



CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, FORT WAYNE  
**For the Life of the World**

Summer 2021, Volume Twenty-Five, Number Two



**Worship Coming Out of the Pandemic**

Todd A. Peperkorn

**Pastoral Care in a Lonely World**

David C. Fleming

**What Is It to “Be the Church”?**

Adam C. Koontz





## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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So much of our interaction and daily business is handled online today: grocery shopping, dating, and even work. But what about church? What about seminary? When so much else has moved into the virtual realm, are there legitimate limits to our virtual life together?

In this issue, we take a look at what it means to be the Church, the Body of Christ. The Small Catechism's explanation of the Third Article tells us that "the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." What does it mean for the Spirit to *gather* us and how does He do it?

Such questions can only be addressed in the context of Christ's incarnation. We do not have a distant God but One who is *present*, who works through means. Christ literally took on flesh and lived among us before He was offered up as the perfect and final offering for our sins. He remains present in Word and Sacrament.

This last year we saw many examples of God at work through the people of God serving one another, even as we struggled with restrictions placed upon face-to-face gatherings. We adapted as we were able in order to continue sharing the Gospel with our members and our communities. What did we learn from these experiences? What does it mean for us moving forward?

As the pandemic established itself, CTSFW did what it needed to do to fulfill its mission. But going fully online with our classes, call service, and commencement was somewhat awkward given our commitment to residential pastoral, diaconal, and lay formation. While thankful for the technology that allowed classes to be offered and degrees to be completed, there was much

missing. Our Seminary's mission is to *form* servants in Jesus Christ and that happens best, we are convinced, when we are physically together.

Nearly 25 years ago, Jackson Carroll and Barbara Wheeler, among others, produced a case study of two seminaries, one "liberal" and the other more "conservative." They shared their findings in *Being There* (Oxford University Press, 1997). One conclusion was that for a student to be formed by the culture of an institution—specifically if they are to internalize and synthesize the theological commitments—it is necessary for that student to "be there," to spend time on campus learning and living in the midst of the community.

We are thankful that a certain normalcy has returned to our life together, but who knows what tomorrow will bring? Of this much we are sure: Christ is Lord of His Church. He will see us through these new challenges just as He has seen us through the past. We pray that this study of what it means to be the Church will be an encouragement to you as you go to receive and then share those gifts with your neighbor.

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L R R J." with a period at the end.

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

# CONTENTS

Volume Twenty-Five, Number Two



## For the Life of the World

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

## FEATURES

### 4 **Worship Coming Out of the Pandemic** **By Rev. Todd A. Peperkorn**

Everyone has been trying to figure this out from day one. As we have tried to work through and make sense of all of these things, decision fatigue can easily set in. Because of that, remembering how to show charity toward brother pastors and our sister congregations has never been more important.

### 7 **Pastoral Care in a Lonely World** **By Rev. David C. Fleming**

Since our Lord proclaimed, before the fall into sin, “It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18), it’s clear we’re meant to be together. However, we live in largely lonely times. Loneliness has been on the increase in the United States for decades. Before COVID-19, the majority of Americans reported being isolated with the youngest adults (18–22 year-olds) being the loneliest of all. The lockdowns because of COVID-19 only exacerbated this isolation. What might we learn from the challenges of COVID in our already lonely society?

### 10 **What Is It to “Be the Church”?** **By Dr. Adam C. Koontz**

In the distant land of pre-coronavirus America, some congregations would take a Sunday off to “be the Church” in their community. The Divine Service was replaced with community service, with the understandable but misplaced idea that the Church is defined by what the members are doing, not by what the Lord is doing among them. For many Christians, the church is what the Church does, not whom the Lord gathers. The Church is defined by her Head, Christ Jesus, as the branches live from the Vine. Where He is, there she is. If He is preached, she is there.

### **Also in this Issue:**

<b>What Does This Mean? . . . . .</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>End of 175th Academic Year . . . . .</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Called to Serve: Christopher Durham . . . . .</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Placements and Calls . . . . .</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Alumni Focus: Rev. Thomas Eggold . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Faculty Focus: Dr. Gifford Grobien . . . . .</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Profiles in Giving . . . . .</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>CTSFW Events . . . . .</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>In the Word Bible Study . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>

# Worship Coming



The date was June 3, 2020. We had been in pandemic lockdown for almost three months at that time. The governor of California had just lifted the restrictions on the shelter-in-place order, so we would be having worship in person for the first time since the second Sunday in Lent. It was going to be Trinity Sunday.

Everything was still new at that time. How would it work with masks, social distancing, wiping down *everything*, and the general fear that we all felt about COVID-19? Was it fear or was it anger? Or sadness? Or joy in anticipation? Maybe all of it was there and much more.

On June 3 I asked the leadership of my congregation to gather so that we could have a practice Divine Service. We needed to figure out how to do everything over again. We were standing and doing “continuous style” communion distribution. Our elders and I had decided to continue the practice of



# Out of the Pandemic

Todd A. Peperkorn

the chalice as well as individual cups. Our sanctuary is a bit crowded on the side aisles, so we decided to use a side exit and have people parade around the side of the building to come back in through our fellowship hall after distribution. The pew pads had to be removed and the hymnals. There were a million little details that we had never thought of before. Would it even feel like church? Would anybody show up? What about registration? What are we forgetting?

The evening of our practice service came. There were about 40 people present. They came in uncertain of how to act or behave in church. It was like we were children, learning where to stand and what to do all over again. Right up until the moment we started.

“In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

“Amen.”

With the invocation of God’s name upon us, everything rushed back into place. I know who I am again as a pastor. I’m not a video producer of a religious show once a week. I have people. I preach. I celebrate the Sacraments and deliver them to God’s dear flock in Rocklin, California. My elder knew how to do the readings. My musicians knew how to play the organ with people in the pews. And my people knew how to receive the gifts. Was it everything we wanted? No. But we received the gifts, and that is what really mattered.

Since that time, we have gone outside to worship, we have gone back online to worship, and we have made tweaks and changes to how things are done. However, it is worthwhile to ask the underlying question: what have we learned through this past year and more? I’m sure each of you has your own answers to that question. Here are my top five:

## **There is no substitute for being there.**

We, like almost everyone, have bent over backwards trying to care for people who were hidden away behind closed doors. I would do it all again. But gathering together is what it means to *be* the Church. We are called out (*ekklesia*). We gather together (*congregatio*). We receive the gifts, and we give thanks (*eucharisto*).

## **We have to act with charity toward our brothers and fellow congregations.**

Everyone has been trying to figure this out from day one. As we have tried to work through and make sense of all of these things, decision fatigue can easily set in. Because of that, remembering how to show charity toward brother pastors and our sister congregations has never been more important. Melancthon was right when he wrote, “*Harmony in the Church cannot last unless pastors and churches mutually overlook and pardon many things*” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article V). Unless a practice is clearly wrong and sinful, in these times we really have to ask, “how can I help?” before going down the road of accusations.

## **Unity is more important than getting your way in matters of adiaphora.**

In the Church, doing things together is more important than doing things your way. Do we have to wear masks? It depends. But when we make a decision as a congregation, I want that decision to be made together, so that we don’t have to second guess and start judging one another over things that ultimately do not matter. The devil loves nothing more than to see the Church divided and at odds with one another over

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**The evening of our practice service came. There were about 40 people present. They came in uncertain of how to act or behave in church. It was like we were children, learning where to stand and what to do all over again. Right up until the moment we started. “In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.” “Amen.” With the invocation of God’s name upon us, everything rushed back into place.**



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**When everything is upside down and changing from day to day, the steady rhythm of the liturgy gives hope in a way that few things can. Although perhaps it is obvious, I have come to appreciate how clear and straightforward our liturgy and worship can be. Cut out the extraneous and get to the point. It does not have to be stark. Simple can be the most beautiful thing in the world. By focusing on the simplicity of the gifts, it may be that we will more easily receive them.**

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things that may not matter. That might mean we have to stand for communion distribution instead of kneel. It might mean worshipping outside when there is a perfectly good building next door.

**Being clear and straightforward matters.**

When everything is upside down and changing from day to day, the steady rhythm of the liturgy gives hope in a way that few things can. Although perhaps it is obvious, I have come to appreciate how clear and straightforward our liturgy and worship can be. Cut out the extraneous and get to the point. It does not have to be stark. Simple can be the most beautiful thing in the world. By focusing on the simplicity of the gifts, it may be that we will more easily receive them.

**Do what you can to connect however is possible.**

While doing the livestreaming and recorded services was and is hard, it is also important for two different reasons. First, connecting—even imperfectly—is better than not connecting at all. Second, it demonstrates to the congregation that they matter, and that the pastor—and whole congregation—are doing everything possible to keep connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 🏡

*The Rev. Todd A. Peperkorn (toddpeperkorn@mac.com) has recently accepted a call to serve as the Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



# Pastoral Care in a Lonely World

David C. Fleming



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Since our Lord proclaimed, before the fall into sin, “It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18), it’s clear we’re meant to be together. However, we live in largely lonely times. Loneliness has been on the increase in the United States for decades. Both England and Japan are even lonelier, now both possessing a cabinet level “minister of loneliness.” Cigna’s 2018 survey found that nearly half of Americans do not have a daily meaningful conversation. Before COVID-19, the majority of Americans reported being isolated, with the youngest adults (18–22 year-olds) being the loneliest of all. The lockdowns because of COVID-19 only exacerbated this isolation. Loneliness has been reported as being as threatening to one’s health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.



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**What might we learn from the challenges of COVID in our already lonely society? I offer four things I have learned or re-learned. First, the Divine Service is vital; it is the ordinary means for the care of souls. Second, congregations need pastors. Third, pastors need pastors. Fourth, generally, congregations that viewed themselves as a family flourished during the pandemic; whereas, those that viewed themselves as a corporation languished during COVID-19.**

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Years before COVID-19, I officiated at my only double funeral for a father and son. The father had died in isolation because of a raging infection. His son was unable to be with his father in his last hours because the son had a compromised immune system. Consequently, the son was only able to say goodbye to his father by recording a message that was then replayed to his dad on his death bed. The father died late that night. The heartbroken 49-year-old son died the next morning.

Since last year, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan (where I serve with Pastors Jeremy Swem and North Sherrill), has seen a high number of homebound deaths. No one died from COVID, but in all but one case, isolation contributed to these deaths. Family, friends, and pastors were mostly prohibited from visiting. We pastors were only able to be at half of the death beds. Until recently we weren't able to have a regular funeral for anyone. This is heartbreaking to family, friends, and pastors too.

Faithful Lutherans, pastors and laity alike, have sought ways to encourage our isolated brothers and sisters. Of course, our congregations are to be gathered together around our Lord's incarnate gifts of Baptism, the preaching of the Word of Christ, and His very Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. However, during this odd time, many have been unable or unwilling to be there. Here's a sample of what some have done to mitigate loneliness:

- ✦ I know of one pastor who has taken to writing handwritten letters of encouragement to congregation members who cannot be visited in person. These have been warmly received.
- ✦ Many pastors have made countless phone calls to have pastoral care conversations with isolated souls.
- ✦ The children's choir at Our Savior, Grand Rapids, led by Kantor Christina Roberts, sang hymns outside the care facilities and homes of homebound members. At one care facility, not only was our member's window open to hear the joyful voices, but dozens of other windows were opened by lonely seniors eager to listen and to join in singing. There were tears of joy all around.
- ✦ Some families, fellow members, and pastors have visited through windows.
- ✦ Others have been able to receive streaming of sermons, Bible studies, and hymns from their churches.

What might we learn from the challenges of COVID in our already lonely society? I offer four things I have learned or re-learned.

First, the Divine Service is vital; it is the ordinary means for the care of souls. Before the pandemic it was easy for us to take for granted the weekly gathering of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the Lord's Word and Blessed Sacrament. COVID has reminded us never to underestimate the richness of our Lord Jesus coming to us to call us to repent,

Photos: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod





to forgive us, cleanse us, teach us, and touch us to bless us.

Some congregations never missed a service. Some adapted by having services of ten or fewer. Some, like us, suspended in-person services for a while. When we returned on Easter of 2020, even though our distribution of Christ's Body and Blood was unusual, members eagerly (and often with tears of joy) received the Lord's Supper.

Second, congregations need pastors. We knew we needed pastors before, of course, but the unique challenges of COVID made it even more evident. I've been privileged to visit with many pastors during the pandemic, and I discovered that no two congregations handled this situation the same way. This demonstrates the Lord's wisdom in placing one or more of His servants in each congregation. These faithful pastors guided their congregations through the myriad of decisions for the purpose of delivering the Gospel of Jesus Christ to needy souls. Instead of being driven by directives from afar, each pastor and congregation were able to nimbly adapt to changing governmental edicts, community issues, and individual concerns.

I am exceedingly thankful for my faithful professors at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and those serving now, who did not specifically prepare pastors and deaconesses for COVID—they had no idea it was coming—but who did teach us to think and act pastorally and faithfully,


so that we could adapt to the changing challenges we encountered. I'm thankful that one of my professors made sure I read Luther's insights on whether one could flee a plague. There Luther gives people lots of freedom to do what appears best, while grounding pastors in the responsibility to serve the souls entrusted to their care while following the best medical protocols of their day.

In talking with pastors and parishioners around the country, I've heard grateful thanksgiving by congregants for their pastors and pastors for their congregations, each rejoicing in how they've negotiated these days. Of course, there's been some painful exchanges too. In a time of fear and anxiety, folks don't always speak in the kindest and most helpful ways. Happily, our Lord is in the forgiveness and restoration business. He absolves and reunites sinners daily and will continue to do so in the future with its uncertainty.

Third, pastors need pastors. "Every pastor needs a pastor" is a refrain that the Rev. Dr. Harold Senkbeil and Dr. Beverly Yahnke have woven into DOXOLOGY's 14 years of training pastors in the care of souls. To hear confession of sins and absolve, pastors need to confess their sins and be absolved. Just as it benefits congregants to hear the Word of the Lord spoken by their pastor, so it benefits pastors to be strengthened and encouraged by the Word proclaimed to them. Additionally, conversation between brother pastors helps each to faithfully and creatively

serve as physicians of souls. Pastors can experience isolation as well, and brother pastors can be dear friends.

Fourth, generally, congregations that viewed themselves as a family flourished during the pandemic; whereas, those that viewed themselves as a corporation languished during COVID-19. In closely-knit congregations fellow members called, wrote to, and encouraged each other with even more intensity than before. It makes sense, families are designed to rally together when times are tough.

In *Christ and Calamity*, a devotional book written during the pandemic, the Rev. Dr. Harold L. Senkbeil offers a beautiful reminder to us all in our isolation and trouble. Where there is calamity, there is Christ with us. As the Lord promises: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). 

*The Rev. David C. Fleming (dfleming@doxology.us) serves as the Executive Director for Spiritual Care at DOXOLOGY: the Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel and as the Associate Pastor at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*



# What Is It to “Be the

In the distant land of pre-coronavirus America, some congregations would take a Sunday off to “be the Church” in their community. The Divine Service was replaced with community service, with the understandable but misplaced idea that the Church is defined by what the members are doing, not by what the Lord is doing among them. For many Christians, the church is what the Church does, not whom the Lord gathers.

We have now all had several and maybe many Sundays “off” from the Divine Service. Our pews were empty, our organ benches empty, our communion rails unused. Diligent pastors and diligent musicians did streaming services for us, but we knew it wasn’t the same as being there. We weren’t there hearing and singing, tasting and seeing that the Lord is good.

If the Church was defined by what we do, the love and kindness and generosity so many Christians have shown in the past year would have been enough for all of us. If the Church was the sum total of all our good works for the sake of others, we would have no sense of loss about the last year. There were kindnesses and joys in abundance, but there was still a lack we all sensed. There were extraordinary examples of generosity and faithfulness among our people. We wouldn’t all feel that we had lost a lot and wouldn’t all know people who have been lost to our congregations and not yet returned—not so much from fear of infection as from indifference to Christ. They did not watch the recorded service all the way through, then didn’t watch anything except the sermon, then didn’t watch more than a few minutes at the beginning, then didn’t watch at all. What happened?

What sustains us? What defines the Church? We know better now than we did before. It used to make some sense somehow that the Church was what the members of the church did. Some of us thought that “church” was the fruit the branches bore, the hours devoted to the community, the number of meals served, the total backpacks given away each school year. None of that fruit then or now was bad, none of it useless or pointless. None of that fruit, however, was Jesus.

Never once have I preached to someone drawing near to the kingdom or near to death’s door that my congregation had given away a large number of backpacks, served a large number of meals to the homeless, or made a certain large number of evangelism contacts in the past six months. I might have those statistics in my head or in our church database, but that fruit never called anyone out of darkness into Christ’s marvelous light. No one was ever saved by the fruit we bore. When it really matters, all I have to say is that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and will see you through death into life everlasting. All I have is that Jesus died for sinners and rose for their justification. I do not preach the branches. I preach the True Vine.





# Church”?

● Adam C. Koontz



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Church is defined by her Head, Christ Jesus, as the branches live from the Vine. Where He is, there she is. If He is preached, she is there. If His washing of water with the Word is done, she is there. If He is handed out in His Body and Blood, she is there. This is basic, but basic isn't the same thing as forgettable. Basic is the same as fundamental, the same as indispensable, the same as essential. The live and lively proclamation of Christ, the life-giving Baptism, the sustaining manna of Holy Communion are all "in-person events," and they are how the Church exists because where He has promised to be and is, there she is too.

If one member is cut off from that Vine, his branch withers. The sap of life no longer flows into him, and he shrivels up by and by. He may love the warm atmosphere of his congregation, but that doesn't come through on Facebook. He may appreciate the good people he grew up with, but they weren't around him when he was in lockdown. By the time the church opened up again, he had no desire to come back. The deer pants for flowing streams, but the man cut off from Christ does not thirst for the Lord. He has no desire any longer for what he has so long done without.

Don't take more Sundays "off," whether for seemingly good reasons or obviously bad reasons. We know now,

if we didn't before, that we can't afford to be "off" or "away" from Christ. We have life only in Him. Without Him we can do and we are truly nothing. This is a wonderful time to learn focus for all our congregations, councils, committees, and every other group in the church: if it does not promote being where and when Christ's Gospel is preached and His Sacraments administered as He commanded, what's it for? This is basic, so it's fundamental and indispensable and essential. If what we do and what we plan as a Church does not lead to more branches growing from the Vine, what's it for? If it's not for building up the Church, what's it for?

Branches need pruning to bear fruit, and we have all been pruned of late. The cutting back was sometimes painful, and our perspective on life is never so wise nor so long as the Vinedresser's. No matter now. He is good, and we are His. We are who we are—His Church—because He is who He is—our faithful Bridegroom. He will never leave us nor forsake us, so wherever He is in His Word and in His Sacraments, there we too will be. From now on, we will not be away or too busy to "be the Church" because being the Bride of Christ is being where Christ the Bridegroom is. Each Sunday we receive from Him all the fullness of God's riches, mercies ever new—good measure pressed down, shaken together,

and running over. Now more than ever, we find in Jesus grace upon grace upon grace and more to spare. [▲](#)

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**The Church is defined by her Head, Christ Jesus, as the branches live from the Vine. Where He is, there she is. If He is preached, she is there. If His washing of water with the Word is done, she is there. If He is handed out in His Body and Blood, she is there. This is basic, but basic isn't the same thing as forgettable. Basic is the same as fundamental, the same as indispensable, the same as essential. The live and lively proclamation of Christ, the life-giving Baptism, the sustaining manna of Holy Communion are all "in-person events," and they are how the Church exists because where He has promised to be and is, there she is too.**

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Photos: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod





# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

## Church

Don C. Wiley

What comes to mind when you hear the word *church*? Do you think about the *building* where you attend the Divine Service to receive the Gospel and Sacraments? Or do you think about the *people* of your congregation? Perhaps your mind goes to the Third Article of the Creed: “I believe in the Holy Spirit, *the holy Christian Church*, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

In Scripture we first hear the word *church* from our Lord. After Peter confesses Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Jesus promises, “on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:16, 18). The Lord builds His Church on the public declaration of Christ and His work—the proclamation of the Gospel. And Christ builds His Church by the work of the Holy Spirit who “calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith,” as we confess in the Small Catechism (SC II 6).

God reveals another reality of His Church through the apostle Paul. As Paul persecuted believers in the early church, Jesus came to him and said, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4). To persecute believers is to persecute Christ Himself! How? Because the Church is the body of Christ! Paul writes that believers, “though many, are one body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5). In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul further develops this thought. “The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” (1 Cor. 10:16–17). Two chapters later, he says, “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. For in one Spirit

we are all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:12–13). Then, to make things explicitly clear, Paul says, “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (12:27). And elsewhere he declares that Christ is “head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1:22–23).




Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Just as a body has organization—head, eyes, ears, nose, hands, feet—so also the body of Christ is organized. Christ is the Head, whose Word rules and guides all things in the Church. While the Church is already one through Baptism and faith in the one Lord (Eph. 4:4–6), we must be “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). Thus, those who recognize

this unity in faith and teaching gather together—first in a local congregation “in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered” (Augsburg Confession VII 1), then in a larger church body like The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Moreover, Christ the Head has given gifts to His body, the Church: “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds [pastors] and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). And God gives pastors an important mandate: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). Pastors are “servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” who must be found faithful (1 Cor. 4:1–2). They are “ambassadors for Christ” to whom the Lord has given “the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them” (2 Cor. 5:18b–20). Christ has given pastors to His Church so that these undershepherds might faithfully administer the Gospel to His body of believers . . . and to the world.

The Church, then, is the community of those who believe that Christ has reconciled them to the Father—a people *called out* (the basic meaning of the Greek word for *church*) and *gathered* into a communion (fellowship) of saints who are the body of Christ and who witness the reconciling Gospel to each other and to the world. 

*The Rev. Dr. Don C. Wiley (Don.Wiley@ctsfw.edu) serves as the Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions and Director of Spanish Language Church Worker Formation Program at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.*



# Seminary Celebrates Close of Academic Year



The 175th academic year of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), culminated on Friday, May 21, 2021. The morning's Baccalaureate Service featured CTSFW Chairman of the Board of Regents the Rev. Dr. Ronald Garwood as preacher. Serving as speaker for the Commencement exercises was the Rev. Dr. Larry Vogel, recipient of the 2020 Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*.

President Rast welcomed the assembly sharing, "It is our 175th academic year, all of which has transpired under challenging circumstances, yet has been accomplished successfully purely by the grace of God ... We are thankful for our graduates... as they prepare to go forth to serve the Lord in new areas, or with new expertise, to show forth His great deeds. To show what God has done for us in Jesus Christ—indeed, to 'Make Known His Deeds!' The mission of Concordia Theological Seminary is to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all, and, over these 175 years, God, through His marvelously rich provision, has ensured that that has occurred."

During the Commencement Ceremony CTSFW awarded several special honors to the following:

## Alumnus of the Year

*This award established by the CTSFW Board of Regents honors a graduate who has distinguished himself by faithfully shepherding the people of God with excellence in preaching, teaching the faithful, and reaching the lost while*

*also strengthening his alma mater by recruiting, publicizing, and supporting the Seminary's mission.*

## Rev. Larry E. Ziegler ('73) Castle Rock, Colorado.

Larry Ellwood Ziegler was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. When completing public high school, he was encouraged to attend St. John's Lutheran College in Winfield, Kansas, where he attended for two years. He then attended the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley where he earned a BA, majoring in political science and minoring in economics.

In 1969 Larry entered Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, and graduated in 1973. His first call was to St. Paul Lutheran Church, Kemmerer, Wyoming, where he also served as the Wyoming District LWML Counselor. Larry accepted a call three years later to Zion Lutheran Church, Terra Bella, California, where he also served as counselor to the LWML in the California Hawaii Nevada District.

Pastor Larry Ziegler faithfully served Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, Colorado, for 31 years, supervising

six vicars and encouraging many young pastors. He also helped revitalize and secure several confessional theologian speakers for the annual Denver Area Lutheran Reformation Festival. He served as the Coordinator for CTSFW's Denver area Continuing Education site for many years. Retired in September of 2014, he continues to serve our Lord in various capacities.

## Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa Rev. Dr. Christopher W. Mitchell St. Louis, Missouri

The Rev. Dr. Christopher W. Mitchell was honored for his devoted study of the Word of God.

Following undergraduate studies in math and physics at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, Dr. Mitchell completed a master's and doctorate in the Hebrew language. Following completion of an MDiv degree at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, he served several years in the parish before accepting a call to Concordia Publishing House (CPH). In his three-plus decades at CPH, he has distinguished himself for his meticulous work as primary editor of the Concordia Commentary series, which to date includes 40 published volumes. Dr. Mitchell himself authored the volume on Song of Songs and has published several other books along with various essays and articles.

## Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa Rev. Prof. Erling T. Teigen Mankato, Minnesota

The son and grandson of pastors in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), the Rev. Dr. Erling Teigen, received both a BA and MA from the University of Minnesota and an MDiv from Bethany Lutheran Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota. From 1966 to 1977 he served congregations in Grand Forks and Apple Valley, Minnesota, before accepting the call to teach at his alma mater in Mankato from 1977 until his retirement in 2015.

Teigen has served as editor of the *Lutheran Sentinel* and coordinating editor of *Logia: A Journal of Theology*. He is the author of several books, numerous journal



articles and essays, and translations from Norwegian and Swedish.

Throughout his long years of service, he has faithfully served the ELS, the wider Church, and the Seminary in a variety of capacities.

### **Doctor of Humane Letters Degree Honoris Causa**

#### **Mollie Ziegler Hemingway Alexandria, Virginia**

Mollie Ziegler Hemingway, a conservative author, columnist, and political commentator, was honored for her faithful witness to the truth.

Born in Colorado to the Rev. Larry and Carolyn Ziegler, Dr. Hemingway graduated from the University of Colorado, Denver, with a degree in economics. She helped launch the online magazine *The Federalist* and currently serves as a senior editor. In addition, she is a senior journalism fellow at Hillsdale College, where she teaches journalism and helps students and alumni with professional development. She has been published in all of the major American news outlets and serves as a Fox News contributor. In 2019 she co-authored *Justice on Trial: The Kavanaugh Confirmation and the Future of the Supreme Court*.

### **Miles Christi Award**

*The Miles Christi (Soldiers of Christ) Award has been created by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary in order to recognize and honor Lutheran laymen or laywomen who have glorified God through a contribution in some field of human endeavor and who have displayed the characteristics of good soldiers of Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). This year the Miles Christi Award was conferred upon the following five individuals:*

#### **Mr. Dennis “Denny” Becker, (awarded posthumously)**

Born and raised in New Haven, Indiana, Denny worked as a certified public accountant in Fort Wayne before moving his family to Washington DC to study law. After graduating from Georgetown University Law Center, Dennis began practicing in Fort Wayne. He worked mainly in corporate

governance and tax law for two decades. He was a partner at Barnes and Thornburg for 10 years and spent the last five years at Beckman Lawson. For many years, he served as CTSFW’s legal counsel.

Denny was a faithful member at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne and Lake George Lutheran Chapel in Fremont, Indiana. He gave generously of his time on several boards and committees in his church and community including the Concordia Theological Foundation, which generously supports CTSFW students. In all the roles of service to community and church, Denny showed his strong faith, compassion, and character.

Mr. Becker was called to his heavenly home unexpectedly on March 6, 2021. His beloved wife, Nancy, and sons, Devin and Tyson, received the award in his honor.

#### **Mr. Jerome W. and Mrs. Linda Bolick Conover, North Carolina, *in absentia***

Jerome and Linda Bolick are long-time members of Concordia Lutheran Church in Conover, North Carolina. Their Christian faith has not only been a foundation for their marriage and family, but also for their entire lives of service in business and philanthropy.

Jerome is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where he earned a BS in business administration. He served in the US Navy for two years as a communications officer aboard the USS Taluga. After that Jerome joined the family furniture business, Southern Furniture Company, in Conover, North Carolina.

In 1967 Jerome and Linda Bolick established The Bolick Foundation to embrace and advance their philanthropic vision. Jerome serves as the foundation’s president, Linda serves as its secretary, and their daughter, Judith, is assistant secretary. The Bolick Foundation concentrates on spreading the Christian Gospel and aiding those in need.

#### **Dr. Michael and Mrs. Margo Liebner Monticello, Indiana**

Married in 1977, Michael and Margo Liebner met in a hospital where she was a nurse and he was preparing to be

a physician. A year later, they moved to Logansport, Indiana, where Michael began his career in radiology. During the next years, Margo shifted her care for others to being a homemaker and faithful mother of their five children. She later pursued a second career in ultrasonography. Presently, Michael and Margo are retired and reside in the community of Monticello, Indiana.

They are profoundly grateful for the gifts they have received and they believe they have an obligation to use the time, talent, and treasure which the Lord has entrusted to them to further the work of His kingdom and promote the proclamation of the Gospel to future generations. It is their hope and prayer that the funds seeded through the establishment of an endowment will help establish a strong foundation for CTSFW, the Lutheran Church, and their family.

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President Rast closed the 175th academic year with special words of gratitude for the CTSFW faculty, “In the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have served faithfully and well as we have celebrated our 175th anniversary year, to ‘Make Known His Deeds!’ And so, for that, I—and I know all of our graduates—are profoundly grateful.”

The Lord has blessed and sustained CTSFW for 175 years and the Seminary asks that all join in thanking God and praying for these gifted servants in their new ministries across the nation and around the world. May God bless, strengthen, and fortify these graduates and all of us as we work to support each other and God’s kingdom and “Make Known His Deeds!” 🙏

**Opposite page top:** *President Rast with Nancy Becker and sons Devin (L) and Tyson (R)*

**Opposite page bottom, left to right:** *the Rev. Larry E. Ziegler, the Rev. Dr. Christopher W. Mitchell, the Rev. Prof. Erling T. Teigen, Mrs. Mollie Ziegler Hemingway, and Dr. Michael and Mrs. Margo Liebner*

# Meet Seminarian Christo



**Please provide a brief biographical sketch.**

I was born in Kokomo, Indiana, and baptized at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church. I spent the first part of my childhood in that place; then my family moved to Ida, Michigan, to be close to my grandmother. Since my Mom was a Lutheran school teacher, I was greatly fortunate to attend Lutheran grade school and high school, where she taught history and English respectively. Both of those schools were tremendous blessings and put the Word of God at the center of our young lives. I went to college at Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW), being shaped by that reality and hoping to come to the Seminary. While I was there, I also met my beloved bride, Mary. We were married in 2016, between our third and fourth years at CUW. God has blessed us during our time at Seminary with two sons, Gregory (2 years) and Clement (3 months). I graduated from the MDiv Program this spring and will stay at the Seminary for one more year to study for an STM.

**What is your home congregation and where did you serve on vicarage?**

The congregation which is home for me is Immanuel Lutheran Church, East

Ida, Michigan. I served my vicarage at Zion Lutheran Church in Bismarck, North Dakota.

**How long have you been a member of the LCMS?**

I have been in the LCMS since I was baptized a little less than a month after I was born. I was confirmed in this faith in 2009.

**Where have you attended school and what degrees do you hold?**

I was educated at Lutheran High School South (Newport, Michigan), CUW (BA in theological studies), and CTSFW (MDiv).

**Have you had any significant work experience before coming to the Seminary?**

Since I came almost directly from undergraduate to the Seminary, I did not have any lengthy employment beforehand. I did work as an assistant at the Writing Center at Concordia Wisconsin while I was a student there. I also did some odd jobs throughout my college years, including working at a restaurant in my hometown, and a pre-cast crew at a concrete company, as well as doing some janitorial work in between college and the Seminary.

**Who/what influenced you to study to become a pastor?**

Our Lord Jesus has sustained His Church through the proclamation of His Holy Word through faithful pastors—and I am grateful that by such men I have been nourished throughout my whole life. From my time in the Lutheran schools and catechesis, to my high school teachers, and the steadfast pastors and professors during our time at CUW, my field education supervisor, my vicarage supervisor—all of them offered encouragement, sound counsel, and guidance. One constant source of strength, especially when I have been doubtful or uncertain about myself, seminary, ministry, and the difficulties of life in our times, has been my dear friend and brother-in-law, the Rev. Paul Schulz. However, no one has been more supportive throughout the years than my beloved bride, Mary, who builds me up when I am downcast and who always points me to Truth Himself. I would be remiss if I did not express the profound gratitude that I have for my mother, Karen Durham, whose patience and steadfast witness to the truth of our confession have shaped who I am.



# pher Durham



## **In every program toward pastoral ministry some residential work is necessary. Why?**

Seminary training must prepare us for the crucial reality of the Holy Ministry of Christ. This ministry is shaped by what God reveals in His Word: God did not make us to be immaterial or without bodies. He established the ministry of the Gospel with audible preaching and hearing, gathering together in one place, and the administration of the flesh and blood of Jesus. That's not accidental, for neither is the final goal of our Christian hope in heaven without bodies! We look forward to the *resurrection of the dead!* We look forward to seeing Jesus face to face. We might say that this is, of course, true, but also that we can accomplish such an education remotely, that we don't need to be *physically* present. In one sense this is true. Information can be delivered by a variety of means. But the ministry cannot be reduced to data or information, as if we could convey the truth of the Gospel in an Excel sheet.

We know this principle intuitively with many other things in life. Consider taking a vacation. If someone told their kids that they were going to Disney World, and then scheduled a virtual tour through Zoom, would the kids'

experience and response be the same? Of course not! Furthermore, the preparation for the pastoral ministry is not like going to Disney. It is much more serious and has far more important consequences than taking a vacation, having to do with the eternal life which is offered in Christ Jesus to the world. The residential process is, in many respects, difficult. It often means moving, labor, lots of hard course work, family trial, uncertainty, and stress. It also means dear friends, brothers who challenge and encourage one another, and growth in hearing and reading the Word of God. All these things *together*, the reality of our Lord Jesus incarnate, the lived trials and joys of the ministry, and many others, are the foundation which underlie our formation. For thus we are conformed to Truth Himself (John 14:6)!

## **You've decided to stay for your STM degree. What led you to do this and what are you hoping to learn from your continued studies?**

Part of my formation prior to seminary was the study of the languages of Holy Scripture. My teachers at Concordia Wisconsin, especially Dr. Schulz, Dr. Mudge, and Dr. Soenksen,

instilled in me a disposition of reverence toward the careful reading of Holy Scripture. I learned from them that the study of the languages could be a deeply gratifying activity. That education instilled in me an impulse to read and translate, to meditate upon and inwardly digest God's Word. Such a disposition was deepened and nourished during my studies at the Seminary by our excellent teachers here. During the next year, I hope to give expression to that impulse through writing and research that allows me to explore more deeply the Word of God in the original languages of Greek and Hebrew.

## **How would you encourage someone who is considering studying to become a pastor?**

Be attentive to the hearing of God's Word! Discuss with your pastor about becoming more familiar with the life of the congregation from his perspective, perhaps shadowing him for a time if he would be willing to do that with you. And come, visit the Seminary!

## **What are your personal goals/vision for your future service as a pastor?**

By the grace of God our dear heavenly Father, to confess the holy Name of Jesus faithfully and to share in joy of the holy Gospel! 🏰

# Seminary Announces Spring Placements

**Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, announces its Spring 2021 deaconess internships, vicarage assignments, deaconess placements, and calls to the pastoral ministry.**

## **DEACONESS INTERNSHIPS**

**April 26, 2021**

MEGHAN A. HOLST  
Zion Lutheran Church  
Painesville, Ohio  
Ohio District

MARISSA E. KROENKE  
Grace Lutheran Church and School  
St. Petersburg, Florida  
Florida-Georgia District

## **VICARAGE ASSIGNMENTS**

**April 26, 2021**

GABRIEL M. AIELLO  
Grace Ev. Lutheran Church  
Muncie, Indiana  
Indiana District

ISAIAH A. ARMBRECHT  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Decatur, Indiana  
Indiana District

NICHOLAS R. BELCHER  
Faith Lutheran Church  
Capistrano Beach, California  
Pacific Southwest District

JOSHUA A. BENISH  
Pella Lutheran Church  
Waupun, Wisconsin  
South Wisconsin District

MICAH J. BROOKS  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Hampton, Iowa  
Iowa District East

GUNNAR G. CAMPBELL  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Hamel, Illinois  
Southern Illinois District

BRENNAN T. DEFOREST  
Messiah Lutheran Church  
Danville, California  
English District

NICHOLAS C. GAPSKI  
Family of God Lutheran Church  
Detroit, Michigan  
Michigan District

MARK P. GASCHLER  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Norman, Oklahoma  
Oklahoma District

THOMAS E. GOODROAD  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
Nebraska District

JEREMY C. HANSON  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Columbia City, Indiana  
Indiana District

JAMES A. HAUGEN III  
St. Paul Lutheran Church and  
School  
Napoleon, Ohio  
Ohio District

ANDREW R. HILL  
Zion Ev. Lutheran Church  
Imperial, Nebraska  
Nebraska District

BENJAMIN N. JANSSEN  
First Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
English District

ANTHONY M. KEILANI  
Faith Lutheran Church  
Green Bay, Wisconsin  
North Wisconsin District

ZACHARY T. KLUMPP  
St. James Lutheran Church and  
School  
Howard Lake, Minnesota  
Minnesota South District

DALE R. KRIENKE  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Laurel, Montana  
Montana District

JONAH Q. LAWS  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Gresham, Oregon  
Northwest District

MICHAEL A. MAPUS II  
Concordia Lutheran Church  
Toledo, Ohio  
Ohio District

JEREMY T. MCDONALD  
Messiah Lutheran Church  
Keller, Texas  
Texas District

CHRISTIAN Q. MUNDORF  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Highland, Indiana  
Indiana District

PAUL D. NORRIS  
Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church  
Terre Haute, Indiana  
Indiana District

BRIAN J. NYGAARD  
Lutheran Life Villages  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Indiana District

BRYAN D. PAYNE  
Our Savior Lutheran Church  
Cheyenne, Wyoming  
Wyoming District

MARK J. PETERS  
Our Hope Lutheran Church  
and School  
Huntertown, Indiana  
Indiana District

CARL R. PETZOLD  
Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
Moline, Illinois  
Central Illinois District

ELLERY J. STEFFENSEN  
Catalina Lutheran Church  
Tucson, Arizona  
English District

JOEL PETER WAGNER  
Zion Ev. Lutheran Church  
Columbus, Ohio  
Ohio District

DANIEL E. WARNER  
Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
English District

WILLIAM J. WINTER  
Shepherd of the City  
Lutheran Church  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Indiana District

DAVID C. WOELMER  
Faith Ev. Lutheran Church  
Churubusco, Indiana  
Indiana District

MARK G. ZIEROTH  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Cedar Falls, Iowa  
Iowa District East

## **PASTORAL CALLS**

**April 27, 2021**

PHILIP D. BARTELT  
Zion German Ev. Lutheran Church  
Brooklyn, New York  
Atlantic District

ALEXANDER J. BLANKEN  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Winside, Nebraska

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Carroll, Nebraska  
Nebraska District

ZACHARIAH E. BURGDORF  
First Lutheran Church  
Ely, Minnesota

Lutheran Church of  
the Good Shepherd  
Babbitt, Minnesota  
Minnesota North District

JUSTIN C.C. CLARKE  
Christ Ev. Lutheran Church  
Murray, Utah  
Rocky Mountain District





**RICHARD M. DAILEY**  
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church  
Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
Oklahoma District

**DANIEL S. GOLDEN**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Parkersburg, West Virginia  
Ohio District

**DANIEL H. HARRISON**  
Christ Ev. Lutheran Church  
New Baltimore, Michigan  
Michigan District

**JESSTEN P. HEIMER**  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Boone, Iowa  
Iowa District West

**MARTIN R. HILL**  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Ponca, Nebraska  
Nebraska District

**CARL D. HINGST**  
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer  
Kokomo, Indiana  
Indiana District

**BRIAN P. E. HOMANN**  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Beardstown, Illinois  
Central Illinois District

**RAYMOND A. HULETT**  
Hope Ev. Lutheran Church  
Fremont, California  
English District

**PHILIP J. JASEPH**  
Board for International Mission  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Missouri District

**NATHANIEL S. JENSEN**  
Board for International Mission  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Missouri District

**TIMOTHY D. KERN**  
Our Savior Lutheran Church  
Marlette, Michigan  
Michigan District

**IAN P. KINNEY**  
NEK Partnership of Lutheran  
Church Congregations:  
First—Sabetha / Immanuel—  
Fairview / St. Paul—Fairview /  
Zion—Hiawatha, Kansas  
Kansas District

**CORY J. KROONBLAWD**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Sac City, Iowa  
Iowa District West

**STANLEY J. LACEY**  
St. John Ev. Lutheran Church  
Clarksburg, West Virginia  
English District

**PAUL W. MARKS**  
Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church  
Adell, Wisconsin  
South Wisconsin District

**TYLER J. MCMILLER**  
Board for International Mission  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Missouri District

**TANNER B. POST**  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Sumner, Iowa

**St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
Sumner, Iowa  
Iowa District East

**RYAN J. PUMPHREY**  
St. Johns Lutheran Church  
Villard, Minnesota

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
Grove Lake, Minnesota  
Minnesota North District

**JOSHUA J. A. SCHIFF**  
Zion Ev. Lutheran Church  
Orange, Connecticut  
New England District

**TIMOTHY D. SCHMEISSER**  
Grace Lutheran Church  
Sebeka, Minnesota

**Nimrod Lutheran Church**  
Nimrod, Minnesota

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
North Germany Twp., Minnesota  
Minnesota North District

**ROBERT M. SCHRADER**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin  
South Wisconsin District

**CHRISTIAN D. SCHULTZ**  
First Lutheran Church  
Paola, Kansas  
Kansas District

**PAUL ELI SHAW**  
Peace Lutheran Church  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Ohio District

**ADAM A. STERNQUIST**  
Peace Ev. Lutheran Church  
Owensboro, Kentucky  
Indiana District

**CALEB D. STOEVER**  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Erie, Kansas

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
Hepler, Kansas  
Kansas District

**JACOB A. STOLTZMAN**  
Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church  
Aurora, Illinois  
Northern Illinois District

**STUART A. SULTZE**  
Faith Lutheran Church  
Ukiah, California  
California-Nevada-Hawaii District

**STAFFORD L. THOMPSON**  
Hope Lutheran Church  
Cloquet, Minnesota  
Minnesota North District

**ANDREW R. TWIETMEYER**  
Messiah Lutheran Church  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Michigan District

## **DEACONESS PLACEMENTS**

**May 19, 2021**

**KATHERINE F. AIELLO**  
Concordia Theological Seminary  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Indiana District

**ANNA C. BARGER**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Flint, Michigan  
Michigan District

**MERRI L. BUNGE**  
St. Peter's Lutheran Church  
Shaker Heights, Ohio  
Ohio District

**KATHRYN E. PHILLIPS**  
Memorial Lutheran Church  
Houston, Texas  
Texas District

**EMILYANN PAIGE WERT**  
Our Savior Lutheran Church  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Michigan District



## Thomas A. Eggold



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**Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, “the physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” The ministry entrusted to us will always be about connecting Christ to people and people to one another in His name, and yet one of the great lessons we have learned from this extraordinary year is that even when circumstances limit our ability to physically gather, the presence and promise of the risen Christ will never be limited and will always unify His people as we wait together for His return.**

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I was really looking forward to Easter 2020. The year before, my wife and I had been in Salzburg on Easter Sunday. We were in the fourth month of a sabbatical that had taken us to nine different countries, and we were homesick. During Holy Week, we couldn’t find an English-speaking congregation, and as we moved into Easter weekend, our hearts were hurting and our thoughts were filled with the familiar faces of our church family. Not being physically present in our home congregation for such an important day of celebration was more disappointing than I could have ever anticipated, and I remember thinking how wonderful it would feel to be back with everyone at Emmanuel for Easter in 2020. Then, in March of 2020, with Easter just weeks away, COVID-19 hit, and suddenly we were separated again. It’s one thing to miss people when you’re 5,000 miles away—you sort of expect that—but being homesick when you are stuck at home is an emotion that’s difficult to process.

The isolating impact of COVID-19 touched every single one of us. In a flash the routines and relationships on which we had built our lives and ministries all changed. Churches everywhere were forced to make

decisions about when and how to meet, and what to do with restrictions that left many unable to gather.

Like so many other congregations, we had to find new ways to minister to our people who needed the hope and





Photos: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

encouragement of the Gospel more than ever before. Within days we had to reinvent everything. From the way we handled the mail to our protocols for weddings and funerals we had to go back to the drawing board and figure out the most basic aspects of congregational life. Beginning with the heart of our ministry, we mobilized for online worship. Utilizing cameras that had been installed in a 2016 renovation, we learned how to record, edit, and stream our worship services, adding music and imposing the hymns and liturgical language onscreen so that our members could participate wherever they were located.

Next, we focused on providing care for our members. Utilizing our staff and Stephen Ministers, we established a care call ministry designed to make personal phone calls to 350 of our most vulnerable members. Each of our 35 callers reached out with weekly calls, assessing needs, providing basic information from the church, and helping the people under their care connect with our online resources. Our care call program began

in March and continued through May, and yet many of our callers continue to cultivate the relationships that began through this approach to caregiving during COVID.

This process of reinvention repeated itself as we adjusted our approach to everything from confirmation to counseling, Christian education to the collection of offerings. 2020 also saw us leap into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as we added a mobile app, redesigned our website, and began recording weekly Bible studies. These improvements provided our members and guests with tools that will continue long after the pandemic subsides.

I can say with certainty that these positive changes would have taken years to implement without the urgency imposed by COVID-19. As a result, our congregation has seen the reach of our ministry expand exponentially. In fact, while the Easter sermon I had longed to deliver was given to an empty sanctuary, over 1,000 people viewed our 2020 Easter worship service online. If you consider that many of these

views included more than one person, the number of souls touched by this special service was extraordinary and far exceeded the reach of any Easter service we've ever held in our sanctuary.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, "the physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer." The ministry entrusted to us will always be about connecting Christ to people and people to one another in His name, and yet one of the great lessons we have learned from this extraordinary year is that even when circumstances limit our ability to physically gather, the presence and promise of the risen Christ will never be limited and will always unify His people as we wait together for His return.

*The Rev. Thomas A. Eggold (taeggold@hotmail.com) serves as the Senior Administrative Pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Pastor Eggold is a 2003 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



# Being Present in the Body

Rebecca S. Ahlersmeyer



For being a busy man with a full schedule, Dr. Gifford Grobien has found a great deal of peace, joy, and balance in his work and in the vibrant community of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Between teaching classes, grading assignments, mentoring students, directing the Doctor of Ministry Program, writing and contributing to a number of projects, officiating soccer matches, being an active part of his church community, and being a devoted husband and father to eight children, Grobien has found a great deal of vocational satisfaction being present in the Body of Christ.

## From Service to Our Country to Service in the Church

Grobien and his wife, Regina, met at Georgetown University, where Gifford was studying foreign service (for potential work in the State Department). After college the two were married and Grobien embarked to fulfill the requirements of his ROTC scholarship by serving in the Navy from 1995–2000.

Early on in his program and service, he was having inklings toward service in the church. In fact, during his time in the Navy, he was encouraged by many people, including his pastor, to consider the ministry. This led to his coming to

the Seminary in 2000, and, after an extra year in Germany, he graduated with his MDiv in 2005.

## Great Lifetime Friendships

After seminary, with Dr. Weinrich’s encouragement, Grobien was led to pursue a PhD in moral theology at the University of Notre Dame. During this time, from 2006–2012, he was blessed to serve as the Assistant Pastor at Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Bend, Indiana, with the Rev. Dr. Richard Stuckwisch. “It was a wonderful, gracious congregation. I had a great mentor. They were very welcoming . . . great lifetime friendships.”

## Robust Theological Foundations

Many interests and influences led Grobien to pursue study in moral theology. “Even when I was studying ethics, I always tried to do it very much so from a dogmatic and confessional systematic theology perspective. So, to talk about ethics—in the sense of systematic theology—is really to talk about sanctification in the Christian life. In other words, how do we live as people forgiven and redeemed, filled with the Holy Spirit?” He found that the knowledge gained through his seminary training became the crux supporting and shaping his education and expression. “Even when I’m exploring particular types of ethical topics . . . my own interests are always shaped by really robust theological foundations, which have to do with the relationship between justification and sanctification, and the way that our worship life and our sacramental life forms us and strengthens us with the Holy Spirit.”

## The Christian Life

Dr. Grobien is involved in the Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series, published by the Luther Academy, started by Dr. Robert Preus in the 1980’s, with Dr. Kurt Marquart writing some

# of Christ



of the early volumes (many who study theology may recognize it by the maroon cover). Grobien is writing a volume called *The Christian Life* for the series. It's a considerable challenge, as the Christian life is quite intertwined with numerous topics, but Grobien continues to expand his research, writing while reading. There is a great deal to be said about "the Christian life, ethics, bioethics, the end and beginning of life, social ethics, how the Church engages in the wider community, mental health"; much of it is "working from the ground up—it will take time."

## Serving Students in Formation

For Grobien, in his various roles at the Seminary "the most rewarding thing, hands down, is getting to know the students, becoming friends . . . serving them in their spiritual and ministerial formation." He cherishes the ability to "stay in touch . . . appreciate the work that they do, see how they grow, and, in turn, learn from them down the road. That, to me, is easily the thing I love the most about being a professor." Right alongside, he also expressed gratitude for "the fact that it's just a great environment to work in as well—colleagues, working on topics and projects that you love to do

anyway, and being able to go to chapel all the time."

## A Comprehensive, Spiritually Formative Experience

Grobien—along with many DMin students interviewed—could not say enough about the value of the DMin program and how grateful they were to be a part of it. "It's structured to help them be better pastors." In ministry—that can, at times, feel frustratingly stagnant—the practical applications for DMin students are exciting and real. "The culminating project, the dissertation, is intentionally structured to be a project for the benefit of their congregation, or perhaps other ministry contexts . . . to understand better the struggles and challenges and problems that their congregation might be facing—to reflect on them and then act in ways that will bring the Gospel of Christ, and serving their people in healing and forgiving and strengthening ways." It's integrative, "requiring that they bring experience and knowledge from their ministry contexts into reflection with theological texts. It sends them back out into the congregation, into their parish, into their ministry better prepared." Grobien was keen to encourage potential students to prayerfully consider this step in growing and expanding their ministries in a supportive and encouraging environment. "Whatever the program that a person wants to enter, this is going to be a community that not only challenges them academically, but also uplifts them and strengthens them in the Body of Christ. Everybody's different at the Seminary . . . but there are always brothers and sisters here who are journeying on a similar path." What makes the program worthwhile is "not only the privilege to study great theological texts and deepen one's understanding of Scripture and the Confessions . . . but also having that camaraderie of other people studying with

you and praying with you and supporting you. It makes it a really comprehensive, spiritually formative experience."

## Bearing Each Other's Burdens

He noted that the Lord's good work at and through the Seminary would not be possible without its many faithful supporters. "Supporting the Seminary relieves students of the question, anxiety, and burden: 'how will I get through this?' 'How much debt will I have?' It is a spiritual partnership. We bear each other's burdens—and it's just as important as any other job. 1 Corinthians 12 says every person is a member of the Body of Christ. Being able to materially support the needs of the Church is vital, valuable, and worthy."

## Being Present in the Body of Christ

While Gifford has plenty on his resume to emphasize, he concluded our discussion by returning home. "Spending time with family is a great joy. We enjoy meals, playing games, playing at the park, catechesis and praying, all different sports." As has been true of all of his endeavors, faith is woven seamlessly throughout life's activities. It was clear that the most important things form the hub around which family life turns: "having the church as the center . . . catechesis at home forms views." When the Lord is at the center, every aspect of life—whether at work, home, or play—is about being present in the Body of Christ. 🏠

*Rebecca S. Ahlersmeyer*  
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serves as the Communication  
Specialist at Concordia  
Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.





# Doctor of Ministry

- ▶ Are you a pastor itching for a deep dive into theology after this last year of living under the pandemic?
- ▶ Interested in examining some issues you are facing in your parish?
- ▶ The DMin Program at CTSFW has been designed with you in mind.

The spiritual lives of many pastors and congregations have been refreshed and enriched through our DMin curriculum, culminating in a project/dissertation done in a real life ministry context. In order to make these benefits available to more pastors, this program has been designed to be *accessible*, *practical*, and *affordable*.



CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

## For More Information

**Dr. Gifford A. Grobien**

Gifford.Grobien@ctsfw.edu  
(260) 452-2143



Visit [www.ctsfw.edu/D-Min](http://www.ctsfw.edu/D-Min) or scan the QR Code above to apply.



## ACCESSIBLE

One of the biggest challenges for busy pastors is to carve out time for ongoing study and professional development. Our accredited DMin program reduces the amount of time you will spend away from your congregation and family and enables you to complete the entire program in three to four years. Our hybrid courses begin online from your home or office, continue during an on-campus intensive week of five class days in Fort Wayne, then finish online. While on campus for your intensives, you will be renewed by worship in Kramer Chapel, study in the Wayne and Barbara Kroemer Library, and through conversation with CTSFW faculty and students.

## PRACTICAL

One of the strengths of our DMin program has been its unabashed practical focus: you are part of a dynamic community of experienced pastors learning from one another, being led by world class theological professors who are also pastors. Research ministry projects will have a lasting impact on your congregation and beyond. In our program you enhance this practical focus by choosing one of three concentrations:

### ■ Pastoral Care and Leadership

Deepen your understanding of spiritual care for your flock and explore biblical ways that your leadership sets the vision for ministry.

### ■ Preaching and Teaching

Meet the weekly challenges you face through in-depth study of preaching and teaching for a variety of audiences.

### ■ Mission and Culture

Consider contemporary challenges facing the mission of your congregation and develop the understanding and skills to address them.

## AFFORDABLE

The tuition for the DMin program is \$400 per credit, among the most competitive rates nationally. A very economical room and meal plan is available on campus for the one-week intensive portion of your courses. The only other significant cost will be transportation to Fort Wayne (about seven round trips).

## Faculty News



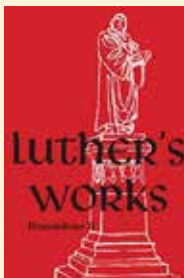
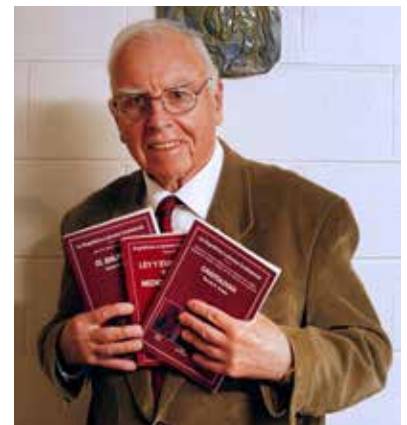
### Master in Sacred Theology Students Online

In spite of the pandemic, CTSFW has continued to offer intensive STM courses over the past year through its accredited international site at Gothenburg, Sweden, using Zoom technology.

**The Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen** taught a course on Lutheran Hermeneutics while in Fort Wayne to students (mostly pastors) in Sweden, Finland, Norway, Latvia, Ghana, and Rwanda. They spent 30 hours online together from March 1–5, 2021, across a few time zones and continents, with great discussions about readings and research projects.

**The Rev. Dr. David P. Scaer** recently had two of the books he wrote for the Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series translated into the Spanish language. *Baptism* and *Christology* are now available in print and as eBooks via the VDMA Project and are also available for use as textbooks for Luther Academy conferences. (VDMA is a Latin acronym which translates “The Word of the Lord endures forever.”)

As Lutheran seminaries, Bible institutes, and other Lutheran institutions in Latin America and Caribbean build up their libraries, the Lutheran Heritage Foundation has committed to printing 300 Spanish copies of the Confessions Dogmatics Series to supply their shelves. These copies will also be shared with LCMS seminaries and universities in the US and their Spanish-speaking students.



**The Rev. Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes's** article “Old Luther Disputing the Origin of Souls: Augustinian and Scholastic Anthropologies in Debate” was accepted for publication in *Lutherjahrbuch*. The article deals with Martin Luther’s affirmation of traditional body-soul anthropology along with his contention that the propagation of souls from parents (at the same time as the body is conceived from the bodies of parents) is the best way to understand how we get our souls. The disputation on which the article is based can be found in *Luther's Works, Vol. 73: Disputations II*.



**The Rev. Prof. John T. Pless's** book *Pastor Craft: Essays and Sermons* is now available. Grown out of a ministry that has spanned nearly four decades, this volume of essays, sermons, and homiletical studies is built around the conviction that theology does matter, for theology has to do with words from God, words spoken back to God and words spoken to the world. Many of these sermons were preached in Kramer Chapel on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, where Pless has preached for future preachers, equipping them in the way of Luther’s *oratio, meditatio, and tentatio*, for the burdens and joys of the pastoral office.

# Making Sure “Always” Stays on Track for the Next Generation

Lance C. Hoffman



*Above, left to right: Lance Hoffman cuts the ribbon to the new track with the Rev. Dennis Goff of The Lutheran Foundation and Tim Falkenstern, the Director of the LSAA*

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), is recognized around the world for its confessional theology and throughout the country for all it provides to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Locally, in Fort Wayne, it has made some significant contributions that those on the other side of the world or continent may not know. CTSFW hosts Lutheran elementary school events, and it has done so ever since its return to Fort Wayne in 1976.

When I was a child in the late 1970s, I ran on the Seminary track. It was just an accepted fact that the Lutheran grade schools would “always” run track meets at the Seminary. Fast forward 40-plus years, and “always” came to an end. In 2019, the conditions of the track, inherited from CTSFW’s senior college predecessor, no longer allowed for meets at the Seminary. Something needed to be done.

CTSFW and LSAA submitted a grant proposal to The Lutheran Foundation in Fort Wayne in the fall of 2019. Spending significant resources on a track did not make sense for the Seminary; and the Lutheran Schools Athletic Association (LSAA), serving 16 elementary schools, could not handle a project of this size alone. Partnership was the only path forward to get this significant “backyard”



project done. The Foundation awarded a matching grant; then the real work was ready to begin.

The work consisted of raising required matching funds and removing and installing a new 400-meter track. Working together during the spring and summer of 2020 (getting over the COVID-19 hurdles), individuals and congregations raised the funds. The new track was installed in August 2020.

In the fall of 2020, the new track was dedicated. Our faculty member, the Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III led the dedication. This was fitting because he also ran on the old 440-yard surface as a senior college athlete in 1974. Dr. Maier noted that sports teach young people valuable life lessons such as being a member of a team, having discipline, striving to do their best, and dealing with competition. He went on to say that the incorporation of faith gives deeper meaning to every aspect of this character formation. At the start of the spring 2021 season, the track was ready to serve a new generation. A new period of “always” was set to begin.

Today, the track has been a blessing and a beehive of activity. One hundred twenty-four events were held at the CTSFW track this spring: meets and practices, some large and some small. This was much more activity than anyone could have predicted at the beginning of the undertaking. The partnership between The Lutheran

Foundation, LSAA, and CTSFW was essential to the completion of this project. Working together, we can accomplish infinitely more than if we go it alone.

The partnership of believers is the real heart of this story. Yes, knowing the need and knowing the history are important. However, without the partnership, the need and the history would not have been enough to make a new running track a reality.

The partnership of individuals, congregations, and CTSFW is needed now as well! We give thanks for the support of donors locally, nationally, and globally. Celebrating 175 years, CTSFW continues the work of preparation and formation of pastors, deaconesses, and church leaders to serve our Lord in your church. You are a part of that work.

If you would like more information about giving opportunities to benefit the next generation, please contact us at [advancement@ctsfw.edu](mailto:advancement@ctsfw.edu) or call us at (877) 287-4338. It is my prayer that you partner with all those near to your heart—your congregation, your church’s school, and CTSFW—to make “always” continue for that next generation 🏃.

*Mr. Lance C. Hoffman  
([Lance.Hoffman@ctsfw.edu](mailto:Lance.Hoffman@ctsfw.edu))  
serves as the Chief Operating  
Officer at Concordia Theological  
Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



**Top:** *The well-used worn out track at CTSFW*

**Above:** *Local athletes compete at a meet on the new track*

**Below, left:** *A drone's view of the newly completed track*

**Below, right:** *The Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III led the dedication of the track*





# EVENTS SCHEDULE

## Mark your calendars or register today!

For more information, please visit our website at [www.ctsfw.edu/Events](http://www.ctsfw.edu/Events) or call (260) 452-2100. Please check the events webpage for current information as events are subject to change.

### SEPTEMBER

#### Opening Service

Tuesday, September 7, 10:00 a.m. in Kramer Chapel



#### Seminary Guild

Tuesday, September 14, 1:00 p.m.

Information: [www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild](http://www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild) or (260) 485-0209

#### Christ Academy: Confirmation Retreat

September 24–26

Information: [www.ctsfw.edu/Confirmation](http://www.ctsfw.edu/Confirmation)

Registration: [ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu](mailto:ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu)

Contact: [ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu](mailto:ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu) or (800) 481-2155

#### Lutheranism & the Classics VI: Beauty

September 30–October 1

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/Classics](http://www.ctsfw.edu/Classics)

Phone: (260) 452-2204

### OCTOBER

#### Seminary Donation Day

Tuesday, October 12, 10:00 a.m. in Kramer Chapel

Information: [www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild](http://www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild) or (260) 485-0209

#### Prayerfully Consider Visit

October 14–16

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/PCV](http://www.ctsfw.edu/PCV)

Contact: [Admission@ctsfw.edu](mailto:Admission@ctsfw.edu) or (800) 481-2155

#### Continuing Education: The Divine Service in the Old Testament

October 18–22

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/CE/Fort-Wayne-IN](http://www.ctsfw.edu/CE/Fort-Wayne-IN)

Contact: [CE@ctsfw.edu](mailto:CE@ctsfw.edu) or (260) 452-2204

#### Culminating Anniversary Event

Sunday, October 24

See ad on next page for more details.

#### The Changeless Word In a Changing World: Post-Pandemic Ministry

Monday, October 5

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/Changeless](http://www.ctsfw.edu/Changeless)

Contact: [LeeAnna.Rondot@ctsfw.edu](mailto:LeeAnna.Rondot@ctsfw.edu) or (260) 452-2204

#### Christ Academy: College

October 29–31

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/CAC](http://www.ctsfw.edu/CAC)

Contact: [ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu](mailto:ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu) or (800) 481-2155

### NOVEMBER

#### Luther Hostel: Here I Stand—Conscience and Confession: 500 Years After the Diet of Worms

November 3–5

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/LutherHostel](http://www.ctsfw.edu/LutherHostel)

Contact: (260) 452-2204

#### Good Shepherd Institute: Christ the Shepherd—Tender, Caring

November 7–9

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/GSI](http://www.ctsfw.edu/GSI)

Phone: (260) 452-2204

#### Organ Recital

Sunday, November 7, 4:30 p.m. in Kramer Chapel



#### All Saints' Choral Vespers

Sunday, November 7, 7:30 p.m. in Kramer Chapel



#### Choral Evening Prayer

Monday, November 8, 5:00 p.m. in Kramer Chapel



#### Hymn Festival

Monday, November 8, 7:30 p.m. in Kramer Chapel



#### Advent Preaching Workshop

Tuesday, November 9, 1:30–8:30 p.m.

Information and registration: [www.ctsfw.edu/PreachingWorkshop](http://www.ctsfw.edu/PreachingWorkshop)

Phone: (260) 452-2204

#### Seminary Guild

Tuesday, November 9, 1:00 p.m.

Information: [www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild](http://www.ctsfw.edu/SemGuild) or (260) 485-0209



Services and lectures will be livestreamed online at [www.ctsfw.edu/DailyChapel](http://www.ctsfw.edu/DailyChapel) or [www.facebook.com/ctsfw](https://www.facebook.com/ctsfw). Please check our events website for the most current information.





**Make Known His Deeds!**

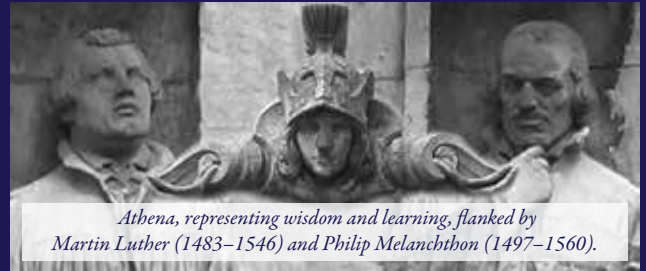
You are invited to join the CTSFW community  
**Sunday, October 24, 2021**  
in the culmination of our 175th Anniversary!

**Special Events Include:**

- Sunday Brunch
- Music Event in Kramer Chapel
- Impact of CTSFW
- Honoring area fieldwork supervisors and congregations

**Additional details to come!**

Please visit [www.ctsfw.edu/175](http://www.ctsfw.edu/175) for more information.



*Athena, representing wisdom and learning, flanked by Martin Luther (1483–1546) and Philip Melancthon (1497–1560).*

**Lutheranism & the Classics VI: Beauty**  
**September 30–October 1, 2021**

This 6th biennial conference celebrates Lutheranism's preoccupation with beauty in the past while contemplating its value for the propagation of the faith to present and future generations.

**Luther and Beauty**—Dr. Mark Mattes

**Beauty and the Incarnation: John Brenz on the Personal Union**—Dr. Christian Preus

**Beauty and the Wittenberg Option**—Dr. E. Christian Kopff

**Martin Luther and the Beauty of the Banquet**—Dr. Alden Smith

For more information and to register, visit [www.ctsfw.edu/Classics](http://www.ctsfw.edu/Classics) or (260) 452-2204.

**The Changeless Word In a Changing World: Post-Pandemic Ministry**

**Monday, October 25, 2021**



Exploring ministry opportunities in the following areas:

- Technology and the church
- Mental and emotional wellness
- Cultural challenges

For more information or to register please visit [www.ctsfw.edu/changeless](http://www.ctsfw.edu/changeless) or contact LeeAnna Rondot at (260) 452-2204 or [LeeAnna.Rondot@ctsfw.edu](mailto:LeeAnna.Rondot@ctsfw.edu).

This single-day conference on the campus of CTSFW is hosted by:



**Good Shepherd Institute**

**22nd Annual Conference**  
**November 7–9, 2021**

***Christ the Shepherd—Tender, Caring***

The 2021 Good Shepherd Institute conference centers on our namesake: Christ, the Good Shepherd. As the world continues to adapt to post-pandemic life and as a cancel culture seeks to dismiss the Church and her witness, we need more than ever to hear the caring voice of the Good Shepherd.

Beginning with Choral Vespers on Sunday evening at 7:30 p.m. and concluding with lunch on Tuesday, the conference will include following plenary sessions:

- *Hear the Word That Christ Has Spoken*—Charles Gieschen
- *Come, O Living Christ, Renew Us*—Todd Peperkorn
- *Christ, Whose Kingdom We Proclaim: Lessons Learned from the Life and Legacy of Carl Schalk (1929–2021)*—Barry Bobb
- *Christ in Every Congregation: Intentional Planning for Worship*—Paul Grime and Kevin Hildebrand

Of course, the conference will include practical sectionals, beautiful chapel services, a Monday late-afternoon organ recital by Steven Wenthe, and the annual hymn festival. For more information and to register, visit [www.ctsfw.edu/GSI](http://www.ctsfw.edu/GSI) or call (260) 452-2204.





# IN THE WORD

# The Body of Christ

Peter J. Brock



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

When we hear the phrase “Body of Christ,” we likely think first of the Church and for good reason. Perhaps, however, our first consideration should not be the Church. Paul makes plain, of course, that the Church *is* the Body of Christ (as in Colossians 1:18), but Paul does not begin with the Church. Rather, he begins with the Lord Jesus Christ. And Christ has a body.

## I. Christ’s Body

**Read Luke 24:36–49.** On Easter evening, Jesus makes Himself present among His gathered disciples and immediately speaks to them His Word of peace. The disciples, however,

thought they saw a ghost rather than the Lord Jesus bodily in their presence. So, Jesus shows them that it is really Him there in their midst, and He does this in at least three different ways. Can you identify them? Why show them His hands and feet instead of His eyes and ears? What does this mean for how we recognize Jesus today and not the devil masquerading as Jesus? Why might it be significant that one of the ways includes a meal? When else does crucified and risen Jesus come bodily to His disciples in the midst of a meal? (See Luke 24:13–35 and John 21:1–14). What does this mean for where we today might expect Jesus to be present with us bodily?

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Jesus showed His disciples that He has a body. It is a body that is present and can be seen and touched. Given the several Easter accounts noted above, it is also a body that is present in the midst of a meal. He is no distant deity. He is the God who comes to us, who is present with us, and who feeds us. Luke’s account continues by recording that Jesus preached in the presence of His disciples on how the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. And now that they have been fulfilled in Christ, repentance and forgiveness of sins must be proclaimed in His name to all nations, in the power of the Father’s promise, the Holy Spirit.

Crucified and risen Jesus continues to come bodily to His gathered people to speak His absolving word of pardon and peace. Like the disciples, we might think this is too good to be true and “disbelieve for joy,” so our gracious Lord is generous in how He comes to us and forgives us. He does this through the same word of Christ crucified preached, through Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and Holy Communion.

**II. The Body of Christ and Holy Baptism**

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–27.** How is it that we are made members of Christ’s body? Noting that the body of Christ consists of many members, how do these members relate to one another? What would happen if one member said, “I am not a part of the body,” or another said, “I have no need of you [other part of the body]”? What does this look like today?

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**Read Romans 6:3–11 and the Fourth Chief Part of Luther’s Small Catechism on “The Sacrament of Holy Baptism.”**

According to Paul in Romans 6, what is the connection between Baptism and Jesus’ body? What is Baptism? How can water do such great things?

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Paul proclaims in his epistles that Baptism makes us members of Christ’s body, members who need all the other members and together are one Body, suffering and rejoicing together. This is so because we are baptized into the death of Christ—His bodily death. Buried with Christ by Baptism into death, we are raised with Him just as He was bodily raised. Here then, we remember what was considered above about Jesus’ body. It can be seen. It can be touched. It is found amidst a meal. All of this then is true of Christ’s Body, the Church. It is neither distant

nor abstract, but present and concrete. Thus, Holy Baptism is water and the Word. To be sure, it is not just plain water, but it *is* the water. It is water that can be seen. It is water that touches. It is a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit who calls, *gathers*, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth to make and keep us members of the Body of Christ in the one true faith.

**III. The Body of Christ and Holy Communion**  
**Read 1 Corinthians 11:17–26 and the Sixth Chief Part of Luther’s Small Catechism on “The Sacrament of the Altar.”**

Why does Paul not commend the Corinthians regarding the Lord’s Supper? What is the Sacrament of the Altar? How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

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Paul reproves the Corinthians regarding the Lord’s Supper because, by dividing themselves and eating apart, they were eating a different supper than the Lord’s Supper. The Smalcald Articles of the Lutheran Confessions therefore state that those who say they want to commune themselves for their own devotion should not be taken seriously, for it is not right “to use the common sacrament of the church for one’s own devotional life and to play with it according to one’s own pleasure apart from God’s Word and outside the church community” (Kolb-Wengert, SA II). The Sacrament of the Altar is the bodily eating and drinking within the present communion of saints along with the words of our Lord. Here we must be a bit careful, for Jesus does not come to us in His Supper simply to be present, but to feed us with Himself. As Dr. Masaki of CTSFW taught me, Jesus did not say on the night when He was betrayed, “Here am I,” but “Take, eat. This is my body.” Jesus is, as Luther felicitously phrases it, “the baker, the waiter, and the supply.” He is present with us in His Supper to be sure, and He is present to feed His gathered and present people with his Body.

**Let us pray:** O God, Your infinite love restores those who err to the right way, seeks the scattered, and preserves those whom You have gathered. Pour Your tender mercy out on Your faithful people, and the grace of unity that, all schisms being ended, Your flock may be gathered to the true Shepherd of His Body, Your Church, and may serve You in all faithfulness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. 🏰

*The Rev. Peter J. Brock (pastorbrock@gmail.com) serves as the Senior Pastor of Saint John Lutheran Church in Decatur, Indiana, as well as the 4th Vice President for the Indiana District of the LCMS.*



# For the Life of the World

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