TKY recently interviewed CTS professor Dr. Carl C. Fickenscher II. Here is part of what he had to say:

How does a person know when he is called and ready to serve as a pastor in the LCMS?

There are two ways to answer that. Here is the theological one first. A lot of seminary students will tell me, “I’m not sure I’m cut out to be a pastor.” At that stage, the answer always is: “Don’t worry about it—right now, you’re not called to be a pastor. You don’t have a call. What you have at this point, as a student, is the inclination or feeling that God has probably equipped you to do the things of the pastoral office.” And sometimes that feeling will be strong, other times it’s weak. A lot of times the feeling that one is ready for this vocation is weaker when a student has been here for a while than when he first comes. None of those feelings is the Call, speaking theoretically.

So, what do you have when you are a seminary student? What you’ve got besides that feeling or intuition is a bunch of assignments, like writing the manuscript for your first Homiletics 1 sermon. That’s your job during your time at seminary. You’re not called to be a pastor. You are in the vocation of seminary student with many classes to take. You do those things God gives you at this time to do. Sometimes you may find you’re not academically prepared, or for other family or personal reasons, you may decide throughout your time at seminary, “I just don’t think I should do the next assignment.” And that can be a perfectly fine decision. The huge majority of guys do the assignments which are set before them. So, it’s not a question of whether you are ready to be a pastor yet. It’s a matter of doing the things God has set you up to do at this stage.

Then a night comes when you hear your name announced as a candidate who is being called to a congregation. And at this time, there is no longer any question whether you are called, because you are no longer listening to the feeling inside you. The Call comes when a congregation says, “we are calling you to be... continued on next page
our pastor.” What happens when a candidate receives the Call into the Office of the Holy Ministry is magnificent theology, totally in concert with our understanding of the Means of Grace, that is, the Call like the Means of Grace is a gift from God, coming to you completely outside yourself. For instance, with the Means of Grace God says, “You’re forgiven.” At your Baptism you are given eternal salvation. At Holy Communion, as you become one with Christ’s body and blood, you are given heaven. Again, all of this is totally outside yourself. The Call is the same way: it’s not a matter of feeling ready, but the Call finally comes when God the Holy Spirit working through a congregation says, “you’re going to be our pastor.” And from then on, a pastor never has to ask, “Am I called?” He is called. And he doesn’t have to look inside himself at all. He will have struggles and challenges, but in the midst of all of those, he can go back to this fact: this congregation has called him. What a great comfort this is to any faithful pastor!

The other way one knows whether he is ready to serve as a pastor is by the guidance and direction of the people at seminary. There are certain criteria the seminary uses to evaluate how the student is progressing. For instance, an LCMS pastor doesn’t have to be a Rhodes Scholar, but he must be a scholar. He doesn’t have to be the smartest guy around but one who is willing to study the Scriptures, Confessions, writings of the church and does well. We find it important that he study the original languages, that he pass Greek, Gospels 1, the first Homiletics course and so on. The faculty and staff at Concordia Theological Seminary want to know, “How is he doing academically?” We watch the way the student progresses through his fieldwork and vicarage, where the student is doing pastoral things, preaching and visiting. And moreover, we are aware of the faith life of our students. If a student becomes entangled in some kind of sin that Paul talks about in Titus or 1 Timothy, then we would conclude that the student really is not someone who is appropriate to be in the pastoral office. But, on the whole, most of our students fare exceedingly well at seminary.

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Above is the first question and answer taken from an interview with Dr. Carl Fickenscher who discusses the placement process of a candidate into the Office of the Holy Ministry. Because the church’s placement and call process is so unique and different from any other process in the secular world, this interview proves valuable and informative to anyone considering the pastoral ministry as a future vocation.

You may request the complete interview of questions and answers by contacting Concordia Theological Seminary’s Admission Department at 800-481-2155 or Admission@ctsfw.edu.
Born in the Bavarian village of Fürth on February 21, 1808, Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe would never see the ocean. Yet without leaving Germany, his missionary efforts would bear rich fruits in North and South America as well as Australia. Due to his untiring zeal for the Gospel and his unwavering commitment to Lutheran missions, congregations were planted that are today part of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne is a direct result of his vision. Who was this man who by the grace of God accomplished so much for the sake of the Kingdom from his rather isolated little corner of the world?

With the death of his father when Loehe was only eight, he would be no stranger to death. After only six years of marriage, his wife, Helene, died at the age of 24. The vacuum created by the death of his wife was filled with even more intense devotion to pastoral work, theological writing and the organization of missionary and works of mercy. Beyond the confines of his parish, his reputation as a preacher grew leading one scholar to call Loehe “the Chrysostom of his century.” Loehe understood the Divine Service as the place where the Heavenly Bridegroom meets His Bride. He sought to recover the best liturgical practices of previous centuries so that the congregation need not be dressed in the threadbare worship forms of Pietism and Rationalism, but in the splendor that befits the Bride of Christ. For Loehe, the center of the church was the liturgy of Word and Supper and from this lively and life-giving center, every aspect of the church’s life, including mission, radiated.

This commitment to mission is evident in Loehe’s response to the plea of a German-American pastor Friedrich Wyneken in 1840. Wyneken told of the plight of Germans living in scattered settlements on the frontier without church or pastor. Troubled by stories of Lutherans being seduced into the sects or abandoning their faith altogether, Loehe responded by collecting funds and books and recruiting two craftsmen, Adam Ernst and Georg Burger, to study with him and then be sent to America as “emergency helpers.” Others would follow, including colonists who would settle in the Saginaw Valley of Michigan and form strong Lutheran communities like Frankenmuth. Disappointed by the lack of commitment to Lutheran doctrine that Loehe’s men found in other Lutheran bodies, they would find in C. F. W. Walther and the Saxons men who shared their loyalty to the Scriptures and the Confessions. When the Missouri Synod was established in Chicago in 1847, over half of its pastors were men sent by Loehe. But even before the Synod was organized, Loehe had already proven instrumental in the founding of a seminary in Fort Wayne.

There is much to be learned from Loehe. For him doctrinal indifference meant the death of Christianity. Tempting as it might be to downplay doctrinal distinctives on the mission field, Loehe knew that such an approach was dead-ended; it could only lead to the destruction of the church for it would rob Christians of the certainty of salvation that Christ gives us in the pure preaching of His Word. It would deprive Christians of the comfort of knowing that Jesus gives them His body and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar. Doctrinal disunity destroys the basis for genuine mission. Pure doctrine and energetic mission go hand in hand for Loehe.

While facing opposition from church leaders who had forsaken their allegiance to the Lutheran Confessions, Loehe stood firm even though it meant he would be denied more prestigious calls. He settled for an out-of-the-way little farm town and transformed it into a center of churchly activity that would include not only a parish church but a deaconess house, orphanage, home for the aged and mission school. His vision for confessional Lutheranism was global. Loehe dreamed that his colonists in the Saginaw valley might attract Indians to Christ by the witness of their communal life. Circumstances prevented his plan from coming to fruition, but Loehe also dreamed of missionary work among the Chinese in California. Pastors from Neuendettelsau would ultimately come not only to North America and South America but Australia, New Guinea and other parts of Europe to spread the saving Word of Christ and plant the church.

It is no wonder that Christian Weber, a German Loehe scholar suggests that without Loehe and his co-workers, the number of Lutherans in the world today might be cut in half. Loehe had a heart for mission shaped by his love for the church and a longing for that heavenly city populated by people from every tribe and tongue. Although he never set foot in Fort Wayne, Loehe was instrumental in the founding of our seminary and in so many ways he remains a model for pastoral ministry worthy of emulation.


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**Join us for Christ Academy**

Christ Academy is a two-week residential program for high-school-aged men of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). It is a place where students come to study about Christ who is present in His Word and Sacraments, who died that our sins may be forgiven. While students experience the life of the seminary, Christ Academy offers these men the opportunity to explore the possibility of some day becoming a pastor.

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**Worship: The Center of the Experience**

Students are immersed in the daily prayer life of the seminary. The four daily offices are prayed by professors and students alike.

“The worship is what makes me want to be here five years from now.”

“The chapel was beautiful, the liturgy full of life. I really enjoyed singing as a choir.”

“I have been reminded again and again how great a sinner I am, but how much greater a Savior that Christ is for me.”

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**Exploring the Holy Ministry**

Through a uniquely Lutheran lens, Christ Academy explores the many facets of pastoral ministry and its application in the world.

“I would encourage teenage friends to come, especially if they are thinking about being pastors. Even if they aren’t, CA is a great way to learn more about Lutheran theology and the role of a pastor.”

“My life is changed because of Christ Academy. There is no doubt in my mind that I will attend this seminary.”

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**Life-Changing Studies**

Christ Academy, like Concordia Theological Seminary, is centered on Christ crucified who dwells in His Church through the Means of Grace. Students of Christ Academy will study Exegetical, Systematic, Historical and Practical Theology. The classes are taught by professors from CTS and professors from our Concordia University System.

“The classes were fascinating and engaging. The professors made theology clear and the subjects taught were all interesting.”

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**Fun Activities**

Lifelong friendships are formed at Christ Academy. Through dorm life and activities such as trips to Cedar Point and TinCaps baseball games, flag football, Capture the Flag and more, students have time for fellowship with others who have similar goals and aspirations in life.

“I was most influenced by the presence of my confessional Missouri Synod Lutheran brothers.”

“I felt unified with my brothers in mind, spirit and song.”
Frequently Asked Questions

Where will I stay during Christ Academy?
You will stay in dormitory rooms on the seminary campus, two guys per room. Each room has two closets, two chairs and two beds. Bedding and towels will be provided.

Who attends Christ Academy?
LCMS high-school-aged men who are interested in learning about theology and are open to the possibility of preparing for the Holy Ministry. Admission is competitive, based on seniority, ability to participate in the Academy for two full weeks and short admission essays.

What will I study at Christ Academy?
This year our professors will lecture on such topics as: Demonology; Satan’s Biography; Job: Faithful Man in the Midst of Suffering; The Theology of St. Paul for Today; Sin in the Lutheran Confessions; Luther’s Letters of Spiritual Counsel; and The Problem of Evil and A Christian Response. In addition, professors will host fireside chats which are an inviting discourse on a range of topics in a more informal setting.

What role does worship play at Christ Academy?
A very central role! Daily word and prayer services such as Matins, Vespers and Compline as well as Holy Communion are offered each week. Students also help lead worship by participating in the Academy choir.

What about sports?
There will be opportunities for basketball, soccer and other sports depending upon the collective interest of the students. Academy-wide games take place in the evenings.

Might I arrive early or spend an extra night?
Yes, just contact us about details.

How much will this cost?
$500 covers tuition, room, board and activity fees. In addition, spending money will be needed for books, some snacks and optional activities.

Do I need books for Christ Academy?
Yes. Students should bring one of the following translations of the Bible: ESV, KJV, NKJV, RSV, or NAS. We also encourage packing Luther’s Small Catechism, The Lutheran Service Book, and the Book of Concord, if they have one.

Will there be musical opportunities?
Students will sing in the Academy choir which serves at special worship services during the Academy. Students who play brass instruments may bring them to participate in worship services.

Top 10 Reasons to Come to Christ Academy:
1. Worship in Kramer Chapel
2. The professors’ knowledge and command of subject matter
3. Fellowship with peers
4. Capture the Flag
5. The food is great
6. Cedar Point
7. Ping pong, basketball and foosball in the Commons
8. Chanting
9. Learning the LSB
10. Evening activities and games

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

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

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

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

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

Please type or print in ink all information. The form must be completed in every detail. Answer "N/A" for all items that do not apply to you.

You may also download an application online at www.ctsfw.edu/ChristAcademy

Personal Information
Name ____________________________________________
First ____________________________________ Middle ________ Last _______
Permanent Address ____________________________ Street, Route, Box #__________
City __________________________________________ State _______ Zip__________
Phone (_____ ) _______ – _______ E-mail Address________________________________
Date of Birth _____ / ____ / _____ Year of High School Graduation_________________
T-Shirt Size__________ Musical Experience _________________________________________
Do you play an instrument?______ If yes, what instrument(s)? _______________________________

Church Membership Information
Home Congregation ______________________________________________________________________
Church Address ________________________________________________________________________
City __________________________________________ State _______ Zip__________
Church Phone (_____ ) _______ – _______ Year of Baptism_________________
Year of Confirmation_________________ Years as LCMS Member________________
Pastor’s Name ____________________________ LCMS District _______________________
“I, (Pastor):________________________________________, give my recommendation and
approval for (Student):______________________________ to attend the Christ Academy at
Concordia Theological Seminary. He has shown interest in the Academy and in learning more about
theology and the Holy Ministry.”
Signed: Rev.______________________________ Date _______/_____/_____

On a separate sheet of paper, please answer the following questions: (Please mail with application.)
1. What does the Gospel mean to you?
2. How does the Holy Spirit work in your life?
3. Why do you seek to attend Christ Academy?

Please return this form to:
Christ Academy Registration
Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 North Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825-4996