— together are engaged in the Seminary’s mission to form students in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.

As Lutherans, we are passionate about digging deeply in the Scripture and in sharing with others the saving good news of Christ and the gifts we’ve been given. Our graduates leave with that passion and zeal for reaching the lost, teaching and sharing all that we’ve been given. In the end, however, we recognize it is all preparatory. The Seminary prepares and the Church assigns. However, it is our Lord Christ who sends. We are thankful for the great privilege of partnering with the larger Church here in the United States and throughout
the world in forming future servants who will lead their communities in faithful confession and practice. As one author has reflected on this:

Christians understand congregations to be a primary mode—arguably the primary mode—through which the Christian gospel is organizationally embodied and made visible. They are settings in which people encounter the meaning of the gospel in word and sacrament, grow in their understanding and commitment to it, experience the community and support of fellow believers, and are empowered to participate in the church’s ministry and mission.3

The Church is always entering a new day. We may romantically pine for an imagined golden age of the past, but the Church’s history shows that our life together this side of heaven will be as fellow combatants in the Church Militant. Like our predecessors, we are continually entering a new day. What that future will look like is uncertain. But the promise of Christ is sure: His Church will prevail (Matt. 16:18).

The Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. (Lawrence.Rast@ctsfw.edu) serves as president and professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

3 Jackson Carroll, God’s Potters: Pastoral Leadership and the Shaping of Congregations (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 11.
The celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation quite naturally invites us to pause and think about the question of Lutheran identity. What does it mean to be distinctively Lutheran? Is it our continuity with the Great Tradition? Our strong heritage of doctrinal theology? Our liturgy and hymnody? Our commitment to the bodily and spiritual needs of the neighbor? While all of these items are characteristically Lutheran, I would suggest that the defining characteristic of Lutheran identity is simply confidence in the Gospel alone.

Reflecting back on his life, Luther mused that it was only when he came to understand the distinction between God’s Law and His Gospel did he find confidence before God and peace with Him. In the Gospel, Luther heard the glad declaration of God’s promise of the forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ alone. This promise sealed in the blood of our Lord, God obligates Himself to fulfill, provides the certainty that in Christ God is not against us but for us in every way.

The Law is not the Gospel. The Law is good and necessary in this old and dying world as it curbs the chaos brought about by sin and convicts us of that sin. But the Law is powerless to overcome sin. The Law does not save, only Christ does.

There is only one Gospel and that is the good news that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting the trespasses of sinners against them but on account of the atoning work of the Son of God, setting sinners free from condemnation by the Word which forgives sins. It is that Word, and that Word alone that Luther confessed and fought for in every aspect of his Reformation work. It is the Word of the Gospel, the Word of the Cross, the Word by which I became and remain a Christian as Luther put it.

Luther’s confidence and our confidence is the Word of Christ, this eternal Gospel. In the early days of Lent in 1522, Luther came out of hiding in the Wartburg Castle to return to the pulpit in Wittenberg to rescue the Reformation from those whose fanaticism would turn it into a chaotic revolution. It was on that occasion Luther would confidently preach: “I simply taught, preached, and wrote God’s Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept [cf. Mark 4:26-29], or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philip and Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such loss upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything” (AE 51:77). This Word, the word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was responsible for the Reformation of the church in the 16th century. This Word gives us the courage to live as Lutherans today.

The Rev. John T. Pless
(John.Pless@ctsfw.edu) serves as assistant professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
What’s your background?
I was born and raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the Wesleyan Church. My parents knew they wanted their children to have a Christian education, so they sent us to the nearest Christian school, which happened to be Lutheran. After eight years of their children having a good, solid, Lutheran education, my family was catechized and we joined The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

While I was in high school we moved to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It was there that I realized how very important Church was to me, and I decided to change my career path to become a pastor. After graduating high school, I attended Indiana University, Fort Wayne, where I majored in German (a good language to know if you want to become a pastor). My final semester was spent immersed in the language in the beautiful city of Freiburg, Germany. Directly after college, I joined the ranks of other new seminarians, eager to begin studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW).

Who/what influenced you to study to become a pastor?
When I moved to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where LCMS Lutherans are sparse compared to the plethora in Fort Wayne, most of my friends did not attend church regularly and that had a huge impact on me. It was this sparsity of faithful friends and general lack of Lutheranism that made me realize just how important Church is in my life. So important, in fact, that I began researching how to pursue a career in the Church.

Why did you choose CTSFW?
The three factors that stood out for me when I was looking at seminary were: education, chapel life and community. I knew the education was bound to be good at both seminaries, and after visiting them, I was sure this was true. CTSFW, however, has exceeded my expectations in regard to the education I’ve received. I’m not only learning excellent theology here, I’m learning how to put it into practice as a pastor.

What absolutely blew me away was the chapel life. True to its architecture, Kramer Chapel forms the very center of campus life. Three services are offered daily. The powerful preaching at the main service is not only a learning experience in homiletics but it is true care for the soul (Seelsorge in its fullest sense) put into action. And with Holy Communion offered every Wednesday, Word and Sacrament are not only taught here, they are lived out. Life here revolves around Christ, and Christ is the heart of all we do and teach.

Finally, something that can only be experienced when you visit the campus is its community. CTSFW is a family. From coffee hour after morning chapel to Gemütlichkeit on Friday evenings, we love getting together and hanging out. And that’s not just the students. The professors are at every gathering and often have lunch with the students, either continuing discussions that began in the classroom or just talking about life in general.
After experiencing these highlights on campus, I knew my decision was made. CTSFW was the place for me.

What have been the greatest rewards in your seminary experience?

The greatest reward has been my deeper understanding of Scripture and the ability and excitement to share that understanding.

Another incredible joy was meeting my wife, Brittni, a deaconess student at CTSFW. We were married after our second year of studies and moved directly thereafter to Oberursel, Germany, where I spent a year studying at our sister seminary. We enjoyed our first year of married life among the confessional Lutherans in Germany, in the Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche (SELK). Now we look forward to our second year of life together serving the Lord’s flock at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Arlington, Wisconsin, as their vicar and deaconess intern.

The theme for this issue is “Distinctively Lutheran.” Any thoughts?

One of the most distinctively Lutheran qualities that had a profound impact on me is our commitment to excellence in education. It was the Lutheran school system that converted a works-focused Wesleyan to a Christ-focused Lutheran. And now I’m blessed to be studying further here at CTSFW, learning the gems of Lutheran theology and how to care for souls, preaching Christ’s Word and administering His Sacraments. I can’t emphasize enough how important our Lutheran school systems are and how important it is to encourage the young men in these schools (and those who aren’t!) to consider the Office of Holy Ministry.

To learn more about church worker formation at CTSFW, go to www.ctsfw.edu/Future-Students. Connect with our Admission staff at Admission@ctsfw.edu or 800.481.2155.
The Rev. Dr. William C. Weinrich was born and raised in Ponca City, Oklahoma. Baptized, confirmed and eventually ordained at First Lutheran Church. Upon graduation from high school, he attended the University of Oklahoma intending to become a heart surgeon. However, by the end of his sophomore year he was on track to enter the Lutheran ministry.

In addition to serving as professor of Historical Theology, in what other roles have you served at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne?

During my now 42 years at CTSFW, I have served as director of Financial Aid, supervisor of the S.T.M. Program, dean of Graduate Studies, academic dean and even for four months, acting president of the Seminary.

You’ve had the opportunity to serve the church-at-large, too. What are some of those highlights?

Over the course of my service I served The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) as third vice-president and fifth vice-president, as well as on the Commission on Theology and Church Relations. More enjoyable, however, were my sojourns in Siberia, assisting in the establishment of a seminary in Novosibirsk, teaching in Madagascar, and, above all, being rector of the Luther Academy, Riga, Latvia, for almost five years. From 1977–2004 I was chaplain of the 122nd Fighter Wing, Indiana Air National Guard, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

What has been your favorite course to teach and why?

For many years I taught Early Church History and Medieval Church History. I loved it. Many students were wholly unfamiliar with this material, and the challenge was to assist them to see that that history was, in fact, their church history. Later I was called upon to teach God and Creation in the Systematics Department. In some way, I enjoyed teaching this course most. It gave me opportunity to emphasize the central importance of the Trinity for Christian faith, and also to introduce...
primary patristic literature into the reading of the course.

At the present moment, I teach the Gospel of John. To open up a Gospel text, not merely as a historical account of Jesus, but as an account of the life of Jesus as the revelation and establishment of divine Truth in the world of men, that is a great challenge and joy.

You asked, “which course?” I answer, “All of them!”

What has been the most rewarding to you as a professor?

Simple. To teach at this school, to teach about what is most true, to teach with those who, with you, hold what is most true to be true, and to teach men and women whose vocational commitment is to dedicate their lives to teaching and promulgating what is most true—what could be more rewarding than that?

How has seminary education changed in the years you have been on the faculty?

Well, in some ways it has not changed. We still are dedicated to the inculcation of the preaching of the Scriptures in a way which is true to the catholic tradition of the creeds, the historic liturgy and the Lutheran Confessions. At the same time, the context of this teaching has radically changed. The intellectual climate, reinforced by popular culture and the habits of society, is distinctly postmodern. In addition, the status of the church in society has disintegrated; its commitments are increasingly thought to be irrational, even dangerous to the human wellbeing. That has placed seminary education into a position where that new context must be acknowledged and in some manner addressed in the curricular structure of our programs.

What is your best advice to your students who will be heading out to serve as pastors and deaconesses?

Do not think your faith is self-evident. It is not. Man without faith is the most natural, common thing in the world. So pray for right and helpful words, live truthfully according to the Truth, be an example in and out of season. Read good books of literature, including poetry, to learn how words work, how they echo beyond their literal meaning. Watch good movies to see what others are seeing and thinking. Stay close to others in the faith.

This issue deals with being distinctively Lutheran in worship, teaching and practice. Any thoughts?

I will read with interest what others say about being “distinctively Lutheran.” As for me, I prefer to think of Lutheranism as being not distinctive at all. The Reformers made much of the claim that their teaching was true to the catholic heritage of the Church. If I see something too “distinctive,” my first thought is to wonder whether it is true or just a predilection of this or that pastor/congregation! In any case, I have no obligation to it. I confess this: “one, holy, catholic, apostolic church.” Those are old and ancient words. If Lutheranism is “distinctive” relative to that, I’m in the wrong place. My conviction is that it is not!
CTSFW Begins 172nd
On Tuesday, September 5, 2017, the Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, community gathered for the opening of our 172nd academic year. CTSFW President Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. served as preacher for the service. “We celebrate the opening of the 172nd academic year at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. A year opened for the purpose of teaching and learning, formation and mission,” said Rast. “Our mission here is to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all. Something we see in action as lay leaders are engaged in mission and leadership, here and throughout the world; when deaconesses engage in works of mercy and support pastors; and especially when pastors are engaged in preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments according to the establishment of Christ.”

We welcomed future pastors and deaconesses arriving for their first year of studies, returning students and those seeking advanced degrees such as the S.T.M, D.Min. and Ph.D. “We are delighted to have men and women from across the United States and the world at CTSFW to be formed as faithful servants who will serve Christ’s Church,” commented CTSFW Academic Dean Dr. Charles A. Gieschen. “The time they spend in the classroom, in fieldwork and in daily worship lays the foundation for their service in congregations in small towns, urban centers and the international mission field.”

The Rev. Don C. Wiley was installed as a mission specialist. The Rev. Daniel J. Brege, first vice-president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Indiana District, conducted the installation. Wiley recently completed his Ph.D. in Missiology at CTSFW and has been serving as assistant director of Spanish Language Church Worker Formation at the Seminary. His new duties will include overseeing and teaching pastoral formation courses in Spanish, as well as teaching M.Div. and Ph.D. in Missiology courses. “What a privilege it is to serve the Lord’s Church in preparing future pastors and missiologists, especially the much-needed formation of men to serve in Hispanic ministries both here in the U.S. and internationally,” said Wiley.

The need for church workers is high, and CTSFW remains dedicated to forming servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all. If you would like more information on how you might serve as a pastor or deaconess, connect with the CTSFW Admission staff at Admission@ctsfw.edu, 800.481.2155 or go to www.ctsfw.edu/Future-Students.
So They May Hear
By Steven R. Schumacher

The Deaf Ministry Program at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, trains and equips seminarians and deaconess students to reach out to the deaf and hearing impaired within the congregations and communities they will serve. It is our hope that all deaf people would come to know the Gospel of Jesus Christ and believe in Him for their eternal salvation, thereby following the Seminary’s mission statement “to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.”

Deaf Ministry has seen many changes throughout the past 121 years in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), from missionaries to pastors of deaf congregations and from multi-state mission stations to thriving individual congregational ministries. Over the years, the LCMS has served as a leader in Christian ministry to the deaf and has been recognized for its seminary education of pastors and missionaries who have served and are still serving today. As our society has become more mobile, so also has the deaf community. In response to this, many hearing congregations have become worship places for the deaf, as well as for the hearing impaired, resulting in the need for pastors and deaconesses with signing skills along with lay religious interpreters for the deaf.

Our Synod’s work with the deaf dates back to 1873 with the beginning of the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit, Michigan, which was originally organized to be an orphanage. At the 1874 Synodical Conference, President Johannes Huegli, a founder of the Lutheran School for the Deaf, and LCMS President Dr. C. F. W. Walther supported and encouraged the deaf institution to concentrate on working with the deaf. In 1896, at the Synod Convention in Fort Wayne, our Synod voted to take on the mission and ministry to the deaf and with its vote marked the beginning of a long-standing ministry and training of church workers.

When Concordia Theological Seminary moved from Springfield, Illinois, George Perry, a Child of Deaf Adults (CoDA), taught fellow students basic sign language. After a period of several years, the Rev. Dr. George Kraus was called to serve at CTSFW and began a Deaf Ministry Program in 1982. The program grew and provided many seminarians with training in learning American Sign Language and enabled them to use the language in translating Scripture, hymnody and catechetical lessons.

Today, the program continues as it provides basic sign language instruction
and transitions to the development of skills required for interpreting the worship services. It is a full year (three quarters) program that begins in the classroom the first two quarters, and then into the chapel, where students put their learned skills to use as they interpret the daily chapel services. Even though the students receive the skills to communicate and interpret the services, there is still much more for them to learn once they receive their calls and are located in a congregation and community, as signs do differ from region to region in the United States and around the world. Yet, with the basics a student will be able to begin to communicate and learn the variants of the local signs and culture.

The training of church workers, and laity, for the deaf also began under the direction of Dr. Kraus in 1983 when, with three other pastors serving the deaf, 24 pastors and one social worker from the Indiana District were taught the basics of American Sign Language. In 1985, the Church Interpreter Training Institute (CITI) formally began to train church workers and laity from around the world to reach the deaf through interpreted ministry. With the addition of CITI, CTSFW provides a Deaf Ministry Program that is available to students as well as to church workers and laity.

The Deaf Ministry Program at CTSFW continues to carry out the 121 year old desire of our Synod to train church workers for mission and ministry to the deaf while, even more importantly, it continues to carry out the command of Jesus to reach out, witness, baptize and teach all people groups of the world.

"The Rev. Steven R. Schumacher (Steven.Schumacher@ctsfw.edu) serves as adjunct professor for Deaf Ministry at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and a career missionary and theological educator in Ghana, West Africa, for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."


CTSFW students have the opportunity to use American Sign Language skills in both classroom and chapel settings.
Rev. Dr. John W. Saleska
1929–2017

The Rev. Dr. John W. Saleska was called to his eternal home on September 12, 2017. He served Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, from 1978-2000. He taught courses in Old and New Testament, Bible Psychology, Counseling and Homiletics. He was also chairman of the Department of Pastoral Ministry and Missions. He most recently served as director emeritus of Concordia Bible Institute at Concordia University Wisconsin.

“No one had a more encyclopedic knowledge of Scripture, a kinder heart or better sense of humor than John Saleska,” commented CTSFW President Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. “He was one of a kind, and those of us who were fortunate enough to learn from him and serve with him are certainly blessed.”

Our prayers are with his wife, Sallie, and all his family as they mourn his passing, yet know they are comforted by the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.

Faculty Publications

Prof. John T. Pless, Dr. Naomichi Masaki and Dr. Roland F. Ziegler have contributed to The Necessary Distinction from Concordia Publishing House (CPH). The 13 exploratory essays in The Necessary Distinction work through the implications of this distinction for preaching, pastoral care, liturgy, mission and Christian living.

Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie is author of The Reformation. The book features an engaging narrative and hundreds of full-color images and maps. Scheduled for release from CPH on October 17.

Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes’ edition of the latest volume of Johann Gerhard’s Theological Commonplaces, On Interpreting Sacred Scripture and Method of Theological Study, Theological Commonplaces I–II, trans. Joshua J. Hayes, has recently been released by Concordia Publishing House (CPH). The Theological Commonplaces series, translated from the original Latin of the early 1600s, presents the most extensive Lutheran systematic theology text in the English language.

Dr. Charles A. Gieschen’s book, Angelomorphic Christology, has been republished in paperback by Baylor University Press. Gieschen demonstrates that angel and angel-related traditions had a profound impact upon the origin, development and shape of early Christian claims about Jesus.

Dr. Mayes, Prof. Pless and Dr. Detlev Schulz have essays in the new Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions edited by Timothy J. Wengert (Ada, Michigan: Baker Academic Press).

Dr. Ziegler was on the editorial board for Encyclopedia of Martin Luther and the Reformation (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers). In addition to Ziegler, CTSFW faculty members Dr. MacKenzie, Prof. Pless and Dr. David P. Scaer have contributed to the encyclopedia.

All these publications, with the exception of Encyclopedia of Martin Luther and the Reformation, may be purchased from the Concordia Theological Seminary Bookstore at Bookstore.ctsfw.edu, by email at Bookstore@ctsfw.edu or by phoning 260.452.2160.

Deaconess Placements
Summer 2017

Karen Eck
Faith Lutheran Church
DeMotte, Indiana

Suzanne Krahn
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Waco, Texas
Singing the Faith—Past, Present and Future

18th Annual Conference
November 5-7, 2017

As the Church celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Good Shepherd Institute Conference will take this opportunity to evaluate the past 500 years as we confess the faith in the present for the sake of the future.

Plenary presentations on the history of the Reformation and the musical heritage of the Church by Dr. Christopher Boyd Brown, Ms. Connie Seddon and Dr. Carl Schalk will begin the conference. A series of sectionals focusing on detailed topics about art, music and preaching will provide practical ideas for today's Church. The conference will conclude with thoughts on pastoral care from Dr. Arthur Just Jr. and a glimpse into what the future might hold by Kantor Emeritus Rev. Richard C. Resch.

The conference will also serve as the kickoff for our second art exhibition, featuring artwork that depicts the theme of Sola, thus reflecting the themes of the Reformation. As a nod to the Reformation anniversary which will have just occurred, Sunday’s choral vespers will include another of Bach’s Reformation cantatas, 79, “God the Lord Is Sun and Shield.”

Prepare the Way
A Sermon Series Based Upon Meditatio, Oratio, Tentatio

Luther once observed that there are three things that make a good theologian: meditation, prayer and testing. By the careful and continued study of God’s Word, through regular prayer based on that Word, and through the various tests and trials that drive us back to that Word, we are turned into a proper theologian, and, as such, God is preparing His people for His return at the end of the age.

This three-fold Advent midweek series based upon segments of Psalm 119 presents the ways that God helps prepare us to celebrate Christ’s first Advent and to look forward with anticipation to His Second Advent.

November 7, 2017
1:30–8:30 p.m.

Presenter
Dr. Gary Zieroth

Registration
Cost for the workshop is $40.00. You may register online at www.ctsfw.edu/GSI or by calling 260.452.2224.

More information
www.ctsfw.edu/GSI
GSI@ctsfw.edu
260-452-2224
Deep, thoughtful reading and study of the Holy Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew. Joyful singing of the mighty works of God in the hymns, chorales and songs of God’s people from throughout the ages. A confidence in confessing “How can water do such great things?”, “What sins should we confess?” and “What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?” A humble admission that I and all men are “poor, miserable sinners.” The daily regularity of a life of prayer. Taking God’s Holy Word and carefully applying it to the lives of God’s people, rightly distinguishing Law and Gospel in proclaiming it. Washing with water and the Word. Feeding Christ’s lambs with His body and blood of eternal forgiveness, life and salvation.

Taken one at a time, you will find other Christian confessions that these describe. But taken all together, these are the things which make us Lutherans distinctive in our confession of the Christian faith.

Upon reflection, I was not all that distinctly Lutheran when I went off to Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, in the summer of 2006. I had been catechized, baptized and received into communicant fellowship a few years earlier. I definitely had faithful pastors who week after week gave me Christ’s Gospel gifts in their preaching, in the absolution and in Holy Communion. Yet, I was woefully weak in knowing and confessing myself to be standing firm in all that is listed above.

From the first day of summer Greek with Dr. Gieschen, I began to swim in the marvelous Lutheran teaching that fills the classrooms,
Lutheran in Service

dining hall, social areas and, especially, Kramer Chapel at CTSFW.

I was in the second class to be instructed under the “new curriculum,” which is hardly new any longer. I’m thankful for that curriculum in that it limited my ability to focus too much of my study in what interested me. Instead it guided me into all the subjects that I would need to be studying, so that I would be prepared to be doing all these distinctively Lutheran things. If left to myself, I would have ruined it all by studying only the areas of my own particular interests. Instead CTSFW’s faculty taught me to comprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.

Now entering my eighth year in the parish, I know just how much I don’t know. I know just how much I must rely every day on Jesus to work through me, His humble and unworthy servant, to continue to preach, teach, pray and administer the mysteries of Christ to His people here. CTSFW continues to be a blessing to me. I’m able to attend the Good Shepherd Institute annually and occasionally the Symposia Series. The CTSFW Media Site (http://media.ctsfw.edu) is an online treasure trove of articles, recordings and videos. Whenever I’m back on campus the faculty joyfully welcome and inquire about both me and my wife.

There is much work our Lord Jesus has given us to do in this world. There are so many dear sheep who daily need His care. Thanks be to God for the work everyone at CTSFW is doing to provide pastors and deaconesses in order to care for those sheep.

The Rev. Michael Schuermann
(revschuermann@gsslcms.org),
CTSFW 2010, serves as pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Sherman, Illinois.

LUTHER HOSTEL
A retreat on the campus of CTSFW

Christ for Us: Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

November 1–3, 2017

For more information contact us at: Retreats@ctsfw.edu or 260.452.2204.
The new academic year at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, will include a very special date, October 31, 2017, the day we will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It is exciting to know that 500 years later there is still a new class of students coming to CTSFW to study as they prepare to serve the Lord’s people. We are thankful for the work of Martin Luther as he translated the Bible, struggled and fought for the truth. Indeed, his work has endured. Praise be to God!

As this year begins, the Seminary Guild has been at work planning ways to encourage and help the students arriving for the first time or returning to the campus for the new year. Consider joining with us in our effort to encourage and support these students in their journey to becoming pastors and deaconesses.

Join us in person or if distance prevents your presence, pray with us and join as associate members. 🙏

Joyce West (joyciew43@gmail.com) serves as president of the Guild at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Romans 15:4

UPCOMING GUILD EVENTS

October 10, 2017
Donation Day
Speaker: CTSFW President Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
Registration at 9:00 a.m.
Student Commons

November 14, 2017
Speaker: Rev. Matthew J. Wietfeldt, CTSFW Director of Admission
1:00 p.m.
Luther Hall

December 12, 2017
Christmas with the Kantorei
1:00 p.m.
Kramer Chapel

February 13, 2018
Speaker: Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie, CTSFW Professor of Historical Theology
1:00 p.m.
Luther Hall

March 13, 2018
Student Focus
1:00 p.m.
Luther Hall

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.
I'm now on my third deployment in the Marines, but this is my first without a LCMS chaplain. I know that I've been unusually blessed in that regard, having also received bountiful support from the CTSFW Military Project over the previous two deployments.

When I realized a need for a Lutheran lay leadership for this deployment, I called upon those chaplains, my home pastor (himself a former chaplain) and the CTSFW Military Project for advice, materials and prayer. I had no idea the depth of the positive response that was coming. Before I knew it, I had the music for all the hymns and full orders of service, hymnals and even an altar book. Rather than let me painstakingly piecemeal the service together from all the components to make a complete Divine Service which correctly followed the Church Year, Deaconess Brinkley provided a full altar book without hesitation. I set out with the goal to provide a confessional, liturgical Lutheran lay service to my fellow Marines and now we have it every week.

All this in addition to the copies of Lutheran Witness and abundance of other supplies that have been sent with prayers and encouragement. A great thanks is owed to the CTSFW Military Project and to all who make this possible.

God bless,
Capt. Mike Golchert

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? Romans 10:14–15a
How a Family Farm Continues to Grow the Kingdom

By James K. Fundum

There were many financial benefactors in Luther’s day committed to making the Reformation distinctively Lutheran. There continue to be many benefactors in our day who want to ensure that distinctive Lutheran teaching continues to thrive.

Advancement officers at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSW), Fort Wayne, engage in discussions with donors about planned giving. It can all seem complicated and overwhelming with the jargon and unique vocabulary that is used. Some planned gifts are easy to understand: gifts of stocks and bonds, real estate, retirement assets, cash or life insurance. But the options can become daunting with terms like: bequest, Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA), Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust (CRAT), Charitable Remainder Unitrust (CRUT). Regardless of the complexity, one goal of planned giving is to preserve assets in a way that benefits you, your family and ministry.

Here is an example of how a CRUT helped the family of the Rev. Leo R. Deitemeyer, pastor of First American Lutheran Church, Mayville, North Dakota. Rev. Deitemeyer writes, Our parents considered their little Ohio family farm to be an asset that would help cover expenses in their retirement years. A year after father’s death in 1988, it became clear that the farm might not be the best answer for our mother. She had to retain the services of a nearby farmer to work the land and share the farm income with him. Taxes needed to be paid and repairs were needed on the farmhouse.

In addition, our mother, who did not drive a car, thought it better to live in town, just a couple blocks from her Lutheran church, a few blocks from her doctor and a few stores.

But what should be done with the farm? Sell it and face the taxes? Maybe it would be better if she gave the farm away. That isn’t as crazy as it may sound.
Blair Miller, a local real estate and investment broker who had received training with the LCMS Foundation, suggested making the farm a charitable donation. The Foundation would sell the farm and the income from the sale would be placed in a trust, avoiding taxes. Our mother would receive lifetime payments made possible through wise investing on the part of the Foundation.

During the following 10 years, mother received from the trust and she did not need to worry about a renter, care of buildings or taxes.

When mother died, her trust payments were divided between her two children. These payments continue for 20 years. The trust fund that did so much to support our mother will give each of us children nearly half the value of the original gift.

When the 20 years are completed, mother’s local congregation, CTSFW and several other ministries will receive the trust principal divided according to the percentages she established.

This trust established back in 1989 that provided income for our mother now provides income to her children, and in approximately five more years will bless those charities named by her. What a wonderful tool the Lord has provided, one that is able to return the value of the family farm several times over to meet family needs and also the Lord’s kingdom needs!

Sincerely,
The children of Carl and Ruth Deitemeyer:
Janet Smith, Pemberville, Ohio
Leo Deitemeyer, Mayville, North Dakota

What an amazing response to what Christ has done for us! “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9). Isn’t that amazing? The Rich One (Jesus) became poor; the poor ones (us) become rich; the rich ones (us) share our riches (spiritual and material) with others, just as the Deitemeyer family has done, to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.

The Rich One (Jesus) became poor; the poor ones (us) become rich; the rich ones (us) share our riches (spiritual and material) with others, just as the Deitemeyer family has done, to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.

The Rev. James K. Fundum (James.Fundum@ctsfw.edu) has served as both an Advancement officer and Admission counselor at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

To learn more about supporting the mission of CTSFW, email Advancement@ctsfw.edu or phone 877.287.4338.

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-CTSW

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

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

Please detach and mail to Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825-4996.
Who are we? As Lutherans, this is an important question to ask as we take a look back at our long lineage and give thanks to God for all that He’s done for us. In fact, it’s this question that is at the very heart of what Lutherans have believed and taught for the last 500 years. This is what the doctrine of justification, the doctrine upon which the Church stands or falls, is all about. It’s about who we are, especially who we are before God. As Lutherans, we seek our identity from God Himself. We want to be defined by who He says we are. We listen as He speaks about how He has created us and about how He has saved us. He tells who He’s made us to be, that is, we find our identity in the Gospel.

Read Gal. 3:10. Who does God say that we are on our own?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Now read verses 11-14. Who does God say that we are in Christ?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

When Lutherans talk about justification—who God says that we are in Jesus—it’s not just another item on a checklist of things we teach. It’s the very core! It’s the sum and substance of everything we believe. The Reformers even called it “the chief topic of Christian doctrine” (Apol IV.2). This might set us at odds with the world, which would rather move on to other things it thinks are more important. Even we might get caught up in the temptation of thinking, “I know all of that. What next?” But even the world and some well-meaning Christians may want to find a distinctive identity in something else, like a project or activity. How does this compare with what we’ve just read in Gal. 3:11?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

People have always wanted to look somewhere else to hear God speak. Some people listen for a little voice in their heart that tells them what to do. Others try to find God’s instruction in their reason. Still others look for Him in majestic scenery or the wildness of nature. Martin Luther was well aware of this seeking God within (called enthusiasm), rather than listening for Him in His Word. This is what Luther had to say about that: “In a word, enthusiasm dwells in Adam and his children from the beginning to the end of the world…It is the origin, power, and strength of all heresy…Therefore we must constantly maintain this point: God does not want to deal with us in any other way than through the spoken Word and the Sacraments” (Smalcald Articles III.VIII.9-10). We are defined by God’s declaration of who we in His Word, namely, the Scriptures and what He speaks in the Sacraments.
When we find our distinctive identity in God’s Word, that we’re righteous on account of Christ, received through faith and not works, there is freedom in that. No longer do we have to define or redefine ourselves. St. Paul recognized this. Read Gal. 5:1. What does it mean to be set free from sins and the desires of our fallen nature? __________________________ 
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Being truly free means that we don’t submit to the old slavish demands of flesh. Read Gal. 5:13. What does freedom in Christ look like?  ___________________________________ 
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
We’re free from anxieties that we’ve done enough to earn God’s favor. In Christ, we’re also free from the yoke that sin puts on us. We’re free to trust our God above all things. We’re free to love our neighbors without fear. This beautiful freedom that’s part of our unique identity as Lutherans comes from the knowledge that we are who God says we are. He says that we’re forgiven sinners who need to do nothing to contribute to salvation. That’s an identity we can ponder and rejoice in, thanking God for a clear confession of it these 500 years, even as we share it with generations to come. ☝️

The Rev Anthony J. Oliphant (aoliphant@redeemerlcms.com), CTSFW 2010, serves as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Elmhurst, Illinois.
ON-CAMPUS VISITATION EVENTS
FOR FUTURE PASTORS AND DEACONESSES

For more information you may also call 800.481.2155, email Admission@ctsfw.edu or visit www.ctsfw.edu/Admission.

Prayerfully Consider Visit
October 11–14, 2017
www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

Phoebe Academy High School
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www.ctsfw.edu/PAHS

Christ Academy College
& Phoebe Academy College
November 2–5, 2017
www.ctsfw.edu/CAC

Christ Academy High School
June 17–30, 2018
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