



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

Summer 2020, Volume Twenty-Four, Number Two



**Marriage as Christ
and His Church**

Gifford A. Grobier

Made for Each Other

Peter J. Scaer

**Singleness in the
Body of Christ**

Andrea L. Schultz

FROM THE PRESIDENT



“It is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18).

We’ve all known these words of the Lord for years, but I suspect that you, as I, have come to understand them in a new and more personal, urgent way these past few months. It is hard to be cut off from our friends and loved ones, from our communities and, especially, our congregations. Isolation and aloneness affect us emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually. God created us to be in relationship to Him, and therefore we are meant to be in fellowship with one another.

Our Lord saw that it was not good for man to be alone and immediately acted. He created a helper fit for the man and thus created marriage to be a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His Church, as Dr. Gifford Grobien discusses in his article. Dr. Peter Scaer further examines how we are made for each other—to serve, love, and care for one another. Andrea Schultz reminds us that those called to the vocation of singleness are integral members of the Body of Christ. Dr. Adam Koontz then explains that, as members of the family of God, we “belong to Him and bear His Name through our Baptism into His only Son, Christ Jesus.” This is Good News, indeed!

I have never been prouder of our CTSFW family than I have these past several months. Our students, staff, and faculty demonstrated great patience and faith in the midst of what were stressful and even disappointing circumstances. Our remarkable faculty and staff made sure our mission was fulfilled as we sent pastors and deaconesses out to serve the Church and its mission. And our careful planning helped us weather an unexpected economic downturn as we faithfully stewarded the resources

that have been entrusted to us. God is faithful and has blessed us mightily.

You have often been in my prayers these past few months. I ask that you also remember your seminaries in your prayers. We have much work ahead to navigate the various challenges we face. And yet we are excited about what the future may bring because we have each other and, even more so, we have Christ. “And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace” (Micah 5:4-5).

May the peace of the Lord be yours as you live out your vocation in the family of God!

In Christ’s service,

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

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



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The Body of Christ is made up of many members, and those brothers and sisters in Christ whom we call family (though we may share little to no blood) come from a variety of backgrounds. Even the singles have many different stories: widowed, divorced, never married, never interested, or desperately interested. Sometimes these stories are shaped by personal choice, but oftentimes we live a role that has been given against our desires rather than welcomed.

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Marriage as Christ and

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’
This mystery is profound....” Ephesians 5:31-32

It turns out, then, that marriage does not teach us about Christ and the Church as much as Christ and the Church picture for us and inform us about marriage. We might say that marriage *reflects* the love that Christ has for His Church.

Paul continues, “... and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” Wait, it refers to Christ and the Church, not to a husband and wife?! Paul’s statement still surprises us, no matter how many times we have read or heard this passage. Imagine the shock of the Ephesians hearing it for the first time, or of anyone hearing it for the first time. “A man shall...hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” What seems so plain, so straightforward between a husband and wife, we are abruptly told truly refers to Christ and His Church.

Yet there it is for us in various places in the New Testament, if we are willing to see it. Just a few verses earlier (25 and 27): “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” Christ “nourishes and cherishes” the Church, His very own flesh, “because we are members of His body” (vv. 29-30).

We are *members* of His body, comparable to limbs and organs, finding our sustenance in Him. We exist now alive as members of His body, apart from which we would have no true life but would wither and die. By His Spirit we are united to Him—in a mysterious way, to be sure, but truly and intimately,

so close that we are considered His own body. Put another way, we cannot be united more closely to Him than we are through faith by His grace of Baptism, promise, and His Body and Blood.

We are united to Him so that we may be made clean and holy, prepared for eternal life in His kingdom. So the angel in Revelation 21:9 exults, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb,” a bride “having the glory of God” (v. 11)! You are of the Church, the definitive Bride, the eternal Bride, the Bride who fulfills everything hoped for in a bride, all due to the love of her Bridegroom, the Lord Himself. Solomon, also, prophesies of the Church in his Song: “You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you” (Song of Songs 4:7). There is no flaw in the

His Church

Gifford A. Grobien



Church; there is no flaw in you because our Lord has covered us, purified us, and sanctified us with His blood.

It turns out, then, that marriage does not teach us about Christ and the Church as much as Christ and the Church picture for us and inform us about marriage. We might say that marriage *reflects* the love that Christ has for His Church.

Notice the grace-filled language of Christ the Bridegroom and His love for

His Church. Neither Paul nor Christ says to husbands, “Live up to this standard, or else!” Nor do they say, “Does your spouse disappoint you? Time to move on!” Paul does call wives to submit and husbands to love, but as a description of the sanctifying work of the Spirit in their lives. There is no “or else” in Paul’s explanation. There is no bar to be met. He simply says, “Here is how Christ has lived for you. As members of His body, so walk this way.”

Above: *Rev. Douglas Christian leads the marriage vows for Rev. Brian Thorson and Deaconess Jennifer (Phillips) Thorson in Kramer Chapel.*

So husbands are given a wife to love, to serve in every way—even unto death—in order to serve, first of all, her sanctification. This is the husband’s first calling, to present the Word of God in his life and his love for his wife, that it overflows daily as an abundant, life-giving word; so that she hears the call away from sin, pride, and death to holiness, spiritual fruits, and love. So that she hears the confession of God made flesh in Christ, taking on our sin, putting it to death on the cross, and rising again for our new life and justification. With this Word she is comforted in sorrow and strengthened with faith, thanksgiving, and joy in all things.


Whatever else we want to say about being a husband (about provision, protection, or what it means to be a man) is second to and follows on this first call to love one’s wife with the Word of God for her sanctification.

As Christ has done for us, the husband does for his wife; as the Church responds to Christ, alive in submission, so the wife responds with life, joy, and submission to her husband. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands” (Eph. 5:22-24). The Church gladly hears, receives, and walks in the way set before her by her Lord Christ, trusting that all He does and says is for her eternal good and salvation. In our imperfect, natural lives, a wife nevertheless trusts her loving husband—who has taken and is taking into account her eternal good—that his love and direction is for her good.

In our imperfect, natural lives, husbands will fail. If their leadership and direction threatens to carry a wife into evil and wickedness, she yet finds refuge in the Church and her eternal bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Through His care and the love of the Church, the couple still works through misunderstandings, forgives each other’s

transgressions, and reconciles in the Spirit. In our imperfect, natural lives, wives too will fail, struggling to trust their husbands, or even turning away in rebellion. Again, the couple finds refuge in the Church and the eternal Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, in whom fear is dispelled, rebellion is forgiven and forgotten through love, brokenness is healed, and love restored.

Marriage is a reflection of Christ’s love for His church, and by the fellowship of the Spirit and grace, it is. Such a reflection is not a burden; it is not a task which has been set upon us, wherein failure would lead to brokenness, separation from the Church, or a fall from grace. The reflection is not a task: it is a gift given. Marriage simply is a reflection of Christ’s love for His Church. The love of a husband for his wife, the union of husband and wife, and the submission of a wife to her husband reflects the self-sacrificing lordship of Jesus, our unity with Him, and our joyful, receptive submission to Him in all things.

Where our marriages fall short, there is no fear, for Christ is our Bridegroom! He loves and reconciles us. He sanctifies us and makes us pure and spotless. Where our marriages are but dim reflections, there is no fear, for the perfect, enduring marriage feast of the Lamb is already at hand for us in the Church. So we can embrace, without fear, without worry of falling short, with great confidence in forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration, time and time again, the marriages God has granted us in this life, till death do us part. We have this joy in natural marriage for a time, until we are perfected in the eternal marriage feast as the Church with her eternal Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. 

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Made for Each Other

Peter J. Scaer



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

We were made for one another. Adam was created from the dust of the earth and Eve from Adam's side. In God's wonderful math, one and one made one, and then multiplied into sons and daughters. Is there any greater blessing than family? When it all comes together, a house becomes a home, teeming with life. If God blesses us, then we may add into the equations grandmas and grandpas, aunts and uncles, and cousins too. It's a social network of the best kind. For many of us, the coronavirus has only underlined this truth, as we spend time at home with loved ones or we call those whom we can no longer see face to face.



To be sure, no man is an island. That is the essence of hell—to be alone, left out, and isolated. We have seen such despair depicted in movies and on TV. Could there be any greater sadness than to be without the presence and love of others? God Himself knew that it was not good for Adam to be alone. Though Adam had everything he could ever want or need, he had nothing if he had not Eve.

We worship a God who is one, but also three in one. We confess the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There was never a time when God was alone. Eternally, the Father loved His Son and the Son loved His father, and from that love the Holy Spirit eternally proceeded. As a reflection of this love, so did God create us, a man and a woman, and from that love children proceed, giving us a network of relationships. Whenever we see a family, we are reminded of God's great love and of His essence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

That does not mean that families are always like the Garden of Eden. There are thorns and thistles now. Sin infects us all. So often men do not want to live up to their responsibilities, and women wish for more. And at every level we are infected by sin, which makes us selfish. But for that, there is forgiveness. We love one another not because the other is always loveable, but because Christ first loved us and still does.

When there is strife in the home, when we are tempted to assert our rights, we do well to think back at the wonder of

Yes, many have made mistakes or have been led astray in this fallen world. Yet, in Christ, there is hope. While the sun shines, we work and rebuild. We are reminded about the great gifts God has given us. This is not about what I desire, or what you want. Love does not think that way. Love strives for the other—husband for his wife, a wife for her husband. Love is patient and kind, not irritable or resentful. Love bears all things, believes all things, endures all things. Do our own lives reflect such love? Not as often as we would like.

creation. We are created equal but we are not the same. We each bring something special to the table of life. A child finds nourishment, comfort, and warmth in his mother. In the father, a child knows strength and boldness. A mother holds a child closely, with tenderness born of a relationship that began within the mother's body. A father joyfully tosses a youngster into the air. The truth is, we need each other. Men and women do together what we could never do alone.

So it is, every child is born into the world in the presence of his/her mother. That is the very nature of things. God gave us marriage to make sure, as well as

possible, to bring the child's father into the life of the family. In the best of all cases, according to God's good design, a child does best with mom and dad, a mother and a father.

To be sure, we live in a broken world. Having fallen into sin, we have made things more difficult than they need to be. We are all children of Adam and Eve, but we remember the strife between Cain and Abel. Things are not easy. We know all about the divorce rates and children who grow up without dads. Too often this is a result of our own bad choices. But we need not lose hope. Our God is a God of restoration.

Rather than demolish, we rebuild. Rather than thirst in the desert, we return to the pure waters of God's Word, to the renewal of our Baptism. We pray together, "Our Father," and we remember that, whatever happens, we are members of God's family. Having been forgiven, we go about the business of forgiveness and restoration. If we feel unloved, we remember that as members of the Church, we are the very Bride of Christ, the one who laid down His life for us, that we might live forever.

Yes, many have made mistakes or have been led astray in this fallen world. Yet, in Christ, there is hope. While the sun shines, we work and rebuild. We are reminded about the great gifts God has given us. This is not about what I desire, or what you want. Love does not think that way. Love strives for the other—husband for his wife, a wife for



her husband. Love is patient and kind, not irritable or resentful. Love bears all things, believes all things, endures all things. Do our own lives reflect such love? Not as often as we would like. Still, love remains, for Christ’s love is persistent among us. He continues to speak tenderly to us, to forgive us, to cleanse and nourish us. Our Lord calls us to be who we already are, as members of His dear and heavenly family.

Yes, we live in a fallen world, but there is no reason we cannot return to the Lord and remember His love. Too many hearts have been broken, too many lives have been shattered. But the Lord has given us this time for mercy and mending. This means that we teach our children in the ways of wisdom. That we honor marriage, even as we are thankful for it. That we teach our children to honor marriage, even when we have gone astray. There is no need for our children to repeat the mistakes that we have made. We love one another not simply because the other person is always good or meets our every need, but because Christ has loved us, showered mercy on us, and given His all. Instead of focusing on what others have or haven’t done, we recall our own sin and we keep our eyes on Christ, who has had mercy on us all.

Yes, of all our earthly blessings, there is no greater than family. There is no more wonderful thing for a child than to grow up cherished by his mother and made safe by his father. Satan, we know,

What, now, do we do? If we have made mistakes, we acknowledge them. That is the great thing about being a Lutheran, about being a Christian. We never need to justify ourselves. That would never work. Instead, we confess and repent. And then we move forward. We teach our children the wisdom of Solomon, we read and teach them the Proverbs. Having been loved, we love, and having been forgiven, we forgive. Then we step back and consider all the good that we have.

is also sowing weeds among the wheat, always planting resentment, jealousy, and discord into our gardens. Family life is not for the faint of heart. It can be messy, sometimes even tragic. Nevertheless, it is God’s good gift still, as is marriage, which forms the family’s foundation.

What, now, do we do? If we have made mistakes, we acknowledge them. That is the great thing about being a Lutheran, about being a Christian. We never need to justify ourselves. That would never work. Instead, we confess and repent. And then we move forward. We teach our children the wisdom of Solomon, we read and teach them the Proverbs. Having been loved, we love, and having been forgiven, we forgive.

Then we step back and consider all the good that we have.

God never meant for us to be lonely. Those who are estranged from their parents can call upon God as their Father, and their fellow Christians as brothers and sisters. In Christ, we are never truly alone. He is our Emanuel, God with us. And in our earthly families we reflect the very love of God. There is no greater privilege to be called a father, a mother, a son, or a daughter. In the family, we have a place of belonging, a place to call home.

To be sure, we live in a world where power, prestige, and money are pursued. Yet there are deeper and more lasting treasures. In a world that has redefined and undefined marriage, we know the greater truth. As men and women, we were created for each other, by a God who loves us dearly. Now is not the time to abandon the truth of our creation, to forget the family, even what it means to be male and female. Now is the time to rejoice that we have been created in God’s image, made for each other, given to love one another. This love, embodied in our love for the family, will be a light in the darkness, a beacon in a world that is so confused. 🏰

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Singleness in the

Andrea L. Schultz



Above: Andrea working on updating CTSFW's event listings and online calendar.

In the middle of every magazine issue themed around the topic of family is the obligatory “single” article. For good reason: the Body of Christ is made up of many members, and those brothers and sisters in Christ whom we call family (though we may share little to no blood) come from a variety of backgrounds. Even the singles have many different stories: widowed, divorced, never married, never interested, or desperately interested. Sometimes these stories are shaped by personal choice, but oftentimes we live a role that has been given against our desires rather than welcomed.

Body of Christ

To comfort those who mourn the fact that they have no spouse, we often speak of the gift of singleness. The words are well meant, driven by a compassionate desire to console and reassure, and every single time I have to suppress the passive-aggressive urge to ask if it comes with a gift receipt for easy return. Loneliness is a hard companion. It also isn't the only one. Not all mourn their unmarried state; celibacy has been given to them and they are content.

We see scriptural validation for both feelings reflected in the Bible. In 1 Corinthians 7:8, Paul exhorts, "to the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am." Paul clearly liked being single ("I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God," verse 7) but others didn't. Naomi bitterly mourned the loss of her husband and sons. Jephthah's daughter, condemned to death for her father's tragic vow, took to the mountains in preparation and specifically "wept for her virginity" (Judges 11:38).

However, emotion isn't a faithful judge of reality, especially for sinners. Too often we mourn what we should celebrate and rejoice when we should weep. But we do have this reassurance: though the heart knows its own bitterness, God knows every heart. No one on earth may be able to understand your deepest feelings of either abandonment or contentment—or that strange pendulum swing between both—but your heavenly Father, who loves His dear children, sees even deeper into your heart than you can. And He does not speak platitudes; He speaks in the language of reality.

Though the Bible does talk at length about marriage—from who we are

as the Bride of Christ to the practical laws established in the Old Testament that dealt with marriage, how to care for widows, and expectations for the unmarried—not one of its 66 books uses the word "singleness." In the ESV, the word "single" appears in the context of marriage only twice: in Exodus 21:3, in terms of a law concerning slaves, and then in 1 Corinthians 7 as quoted above. "Single" more often appears as a description: single hours and days of judgment, or single members of the Body of Christ. Jesus, the Bridegroom of the Church, speaks on the subject only once, after His disciples declare that it is better not to marry. "But he said to them, 'Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given ... Let the one who is able to receive this receive it'" (Matt. 19:11-12).

Singleness is not an identity. It is a description of a state of being, and perhaps a temporary one. But is it a gift?

Certainly there are gifts that come with singleness. Time. Money. Choices. You have more choices about where and how you spend both. There are also fewer distractions as well as opportunities to sin against our closest neighbors, as the Apostle Paul lays out in 1 Corinthians 7:28, 32-35:

Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that ... I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about

Below: Andrea lending a hand with a diaper drive for Shepherd's Hand, a community outreach organization in Fort Wayne.



So is singleness itself a gift? Yes...but not necessarily to you. The gift of singleness is not a gift to the single but a gift given to the Church through the single person. You are the gift. Your singleness may be either a cross to bear or a state to celebrate, but whether in sorrow or joy you cannot help but be given more fully to the Church. Singles are a gift from the Lord.

the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

So is singleness itself a gift? Yes... but not necessarily to you. The gift of singleness is not a gift to the single but a gift given to the Church through the single person. *You* are the gift. Your singleness may be either a cross to bear or a state to celebrate, but whether in sorrow or joy, you cannot help but be given more fully to the Church. Singles are a gift from the Lord.


When a man is called to serve a woman as her husband and a woman to a man as his wife, they receive special, strict expectations about their priorities: the woman must submit to her husband, who must lay down his life for his wife (Eph. 5). When my father served as a missionary in Southeast Asia, he eventually began helping to train Cambodian pastors, work that was both satisfying and fulfilling; work he shortly had to leave to serve my mother and me. My two older siblings had graduated high school and returned to America, and my mother could not stand another year that far from her children. As a husband and father, his decision was undoubtedly pleasing to the Lord. But the Church lost him as a teacher to the Cambodians. Certainly, through his and my mother's dedication, they have raised up three faithful members of the Church (two of whom are now bringing up their own families in Christ), but many of their skills and talents had to be dedicated to their children and to each other.

As a single person, I do not have to make those choices. I serve the Church here at Concordia Theological Seminary, managing our online presence and collecting and writing pieces to help pass on learning to the Church while connecting those outside our walls with

the faculty and students within them—work I would not be doing if I was married, and especially if I had children. And what of the work of the ancient Church: of Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, or Paul? Would he have traveled as he did? Risked his life on his many dangerous mission trips? What of Christ?

Yet even we who are single are not single. Christ wasn't single and neither are we: we are His Bride. Nor are we even single members in the Body of Christ: "But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be?" (1 Cor. 12:18-19).

The Church is our family in a way that singles understand implicitly. Even without the normal ties that bind, we are brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, parents, friends, and children. We don't share blood—and yet we share the only blood that matters. Baptized into the Church, the name of the Triune God written on our foreheads identifies whose family we belong to as we stand with the Lamb (Rev. 14). Biologically we share grandparents from long ago—Adam and Eve and later Noah and his wife—but we are tied most closely and strongly by the blood given and shed on the cross; the same Body and Blood given in, with, and under bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

Single or married, burdened or uplifted, here is the reality: Christ knows your troubles and your joys and the gifts He has specifically given to you because you are single—and the gift he has given to the Church through your singleness. We need not fear what is only a description. We are Christ's. "And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother'" (Mark 3:34-35). 

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Below: *Andrea (front row, second from left) sings with Synod congregation choir members at the Opening Divine Service of the 67th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.*



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In God's Family

Adam C. Koontz

When Abram and Sarai were struggling to start a family, the Lord told them their family's existence would depend on His promise. Sarai laughed at this, but the Lord would laugh last, and the child He had promised would be called Isaac, which means "He laughs" (Gen. 21:3). Family is God's gift, and the greatest gift is being in God's family.

Through Abram's family, all the families of the earth would be blessed one day. When that day came, the one who was born to Mary was not only her son, He was also "the son of Abraham," the fulfillment of everything promised to Abraham and to so many others through the ages (Matt. 1:1). Jesus shares that name "son of Abraham" with us who, like our father Abraham, believe in the Lord and His promises. But Jesus is also the "son of David," who inherited all the promises God made to strengthen and protect the house of David (Matt. 1:1). Throughout the ages, God's people, His family, have depended on His promises for everything they have and are.

Being in God's family is nobody's achievement. Jesus came into the world so that we might become the children of God. Without Jesus we have no claim on our heavenly Father. In His love, Jesus shows us His Father and our Father. Our birth into God's family is "of water and the Spirit" in Holy Baptism (John 3:5). That birth "from above" is a birth due to God's work in Christ and the Spirit's work through His Word upon us (v. 3). We are God's children, not His employees, so we are in His family, His household, by His will and by His love alone.

Since it's God's family we are in, our lives aren't determined by anyone

else's rules. God's family cannot be run by the say-so of anyone other than the Father of the household. Not even the most venerable traditions of men can naysay what the Father says in His Word. The inerrant Scriptures are the Father's teaching, inspired by His Spirit, and what He says is what goes.

That's why the Church is not free to change either her teaching or her way of life. We cannot change our teachings because the Father has not changed His teachings. All His words prove true, and He is a mighty fortress (Psalm 46). If we should change our teachings, we will not have changed His mind but only our fickle hearts. The Church's teachings don't change, *not* because we are against change per se or are just grumpy. The Church's teachings don't change because her gracious Father does not change, as James said in James 1:17.

Nor may we change how we live in our Father's house or in His world, however much that world wants to change. We are bound to our Father's directions for how we deal with our emotions, run our businesses, say our prayers, and navigate our relationships. We live within His guidance for our marriages, for our pastors, and for our children because we know our Father's teaching strengthens us as meat and milk strengthen us. His family is reinvigorated now and prepared for

the future through His Word alone and always.

Belonging to His family has these responsibilities and these joys: walking in His truth, growing daily in His strength, finding His Word to prove truer than every word of men, finding His Christ to be our gracious Brother, Friend, and Savior. We stake our lives on our Father's Word because He staked His Son's life to His Word, and the Son did what the Father commanded: crucified for our sins and raised from the dead for our justification (Rom. 4:25). Since the Father has shown such glorious love to us in His Son, what would we not give up for the sake of such a loving family, the family of God? What else is worth comparing to the joy and the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus?

You are God's family, so you belong to Him and bear His Name through your Baptism into His only Son, Christ Jesus. Remain in His family, and at the last you'll find your Brother's words prove true about what your Father's heart intends for you: "Come, o blessed of My Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" (Matt. 25:34) All this is yours, child of God. 🏡

The Rev. Dr. Adam C. Koontz (Adam.Koontz@ctsfw.edu) serves as Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology and Director of Field Education at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. All Scripture verses in this article are Dr. Koontz's translations.



Seminary Announces Spring Placements

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, announces its Spring 2020 deaconess internships, vicarage assignments, deaconess placements, and calls to the pastoral ministry.

Deaconess Internships April 29, 2020

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

ANNA C. BARGER
Ephphatha Lutheran Mission
Society
Hartland, Michigan
Michigan District

AMANDA M. KORTHASE
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Indiana District

EMILYANN P. POOL
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Michigan District

Deaconess Placements April 29, 2020

TAYLOR E. BROWN-FICKENSCHER
The Texas District Board Of Mission
Administration - Serving Cristo
El Salvador Lutheran Mission
Del Rio, Texas
Texas District

MIKA A. PATRON
Grace Lutheran Church
Auburn, Michigan
Michigan District

Vicarage Assignments April 29, 2020

EMMETT A. BARTENS
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Cedar Falls, Iowa
Iowa District East

JOHN C. BASELEY
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Imperial, Nebraska
Nebraska District

ADAM P. BAUMANN
Trinity Lutheran Church
Hampton, Iowa
Iowa District East

TIMOTHY D. BENZINGER
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Columbia City, Indiana
Indiana District

JOSHUA J. BRANDMAHL
Trinity Lutheran Church and School
Reese, Michigan
Michigan District

DANE G. BREITUNG
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
Laramie, Wyoming
Wyoming District

MATTHEW J. CHRISTIAN
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Muncie, Indiana
Indiana District

BRENNICK T. CHRISTIANSEN
Risen Savior Lutheran Church
Basehor, Kansas
Kansas District

RAYMOND B. COX
Memorial Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas
Texas District

MARK K. DE YOUNG
Ascension Lutheran Church
Huntsville, Alabama
Southern District

JOHN M. DOLDE
Zion Lutheran Church
Painesville, Ohio
Ohio District

JOSHUA P. DUB
St. James Lutheran Church
and School
Howard Lake, Minnesota
Minnesota South District

MATTHEW D. GOEHRING
St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Laurel, Montana
Montana District

DANIEL L. GRAY
St. Thomas Lutheran Church
Ohio City, Ohio
Ohio District

BRENDAN G. HARRIS
Immanuel Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Terre Haute, Indiana
Indiana District

SILAS M. HASSELBROOK
First Trinity Lutheran Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
English District

NATHANIEL W. KONKEL
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Moline, Illinois
Central Illinois District

CHASE K. LEFORT
Messiah Lutheran Church
Danville, California
English District

ANTHONY B. MANDILE IV
Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
English District

BENJAMIN W. MCCRIMMON
St. John Lutheran Church
Wheaton, Illinois
Northern Illinois District

AUSTIN D. MEIER
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Columbus, Ohio
Ohio District

KYLE S. MULLINS
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Martinsville, Indiana
Indiana District

KYLE P. NELSON
Catalina Lutheran Church
Tucson, Arizona
English District

CHARLES E. NEMEC
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Highland, Indiana
Indiana District

JORDAN R. PEISER
Trinity Lutheran Church
Norman, Oklahoma
Oklahoma District

AARON A. SCHULTZ
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Fort Wayne, Indiana
English District

C. VINCENT SHEMWELL
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Gresham, Oregon
Northwest District

ERIC D. SOUER
Faith Lutheran Church
Green Bay, Wisconsin
North Wisconsin District

TIMOTHY D. STEELE II
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Lincoln, Nebraska
Nebraska District

ETHAN E. STOPPENHAGEN
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Raleigh, North Carolina
Southeastern District

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

CHRISTOPHER M. WALTERS
Lutheran Life Villages
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Indiana District

AARON N. WENDORFF
Pella Lutheran Church
Waupun, Wisconsin
South Wisconsin District

NATHAN C. WIDENER
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Indiana District

JASON B. ZOSKE
Shepherd of the City
Lutheran Church
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Indiana District

Pastoral Calls

April 29, 2020

JAKOB A. ANDRZEJEWSKI
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Royal Oak, Michigan
Michigan District

CHRISTOPHER O. ANTONETTI
St. Paul's Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Lockport, Illinois
Northern Illinois District

TYLER R. ARENDS
Trinity Lutheran Church
Guymon, Oklahoma
Oklahoma District

ALBERT J. BADER
St. Johns Lutheran Church
Ogallala, Nebraska
Nebraska District

PATRICK M. BALDWIN
Christ Lutheran Church
Rawlins, Wyoming
Wyoming District

NORLYN D. BARTENS
Grace Lutheran Church
Neligh, Nebraska
Nebraska District

DANIEL S. BROADDUS
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Edgerton, Ohio
Ohio District

LYLE E. BUETTNER
St. Paul Lutheran Church
New Athens, Illinois

Trinity Lutheran Church
Darmstadt, Illinois
Southern Illinois District

JON C. CARPENTER
St. John Lutheran Church
Massillon, Ohio
SELC District

JARED A. COOKSEY
St. John's First Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Bridgeton, New Jersey
New Jersey District

SIMEON J. CORNWELL
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Spring Lake, Michigan
Michigan District

JONAH J. DOMENICHELLI
Risen Savior Lutheran Church
Tea, South Dakota
South Dakota District

KEITH E. EMSHOFF
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran
Church
Ellsworth, Kansas
Kansas District

ROBERT D. ETHERIDGE
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
of Northbrook
Northbrook, Illinois
Northern Illinois District

DANIEL P. FICKENSCHER
The Texas District Board Of
Mission Administration
Austin, Texas
Texas District

SCOTT R. HEDTKE
Promise Lutheran Church
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Indiana District

JEFFREY M. KAZMIERSKI
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
North Wisconsin District

DAVID T. KEATING
St. John Lutheran Church
Curtis, Nebraska
Nebraska District

ANDREW P. KELLER
St. James Lutheran Church
Reynolds, Indiana
Indiana District

MARK J. KRANZ
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Excelsior Springs, Missouri
Missouri District

KURT G. LASKOWSKY
First English Lutheran Church
Centerville, South Dakota

Zion Lutheran Church
Hurley, South Dakota
South Dakota District

TIMOTHY W. MAGILL
St. John's Lutheran Church
Villard, Minnesota

Trinity Lutheran Church
Grove Lake, Minnesota
Minnesota North District

GINO R. MARCHETTI II
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Warsaw, Indiana
Indiana District

MARK T. MATHENY
Hosanna Lutheran Church
Columbia Station, Ohio
Ohio District

JOSEPH M. MCCALLEY
Trinity Lutheran Church
Columbia, Missouri
Missouri District

SAWYER A. MEYERS
Missionary-at-large of the
Mid-South District - LCMS
Cordova, Tennessee
Mid-South District

ZACHARY R. OEDEWALDT
Zion Lutheran Church
Decatur, Indiana
Indiana District

JONATHAN T. OLSON
Hope Lutheran Church
Aurora, Colorado
Rocky Mountain District

JOSHUA S. REBER
Trinity Lutheran Church
Clear Lake, Minnesota

Faith Lutheran Church
Saint Cloud, Minnesota
Minnesota North District

BROCK W. SCHMELING
Trinity Lutheran Church
Great Bend, North Dakota

Peace Lutheran Church
Barney, North Dakota
North Dakota District

DANIEL M. SCHUETZ
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Maywood, New Jersey
New Jersey District

TIMOTHY J. SHERIDAN
St. Luke Lutheran Church
Harrison, Michigan
Michigan District

GRANT A. SORENSON
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Madison, Wisconsin
South Wisconsin District

TITUS A. UTECHT
Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church
Sherman Oaks, California
English District

THOMAS C. VAN HEMERT
St. John Lutheran Church
Center Point, Iowa
Iowa District East

JAY R. WEIDEMAN
Faith Lutheran Church
Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Fergus Falls, Minnesota
Minnesota North District

NATHAN J. WILLE
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Clinton, Iowa
Iowa District East

ISAAC H. WIRTZ
Mount Olive Lutheran Church
Tucson, Arizona
English District

BRETT P. WITMER
Bethel Lutheran Church
Sutherland, Iowa
Iowa District West

JUSTIN E. WOODSIDE
Bethel Lutheran Church
Bismarck, North Dakota

Shepherd of the Valley
Lutheran Church
Bismarck, North Dakota
North Dakota District

CTSFW Upcoming Events

JULY



VIRTUAL VISITS NOW AVAILABLE!

Virtual Prayerfully Consider Visit

Choose July 11 or July 20

Information and registration: www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

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

Organist & Pianist Workshop

NEW DATE! July 27-31

Updated
and discounted!

Registration deadline: July 20, 2020

Information and registration: www.ctsfw.edu/MusicWorkshops

Contact: Music@ctsfw.edu or (260) 452-2224



**Mark your calendars
and register today!**

For more information, please visit our
website at www.ctsfw.edu/Events
or call (260) 452-2100.

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER



Opening Service of 175th Academic Year

Tuesday, September 8, 10:00 a.m. in Kramer Chapel

Seminary Guild

Tuesday, September 15, 1:00 p.m. in Luther Hall

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

Christ Academy: Confirmation Retreat

October 2-4

Information: www.ctsfw.edu/Confirmation

Register: ChristAcademy@ctsfw.edu or (800) 481-2155

Seminary Donation Day

Tuesday, October 13, 9:00 a.m. in the Student Commons

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

Prayerfully Consider Visit

October 15-17

Information and registration: www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

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

Christ Academy: College

October 30-November 1

Register: www.ctsfw.edu/College

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

Continuing Education 2020 Opportunities

June 30–July 2

Anaheim, California

Prof. John Pless

*Letters from a Lonely Lutheran:
Confidence and Joy Under the Cross*

July 6–10

Grass Valley, California

Dr. Jeffrey Pulse

*The Joseph Narratives: A Tale of
Two Brothers in Genesis 37–50*

July 7–9

Westminster, Massachusetts

Prof. John Pless

*Using the Catechism in the
Congregation*

July 13–15

Riverton, Utah

Dr. William Weinrich

*Sacramental Theology in the
Gospel of John*

July 27–29

Nashville, Tennessee

Dr. Detlev Schulz

Theological Anthropology

August 3–5

Farmville, Virginia

Dr. Reed Lessing

Exodus: "Let My People Go!"

August 3–7

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dr. Naomichi Masaki

Luther's Great Galatian Lectures

August 3–7

Flathead Lake, Montana

Dr. Joel Bierman

*Christian Americans...or American
Christians*

August 10–14

Council Bluffs, Iowa

Dr. Peter Scaer

Right to Life Issues

August 17–21

Denver, Colorado

Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes

*Johann Gerhard on Exegesis, Study,
and Preaching*



175th Anniversary Events Schedule

September 2020

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

Opening Service

October 2020

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Seminary Guild Donation Day

Sunday, October 18, 2020

Special 175th Music and/or Lecture Series

November 2020

November 4-6, 2020

Luther Hostel

November 8-10, 2020

Good Shepherd Institute

January 2021

Sunday, January 17, 2021

Special 175th Music and/or Lecture Series

January 19-22, 2021

Symposia

April 2021

Sunday, April 25, 2021

Special 175th Music and/or Lecture Series

April 26-27, 2021

Placement and Call Services

May 2021

Friday, May 21, 2021

Commencement

September 2021

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Opening Service

October 2021

Sunday, October 24, 2021

Culminating Anniversary Event

**For more information, please visit
our website at www.ctsfw.edu/Events
or call (260) 452-2100.**

**Please note that information is subject to change. Check our
website at www.ctsfw.edu/CE for the most current information.**

ADDITIONAL CLASS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To Register by Phone with Credit Card:

Contact LeeAnna Rondot at (260) 452-2204.

To Register Online:

Go to www.ctsfw.edu/CE and select the site for which you'd like to register.

Additional Information about Individual Classes

(Including Accommodations):

Contact the site coordinator listed on each site's webpage.

To Find Additional Continuing Education Classes:

Visit our website at www.ctsfw.edu/CE.

To Inquire about Adding Continuing Education Opportunities:

Kara Mertz

Administrative Assistant, Continuing Education

Email: CE@ctsfw.edu

Phone: (260) 452-2103

Dr. Jeffrey Pulse

Director of Continuing Education

Email: Jeffrey.Pulse@ctsfw.edu

Phone: (260) 452-2273

Seminary Celebrates Close of Academic Year



The 174th academic year at Concordia Theological Seminary came to a close on May 22, 2020. The Rev. Martin E. Keller, father of graduate and pastor-elect Andrew Keller, served as preacher for Baccalaureate Matins at 10 a.m. The Rev. Thomas L. Olson, father of graduate and pastor-elect Jonathan Olson, addressed the virtual audience at Graduation Exercises at 4 p.m. In addition to the awarding of academic degrees, several special honors were conferred:

Miles Christi Award

Created to recognize Lutheran laymen and laywomen who have significantly contributed to some field of human endeavor, displaying the characteristics of good soldiers of Jesus Christ, this year the faculty of CTSFW chose to honor three couples:

Jack and Diana Barich Alta Loma, California

Mr. and Mrs. Barich met at Christ Lutheran Church in La Mesa, California; they have been married for 47 years and been active members of their home church, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Rancho Cucamonga, throughout their lives. Mr. Barich worked in management at Macy's while Mrs. Barich served as a highway and water engineer for the State of California. Diana now cares for the daily needs of Jack, who has Alzheimer's.

They have been faithful stewards of the gifts that God has provided to them, compassionate to the less fortunate, intentionally supportive of pastors and church workers, and generous to their church and to Lutheran higher education. Their financial gifts have supported the Seminary's general fund, the library project, and initiated The Jack and Diana Barich Endowment Fund and The Rev. James Kramer Endowment Fund.

Dennis and Ann Ross Wichita, Kansas

Born and raised in rural Nebraska, both Dr. and Mrs. Ross demonstrate a strong work ethic and commitment to service; Ann is a nurse and Dennis a specialist in nephrology. Their exemplary service to the physical needs of society and their deep love for the Holy Scriptures have been obvious throughout their lives.

Their particular commitment to this Seminary's mission began at CTSFW's Lutheran Hostel, where they came away inspired by the teachings of the professors and with the renewed realization that the thorough training of men for the pastoral ministry is critical for the present and future of Christianity. As a result, they generously support our current operations. They established a Student Aid Endowment as well as the Ross Rare Book Room in the lower level of Kroemer Library, which preserves books dating from the very advent of the printing press to the recent contents of this Seminary's archives. Dr. Ross has also served with distinction for a number of years on our Board of Regents, freely giving of his insight and leadership.

Timothy and Janet Sheldon Moatsville, West Virginia

The Sheldon's concern for pastoral training goes back to their college days, when they graduated from Concordia University Ann Arbor in 1980, after which Timothy came to the Seminary. Though respected by the faculty and his classmates (several of whom are themselves now on the faculty), Timothy chose to pursue a career in the hospitality industry in 1985, working his way up the ladder in Fort Wayne. He now serves as President of the Caribbean and Latin American Group at Marriott International, overseeing 260 hotels with 55,000 rooms across 21 brands in 33 countries.

Janet's parents were instrumental in establishing an LCMS mission congregation in Clarksburg, West Virginia, which was received as a congregation of the Missouri Synod on October 6, 2019. Both she and Timothy are active members of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clarksburg and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Davie, Florida. Timothy served on the LCMS Foundation Board of Trustees, and together he and Janet established and funded an endowment honoring their parents: The Mr. and Mrs. Ernest L. Sheldon and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence E. Liske Student Aid Endowment Fund.

Alumnus of the Year

Established by the CTSFW Board of Regents, this award honors a graduate who has distinguished himself as a faithful shepherd while also strengthening his alma mater by recruiting, publicizing, and supporting the Seminary's mission.

Rev. Peter C. Bender

CTSFW class of 1987
Peace Lutheran Church and Academy
Sussex, Wisconsin

Peter Bender has served as minister of Peace Lutheran in Sussex, Wisconsin, since 1991, where he also founded and directed the Concordia Catechetical Academy. He is the general editor of the

Lutheran Catechetical series and author of a number of volumes in the series. In 1995, he led his congregation in forming Peace Lutheran Academy, a classical elementary school that also fosters a unique culture of catechesis and prayer in the congregation.

Rev. Bender served on the Agenda Committee for the *Lutheran Service Book*, focusing on the rites of Holy Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, and Guidelines for Pastoral Examination of Catechumens, and the *Lutheran Service Book: Pastoral Care Companion*. He is a frequent guest on Issues, Etc., a presenter at pastors' conferences in the United States and Scandinavia, and has taught at our sister seminaries in Kenya, Ghana, and Nigeria as a Lutheran catechesis lecturer for the Synod's Office of International Missions. Five of his Nigerian students are now pastors doing advanced studies at CTSFW with the support of his congregation and others. He has served on the Synod's Board for National Missions since 2016 and as an adjunct professor for catechetics in the CTSFW Deaconess Program.

**Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa
Rev. Dr. Larry M. Vogel**

The Rev. Dr. Larry M. Vogel earned his BS in Education from Concordia College in Seward, Nebraska, in 1975, and his MDiv from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1981. His service in the ministerium of the LCMS spans nearly three decades of parish ministry, including time as a worker-priest teacher on the Rosebud Lakota Sioux reservation, as a missionary pastor in New York City, and as pastor of Martin Luther Chapel and School in Pennsauken, New Jersey. Since 2009, Dr. Vogel has served as the Associate Executive Director of the

Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).

In addition to his extensive writing and travel for the CTCR, he has written a wide variety of published works: biblical plays for children, sermons, book reviews, theological articles, and chapters in books. He also provided leadership as a member of the drafting committee for *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017 edition). He is currently completing his PhD at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, writing his dissertation on the implications of changing demographics for ministry in the LCMS.

**Doctor of Divinity Honoris Causa
Rev. Dr. Andrew K. Pfeiffer**

The Rev. Dr. Andrew K. Pfeiffer graduated from Luther Seminary in North Adelaide, South Australia (SA), in 1983 and was ordained into the Holy Ministry at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Moorook, SA. He served there for one year before being called to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hampstead, SA, where he served from 1984 to 1989.

Since completing a Master of Sacred Theology degree at CTSFW in 1991, he has served as professor at the Luther Seminary and Australian Lutheran College in North Adelaide, SA. His duties included service as the Director of Field Education, the Head of the School of Pastoral Education, and the Coordinator of Vicarage.

In 2002, Dr. Pfeiffer earned his PhD in Missiology from CTSFW, writing a dissertation on "The Catechumenate in Lutheran Missiology." He is also a widely respected lecturer and writer in the Lutheran Church of Australia, where he has served as the Assistant Bishop since 2015.

The Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. concluded graduation exercises with a word of thanks. "Allow me to speak a special word of commendation for the faculty and staff of Concordia Theological Seminary, who have helped bring our many 2020 graduates across the finish line. In the extraordinary circumstances of these past months, they have served in exemplary ways for which I, and all of our graduates, are profoundly grateful. Dear colleagues: thank you." Dr. Rast then invited all 2020 graduates to the 2021 commencement, to join in a public recognition of their degree conferral plus individual hooding.

"In the meantime," he continued, "we pray for the Lord's deliverance from this virus, and we look forward to a more normal next academic year, our 175th academic year, which we will celebrate under the theme, 'Make Known His Deeds.'

"And now, as President of Concordia Theological Seminary, I hereby declare that the 174th academic year has come to a close. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." 🏴‍☠️

Opposite page: *President Lawrence R. Rast welcomes the online audience to the 2020 Graduation Exercises.*

- Below left to right:**
1. *Jack and Diana Barich*
 2. *Dennis and Ann Ross*
 3. *Timothy and Janet Sheldon*
 4. *Rev. Peter C. Bender*
 5. *Rev. Dr. Larry M. Vogel*
 6. *Rev. Dr. Andrew K. Pfeiffer*



Meet Second-Year Stu



I do appreciate the high liturgy of a Lutheran church service. I would love to be at a church that appreciates it as well. Having a background in education, I would also love to end up at a church that has an associated Lutheran school. My family and I love social events involving people of the church! Be it a crawfish boil, a Super Bowl party, a darts tournament, or a simple church potluck, whatever it takes to bring the church community together, we're all for it!

Please share about yourself.

I was born and raised in a small farming community in California's Central Valley. I attended Zion Lutheran Church and School (K-8) in Terra Bella. Upon graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Go Huskers!), I took a job as a 5th grade teacher at a Lutheran School in New Orleans. There I met and married the lovely southern belle, Katherine Anne Sovik. She and I ended up in Alexandria, Virginia, where I taught at Immanuel Lutheran Classical. Katie and I have four rambunctious but lovely boys: Canon (7), Benjamin (5), Samuel (3), and Augustine (1).

What is your home congregation?

My current home congregation is Immanuel Lutheran (Proctor Christopher Esget) in Alexandria, Virginia, just outside D.C. An amazing church, pastor, and people! But I would be remiss if I did not also mention Zion Lutheran Church in Terra Bella, California. I spent the first 20 years of my life at Zion, and I still love going back.

How long have you been a member of the LCMS?

Since the 8th day, at my Baptism.

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

After a less than stellar high school career, I attended Porterville Community College (California). From there I transferred to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where I obtained a degree in Elementary Education.

What were some significant work experiences before coming to the Seminary?

I have taught at three different Lutheran schools: St. Paul Lutheran in New Orleans, Louisiana; Redeemer Lutheran in Denver, Colorado; and Immanuel Lutheran Classical in Alexandria, Virginia. I mostly taught middle school math, science, and PE. During the off-season, I have done work as a farmhand and I've worked several summers for the U.S. Forest Service.

dent Aaron Schultz

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

There have been many influences. I would have to start with my parents, Andy and Yolanda. They instilled in me the importance of the Christian faith; we were in church every Sunday. Pastor Daniel Conrad, who was a pastor at Zion Lutheran in California, had a major influence on me. He encouraged me to consider seminary. Then there's Pastor Christopher Esget. He is one of the most wise and gentle men I know. Pastor Esget, to me, is the standard for a Lutheran pastor. There have been others along the way whom God has used to steer me in this direction: Pastor Marty Reed, Julia Habrecht, and Pastor Richard Habrecht.

What has the seminary experience been like for Katie? For your family?

Katie: "The seminary experience has been such a blessing so far. Aaron's class has a number of second-career guys with families, and we quickly became close with them. There are a lot of social events on campus that are family friendly, so my kids can run around with their friends and we can socialize with ours! We are also so grateful that seminary life has slowed down our family pace and work life. We came from the DC area, which is an area and people that are constantly on the go! Now that we are settled in Fort Wayne, I've been able to stay at home with my boys and we are all very happy about that!"

What have been your greatest challenges and rewards thus far in your seminary experience?

Sometimes I worry about finances—how I am going to provide for my family while at seminary when I have no regular

income. But the Lord truly provides, and He has provided beyond belief. At times I can get bogged down with the class work and assigned readings—but God grants me the needed strength, focus, and patience to get through it. Another challenge is the balancing act between family and studies. Through it all, the greatest reward is seeing how truly sufficient His grace is. More than ever before, I have had to lean on His grace; and His grace is a sure foundation.

What do you think laypeople would find most surprising about the seminary experience?

Indeed, we are being trained in the finest theology and doctrine by top-notch professors. But we are also a bunch of regular guys. We enjoy playing in the seminary's flag football league in the spring, and drinking beer and throwing darts on Friday nights in the Commons. Some are single guys who occasionally play video games, other guys have families whose kids love playing at the seminary playground.

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

Consult your pastor; consult those Christians in your life who know you well. Pray, pray, pray. Seek His wisdom and guidance. Ultimately, if the Lord wants you to be a pastor, He will have you at seminary. CTSFW is not only an amazing place to learn how to think like a Lutheran theologian, but it is also a place that loves and welcomes families.

How might you encourage a spouse who is concerned about what seminary would mean for their family?

Katie: "I certainly wouldn't deny that it is hard to pick up and move, to leave friends, family, and church. However, the community here is so great that it quickly eases that hurt. The Seminary Women's Assembly (SWA) puts on lots of events and socials, and that immediate connection to other women who are going through the same journey is priceless. Our kids have also transitioned well. There are many great schools here and kids are always welcome on campus. I would encourage her that once she gets here, if she gets involved, she'll feel at home in no time!"

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

I do appreciate the high liturgy of a Lutheran church service. I would love to be at a church that appreciates it as well. Having a background in education, I would also love to end up at a church that has an associated Lutheran school. My family and I love social events involving people of the church! Be it a crawfish boil, a Super Bowl party, a darts tournament, or a simple church potluck, whatever it takes to bring the church community together, we're all for it! Wherever I end up, I hope to foster the beautiful liturgy of the Lutheran church, nurture the Lutheran school, and perhaps even create a youth sports league that can be used as outreach. But I trust that the Lord will lead me where He wants me. 🏡

To learn more about church worker formation at CTSFW, go to www.ctsfw.edu/Future-Students. Connect with our Admission staff at Admission@ctsfw.edu or (800) 481-2155.

The Rev. Dr. Benjamin



How were you led to study for the ministry at CTSFW?

I grew up in an LCMS pastor's family, first in Concordia, Missouri, and then in Maryville, Missouri. Dad and Mom always said how pleased they would be if I became a pastor, and though that didn't seem appealing for a while, I entered the pre-seminary program at Concordia College in Seward, Nebraska, though I was still unsure about it. While there, the roadblocks to pursuing the ministry fell away one by one. No longer was I worried about being "cool." No longer did I care that I would not become rich. What mattered most to me was being a man placed by God to preach His saving Word and administer His saving Sacraments to the people, as well as defending the Church from false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice.

While at Seward, I met Rebecca Gerdts, and it was love! We married in 1997 and came to Fort Wayne for seminary in 1998. Just 10 days before the Twin Towers in New York City came down (9/11/2001), we moved to Oberursel, Germany, for my exchange year studying theology in a German Lutheran context. That was an important year for us, as we traveled throughout Europe and made friends from different countries. We look back on it with fond memories.

What led you to pursue an advanced degree? What are you passionate about in your studies and teaching?

While studying in Germany, I read deeply in 19th and 17th century Lutheran theology. I spent a lot of time in the rare books room of the seminary there and encountered the writings of 17th century Lutheran Orthodoxy in German and Latin. I was pleased to find how filled they were with the Scriptures and the writings of the early church fathers, as well as how thorough they were, addressing all manner of pastoral circumstances. Being in Germany showed me how many theological treasures are locked away in German and Latin, waiting to be discovered. Since then my aim has been to make these treasures available for English-speaking Christians today, because I'm convinced that they either hold the answers to our questions, or lead us to find the answers in the Holy Scriptures.

Back in the States, after graduation from CTSFW in 2003, I pursued a PhD in historical theology at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I was blessed to study under the North American expert in 17th century Reformed theology, Richard A. Muller. Muller was incredibly supportive of my interests in 17th century Lutheran theology and gave helpful guidance. I graduated in 2009; my dissertation addressed Lutheran moral reasoning

in the 17th century, especially the old Lutheran casuistry literature and how it dealt with divorce and remarriage. The dissertation was published under the title *Counsel and Conscience*.

How did you serve before coming to CTSFW as a professor?

While in Grand Rapids, I was called as associate pastor at Our Savior Lutheran Church. The time serving under the Rev. David Fleming and with the caring people there was a great blessing to us. But the position was part time, since I was studying full time in a doctoral program. And as financial aid in the doctoral program was coming to an end, I made our family's needs known to the Lord and to leaders in the district and Synod.

The Lord answered with a call to Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis to be the managing editor for the new Luther's Works series and the general editor for Johann Gerhard's *Theological Commonplaces*. I began there in 2006 and was blessed to work for 10 years alongside talented, committed Christians, with a window view of downtown St. Louis and the Arch every day.

Finally, I was called here to CTSFW as Assistant Professor of Historical Theology in 2016. Thanks to the cooperation of CPH, my work with *Luther's Works* and Gerhard's *Theological Commonplaces* continues, though not at quite the same fast pace as previously.

T.G. Mayes

How have you seen students grow in their time on campus?

Students arrive eager to learn, but when you first talk to them, they often sound the same. The Greek language is on their mind, they have questions, they look forward to being a pastor; but with many of them, their theological thoughts are not particularly insightful. It is a joy to see how the pastoral formation at CTSFW stretches them and makes them look at the Scriptures and various questions—both theological and practical—in far more depth than when they arrived. Then they go on vicarage, excited. And how do they come back? As mature men, almost ready to bear the care of souls on their shoulders. This transformation from pious layman to caring, knowledgeable, competent pastor is always a joy to behold.

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

From the beginning of their studies, students respectfully call me “Dr. Mayes,” and that is correct and honorable. But what I love is when, after they have been called to the ministry and have graduated, I tell them to call me by my first name. One graduate respectfully asked, “What is the proper way to address a doctor of the church?” I replied, “Ben.” Our ministry here as professors is not to make students into followers of ourselves, but to form them into pastoral *colleagues*.

Are you working on any special writing or research projects? What has captured your interest lately?

The faculty recently tweaked the curriculum, so that now the history of the Church from 1580 to the present day is a required class. This has been my focus, trying to bring together and tell the story of the Church after the Reformation, and especially to show the sad history of the Enlightenment and the many ways that Christians have responded to the growth

of doubt toward Christian truth. All of this will help our students to minister in a world that is still greatly influenced by the Enlightenment questions and by the answers that have been given to it.

Besides this, I am interested in the history of the reception of the *Book of Concord*—how the text of the *Book of Concord* was published and used after 1580. My hope is to better understand how the original recipients of the *Book of Concord* understood and used it, since this will provide a much-needed interpretive context in our day as well.

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

To the diaconal students I would say: “Serve the Lord with gladness” (Ps. 100:2). “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might” (Eccl. 9:2). “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised (Prov. 31:30).”

To pastoral students I always say: “Don’t be weird. But you won’t know what ‘weird’ is until you talk with your people. Also, you have two things to study when you’re a pastor: God and God’s people. And that means you must continue to study theology, but you must also spend time talking with and learning about the people among whom you serve and their culture; both are crucial.” The Seminary cannot provide detailed knowledge about every culture and situation and individual; that is best learned in the field. But CTSFW is a place for intensive interaction with the Word of God in conversation with its preachers and teachers and confessors throughout history, and in conversation with a deeply-committed community of teachers and learners. This is irreplaceable. We form servants; we do not give them all the facts. It is their duty to continue to serve and learn.

We as a Church, Seminary, and each of us personally have faced new challenges in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. What does COVID-19 mean for your work at the Seminary?

COVID-19 does not remove our need for pastors. The Seminary is here to form pastors and other servants for the Church. The COVID-19 strictures have shown us all how valuable in-person formation is. We have done well with the instructional technologies available to us, but the truth remains: something important is lost without a physical community of learners. Online learning just isn’t as good as in-person ministerial formation, even if it’s sometimes necessary. Both our students and faculty earnestly desire the resumption of our community, especially as it is gathered together in Kramer Chapel and in our congregations around the preaching of God’s Word and the reception of the Sacraments.

The general theme for this issue is “Christ and His Church: Marriage and Family.” What does this mean for you personally and for your family?

Becca and I have been blessed with two sons from adoption, one from Michigan and the other from Missouri. A peaceful, God-fearing family is one of the greatest blessings of God, something not everyone has. We thank God for our own parents who raised us as confessing Lutheran Christians. We are trying to do the same for our sons, and we pray they will do the same. Proverbs 22:6 is a comfort: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” 🏠

To learn more about the faculty at CTSFW, go to www.ctsfw.edu/faculty.

Student Academic Awards for 2019-2020

On Tuesday, May 12, 2020, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Indiana, Academic Dean Dr. Charles Gieschen announced the following academic awards. These were awarded for excellence in languages, study, and writing:



Alexander Blanken: The Classical Association of the Middle West and South Award for Outstanding Accomplishment, given in recognition of excellence in Greek.



Jonathan Olson: Outstanding Paper in Historical Theology Award, for his paper entitled “Augustine as Catechist.”



Daniel Gray: The Department of Pastoral Ministry and Missions Outstanding Paper Award, for his paper “Luther’s Large Catechism: A Study Guide for Continuing Adult Education.”



Joshua Schiff: The Draves Family Scholarship to provide a stipend for a student, who will be in his fourth-year of study in the coming academic year, who has an exemplary commitment to the Lutheran Confessions.



Silas Hasselbrook: St. Timothy Award, given to encourage a second-year student in his continuing studies of the Holy Scripture.



Christian Schultz: Zondervan Theology Award, given for outstanding achievement in the study of Systematic Theology with his paper “*In ipsa fide Christus adest*: The Theology of Tuomo Mannermaa and the Necessity of Jesus.”



Gino Marchetti II: Outstanding Paper in Systematic Theology Award, for his paper “An Overview of the *Unio Mystica* in Lutheran Theology and Its Relations to the Lord’s Supper.”

Zondervan Greek Language Award, given for outstanding achievement in the study of Biblical Greek.

Awards were also announced to the following students for outstanding service:



Anna Barger (Residential Deaconess Student): The Elizabeth Fedde Award for Outstanding Service, given to an exemplary deaconess student who demonstrates both academic excellence and exceptional virtue and practical service to those in need.



Blake Martzowska: Exegetical Theology Department Writing Award, for his paper “A Comparative Study of the Temple in Second Temple Judaism and the Book of Revelation.”



Brett Witmer: Shepherd’s Staff Award, voted on by his peers and presented to the fourth-year student who exemplifies pastoral faith and life.



Kyle Nelson: Gerhard Aho Outstanding Sermon Award, presented for a single sermon with homiletical excellence. His sermon, “Behold the Man!” was based on Luke 8:26-39.



Kimberly Wolkenhauer (Distance Deaconess Student): The Elizabeth Fedde Award for Outstanding Service, given to an exemplary deaconess student who demonstrates both academic excellence and exceptional virtue and practical service to those in need.

Faculty Updates



The **Rev. Dr. Adam Koontz** successfully defended his PhD dissertation entitled “The Imitation of Paul in the Greco-Roman World” at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The PhD degree was conferred upon him on May 7, 2020. “Dr. Adam Koontz’s timely

and successful completion of his PhD dissertation on imitation in Paul’s epistles at Temple University testifies to both his extraordinary talent and conscientiousness,” said the Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen, Academic Dean here at the Seminary. “Our students and the Church will benefit from his teaching and service at CTSFW for many years to come.”

To honor their graduates, the university asked their master’s and doctoral students a series of questions, which you can read in full at <https://liberalarts.temple.edu/news/congratulations-our-class-2020-graduate-students>. Dr. Koontz’s, too, spoke about teaching: “The joy I find in learning and teaching is something I experience every day [at CTSFW]. I take what Temple taught me about delighting in learning everything I can and teaching everything I know—and being honest about what I don’t know!—and get to use that every day.”



During commencement on Friday, May 22, it was announced that the **Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler**, the Robert D. Preus Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Confessional Lutheran Studies as well as Chairman of Systematic Theology, and the **Rev. Dr.**



Jeffrey Pulse, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology who also serves as Director of Certification and Placement and Director of Continuing Education, will be advanced to the rank of (full) Professor by the CTSFW Board of Regents.

The Board has also established a newly endowed faculty chair, named in honor of the **Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe**, President Emeritus of CTSFW. They have appointed the newly advanced Dr. Pulse as the first holder of The Dean O. Wenthe Chair in Old Testament Theology. The chair will be inaugurated on Friday, September 11, following chapel at 10:00 a.m. with a public lecture by Dr. Pulse to follow later that day in Sihler Auditorium at 4:00 p.m.



The **Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen**, Academic Dean and Professor of Exegetical Theology at CTSFW, was invited to participate in the Baylor-Edinburgh Colloquium on April 9-10, 2019, a small gathering of international scholars of first century Christianity at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland funded by Baylor University Press. His paper, “The Divine Name as a Characteristic of Divine Identity in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity,” will be published in a volume of essays from the colloquium edited by Matthew V. Novenson and entitled, *Monotheism and Christology in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).



The Jonathan Ekong Memorial Lutheran Seminary in Nigeria is completing a project to upgrade their library building.

The Rev. Prof. Robert Roethemeyer, the Wakefield-Kroemer Director of Library and Information Services here at CTSFW, has driven the initiative to help provide a refresh of those books that have been in service for more

than 50 years in some of the harshest environments in the world. In 2017, the library staff began setting aside material for the project, mostly from books gifted to the library from retired CTSFW faculty, Concordia Seminary St. Louis faculty, and from many pastors across the Synod. In the end, 2,600 volumes were sent to Nigeria shelf- and circulation-ready, with spine labels and barcodes on the books.

As the project developed, the staff discovered a library software system that could be used in the cloud and locally. Using this tool, they created a catalog containing the materials selected for Nigeria. Kay Roethemeyer, Assessment and Business Analyst for the Wakefield-Kroemer Library, managed the project and provided call number assignment oversight. The Rev. Richard Lammert, Technical Services Librarian, used his skills to help build the catalog. Many student workers were involved throughout the project and assisted with creating a bibliography, adding holdings in the library system, adding the spine labels and barcodes to each book, packing boxes, and manifesting each box.

Ninety-two boxes of books began their journey to Nigeria in January. The Theological Book Network in Michigan performs logistics needed for the shipment of the books before the pallets can leave the states to go to port. Once on the water, it takes about 100 days to get to Nigeria.



What Is a Pastor's Legacy?

Matthew J. Wietfeldt



Left to right: Rev. Robert Hill's son, Rev. John E. Hill (president of the Wyoming District); son-in-law Rev. James Woelmer (senior pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Plano, Texas); grandson Rev. Joshua Woelmer (pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Vassar, Kansas); Rev. Hill; grandson Martin Hill (vicar at Memorial Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas); grandson Andrew Hill (first-year student at CTSFW); grandson-in-law Jonathon Olson (CTSFW candidate-elect called to Hope Lutheran Church in Aurora, Colorado, this April 29 at the 2020 Call Service); grandson David Woelmer (first-year student at CTSFW); and grandson-in-law Jacob Tuma (candidate-elect from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, called to Saint John Lutheran Church in Pierce, Nebraska, this April 28 at their 2020 Call Service).

When a pastor looks back at his legacy (that is, the mark that he left behind throughout his ministry), there are many different things he could consider. He could consider the membership of his congregation and the impact they have had in their community. He could consider the different programs inside and outside of his church that he created or continued. He could consider the building projects he assisted or the missions his congregations supported.

However, none of these matter unless the pastor has tended to the basics of the task that he has been given to do. He should consider whether he preached God's holy Word and administered His holy Sacraments rightly. These are the marks of a faithful pastor. In doing this, he has done more for his people and the Church-at-large than one recognizes. In doing these things—in preaching and administering rightly—he has cared for and loved his people as much as one possibly can.

Ultimately, the pastor's legacy is never about himself. The pastor's legacy is solely about Christ and Him crucified for the forgiveness of the sins of the whole world. As pastors, we have the privilege of being able to step in and serve Christ's people in our particular locations and in His specific ways. The Lord works through our faults and follies, through our shortcomings and sinful ways. The Lord works through our hard-heartedness and

stubborn-headedness. The Lord works in spite (and often despite) what the pastor brings to the table. All that He calls for us as His undershepherds to do is to preach and administer His Sacraments. It is His ministry, not our ministry, just as it is His forgiveness and not our forgiveness.

And still the Lord works through His pastors, using them to raise up future pastors as well. Not only through their faithful work but also through words of encouragement, the Lord uses His pastors to inspire and console those considering and those who should be considering service to Christ in the Office of the Holy Ministry. The Lord uses those who know the task, those who are actively engaged in the task, and those who have lived what it means to be a pastor to raise up those who are to be the next generation of Christ's undershepherds; men young and old, from those who are just now entering initial conversations and thoughts about

what it is they are going to do for their life as well as those who are and have been considering this type of service for some time. To each of these, the Lord uses the means of His pastors to assist those thinking of this vocation.

The Rev. Robert Hill is such a pastor, used by the Lord to speak a word (or many words) to the laborers He is calling to His harvest fields. During his 34 years as senior pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Plano, Texas, Rev. Hill has encouraged countless men. Through faithful service and words of encouragement, pastor after pastor are now serving in the Office of the Holy Ministry; in all, 13 men from his congregation went to seminary while he served as pastor in Texas. As to his family, the eight men pictured here with Rev. Hill are all currently serving or are preparing for service in Christ's Church. A son, son-in-law, grandsons, and grandsons-in-law follow in Rev. Hill's footsteps as they carry the Good News of Jesus Christ's all atoning death for our sins and His resurrection for our new life.

Our Lord uses us all as we encourage those who should consider the Office of the Holy Ministry. He uses us to walk with those who need a comforting and guiding word to help them along the path to His service. He uses our words and our actions, giving them His Holy Spirit to accomplish the things which He would do. Our words and actions are solely wrapped up in His forgiveness, His love, and His grace.

As we speak these words and do these actions, He is there hidden in them to see that they are done. In the end, He lets us play along in His holy work of preaching His Word and administering His Sacraments. Not our work but His, all the way through. 🏰

The Rev. Matthew J. Wietfeldt (Matthew.Wietfeldt@ctsfw.edu) serves as Director of Admission at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana.





Fifteen Precious Reasons

Jared K. Melius



I can't remember all the exact reasons. It's still murky. I'm pretty sure it was some cross between deciding against having more biological children (seven altogether), knowing some "normal" people who were foster parents, having some conviction that the Bible urges Christians to care for orphans, my wife's affinity for babies, and our disdain of abortion. Somehow this collection of murky impulses resulted in filling out a simple application and then sitting together at a county training class for foster care. We were certified about seven years ago.

Since then, our family has fostered 15 different children, ranging in age from one day to six years old, for a length of a few days to 2 ½ years. We have adopted one and are working on adopting another.

I can remember the day that my wife Jan called me while I was making a shut-in visit and asked what I thought about taking a sibling group of three—a three-year old girl and four-year old twin boys. Now this was outside our specified parameters, and I pointed that out to her. We had agreed on one. We had agreed on a child under two years old. However, she explained the situation. They had been taken from their home that day, were dirty and hungry from neglect, and the social worker was just about to split them up and send them to different homes. They were scared. She had called us as a last resort. We understood beforehand that we would be faced with such scenarios, but they were easier to dismiss in the abstract. Now the children were real, with names, and were basically standing at our front door.

Well, we agreed. I looked up a toddler bed on Craig's List and picked it up on my way home. The nice lady gave it to me for free when she learned why

I needed it. The three children sat at my kitchen table when I walked in the door. My own kids hovered around them with fascination. Jan and I looked at each other with a look that mused, "What did we just do?"

Those three children lived in our home for more than two years. As you might imagine, they were delightful in many ways and also challenging in certain ways. I suppose that we could have adopted them, but a remarkable thing happened. A couple from our church got to know them, fell in love with them, and adopted them instead. They were my foster children for over two years. Now they have been my parishioners for over five years! I baptized all three of them.

Here is an observation: foster care in the abstract is hardly attractive. Our willingness to jump in and do it is peppered with unknowns. How much will it cost? Will my heart be broken? Will they put holes in the wall? Will my own children hate me for doing it?

However, foster care is not an abstraction. We are caring for real people with names and stories.

In the real world of foster care, the achievements and progress of our foster

kids have outshined a few holes in the wall. I'm serious about this.

In the real world of foster care, the finances work out. I'm not sure how, but they have for us.

In the real world of foster care, our biological children have thrived by learning how they take a real role in loving a world broken by sin. We ask our children now before we take a new placement, and they are almost always more eager than us. It's hard work, but they don't hate us.

In the real world of foster care, you don't always have your heart broken. We have rejoiced with birth parents who did the work and got their kids back and still text us pictures. We have rejoiced as friends decided to adopt one of our foster daughters and we still see her. We have rejoiced as our church welcomes each new face and especially the occasional baptism. We have rejoiced when a judge asked us what the boy's name will be and we have answered with our own last name! Sure, we have had some rough days, but nothing like the imaginary dread of the preconceptions.

I can't remember all the reasons we started. But I can tell you the reasons we have continued—15 reasons, in fact. Fifteen precious, valuable, little, breathing, running, smiling reasons. 🏡

*The Rev. Jared K. Melius
(pasor@mtzionlcms.org),
CTSFW 2006, serves as senior
pastor at Mount Zion Lutheran
Church in Denver, Colorado.*





Endowed Chair Honors

Mark H. Steiner



Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Indiana, is blessed with an outstanding faculty. One of the ways that educational institutions have sought to assure the long-term future of talented faculty is to establish endowed faculty chairs. Income from the endowment pays the costs related to the faculty member appointed to the chair. Endowments such as these are especially important during times of economic downturn such as we are experiencing now in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CTSFW recently established The Dean O. Wenthe Chair in Old Testament Theology. It is named in honor of the Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President Emeritus of CTSFW. The endowment will support a faculty member who teaches in the discipline of Old Testament studies.

Dr. Wenthe served almost his entire ministry as a faculty member of CTSFW. He first taught for a few years in the 1970s when the Seminary was in Springfield, Illinois. Then he served as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Atlantic, Iowa.

Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

In 1980, he was called to the CTSFW faculty, teaching in Old Testament while completing his PhD at the University of Notre Dame and serving in various administrative roles. In 1996, Dr. Wenthe was called to be the President of CTSFW, a position he held for the next 15 years.

His presidency saw several new additions to the faculty, expansion of CTSFW's global impact, clarity of Lutheran identity, and financial stability. His strong convictions and charitable spirit have made him a beloved colleague, a respected teacher of the Church, and cherished friend of those who have come to know him.

Dr. Wenthe continues to be a member of the CTSFW faculty. Beginning in 2012, he has served as President of the Concordia University System in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Dean and his wife Linda have been blessed with four sons and eight grandchildren.

Because of Dr. Wenthe's role on behalf of CTSFW over such a period of time and in light of the many positive developments, a group of donors joined together to fund an endowed faculty chair in his name. They did this both out of respect for him and out of appreciation and love for CTSFW as an institution that prepares and trains future pastors for

the churches of our LCMS Synod. The gifts totaled over \$2 million, the amount needed to fund the endowment.

Endowed chairs highlight the importance of an academic discipline in the formation of future servants. Endowed chairs also honor well-known contributors to the field, helping to preserve and advance their body of work for the benefit of the Church. Today CTSFW seeks donors to endow faculty chairs in support of a number of academic specialties, such as Homiletics, Pastoral Ministry, and New Testament studies.

We rejoice at the establishment of The Dean O. Wenthe Chair in Old Testament Theology. A celebration to inaugurate the chair will be held following the opening of the 175th Academic Year for CTSFW this fall.

Faculty Chairs are made possible by prayerful gifts from faithful donors. If you would like more information on financially supporting endowed faculty chairs, please contact us at advancement@ctsfw.edu or (877) 287-4338 (x2277). Thank you for your prayers and gifts. 🙏

*The Rev. Mark H. Steiner
(Mark.Steiner@ctsfw.edu)
serves as Advancement Officer
at Concordia Theological
Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



CTSFW recently established The Dean O. Wenthe Chair in Old Testament Theology. It is named in honor of the Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President Emeritus of CTSFW. The endowment will support a faculty member who teaches in the discipline of Old Testament studies.

Current Endowed Chairs at CTSFW:

- ✦ The Forrest E. and Frances H. Ellis Chair in German Reformation Studies
- ✦ The David P. Scaer Chair in Biblical and Systematic Theology
- ✦ The Robert D. Preus Chair in Systematic Theology and Confessional Lutheran Studies
- ✦ The Carl and Erna Weinrich Chair in New Testament and Early Church Studies
- ✦ The Wakefield-Kroemer Director's Chair in Library and Information Services
- ✦ The Dean O. Wenthe Chair in Old Testament Theology





The Family of God and the Home-Court Advantage

Henry J. Graf V

Chances are you've thought a lot about family. Ask five people what counts as family and you're sure to get six answers. Modifiers like "step" or "in-law" or "adopted" are used to help clarify these relationships. But Jesus redefines family altogether. **Read Matthew 12:46-50.** How would you summarize what Jesus is getting at in this passage?

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, sin has been defeated and family has been redefined. Still, when we hear the word "family," our minds are filled with those who live with us. Regardless of the seen and unseen joys and pains that make up your family history or *any* modifiers that define how your family looks, God has grafted us into His own family and made us His own. As His children, we have value and play an important role in His family—in spite of our brokenness. At my own congregation we summarize Matthew 12:46-50 as the "Home-Court Advantage" (HCA). Hearing the Word of God and doing what it says is HCA. It's what makes a Jesus-style family.

Jesus didn't just talk about HCA that one time in Matthew. He ended His Sermon on the Mount with a story about a wise and foolish builder (**Matthew 7:24-27**). Later His half-brother James has the same message, just a bit more distilled (**James 1:22**). How are you hearing God's Word?

When you do hear it, how are you putting it into practice?

Maybe that last question was a bit of a struggle. It is for many families. We know that people thrive when they have simple, repeatable patterns.

Our church, Promise Ministries in Fort Wayne, Indiana, was blessed to have Scott Hedtke assigned as our vicar for the 2018-2019 academic year; on Call Night this year we found out that he will be our associate pastor. He helped develop six simple repeatable questions that synthesize **James 1:22** and the Shema (an ancient Israelite prayer taken from **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**), which will give you HCA. Take a moment and read these passages before we move on. Who are they directed to?

First, we'll skip Question 1 and begin with Question 2 of the six questions, keeping in mind that Shema means "hear," and that hearing should always come before doing. When you are reading your Bible or listening to a sermon, consider the following question. What are you hearing from God's Word?

When Paul and Silas went to Berea, they found that the Bereans were more noble than the Jews in Thessalonica because they checked what Paul was saying against Scripture (**Read Acts 17:11**). If Paul uplifts the action of his hearers double checking his teaching, how much more should we do so these days as well? Therefore, Question 3 encourages us to "be Berean": Is what you're hearing what the Bible says?

Your family may have different tools to help compare what you hear with what the Bible actually says. What are they?

Here's an idea to put into practice each Sunday: tell your pastor you heard something in his sermon and want to know more about what the Bible says about it. Not only will he help you, you'll make him smile.

Question 4 is the **James 1:22** question: What are you going to do in response to what you've heard?

Deuteronomy 6:5 frames our response to hearing a loving God. (Jesus clarifies the "how" as first loving the Lord and then loving your neighbor as yourself in **Matthew 22:35-40**.) If you are like me (or even Paul; see **Romans 7:14-20**) you want to hear God and respond, but it's easy to get distracted. We need reminders.

Deuteronomy 6:8 might help you answer Question 5: How will you remind yourself to love the Lord your God and to love your neighbor as yourself?

HCA is also about being a team. **Deuteronomy 6:7** leads with some ways we can remind each other. In the words of Question 6: How can we remind each other about our **James 1:22** goal?

And finally, Question 1 (which, after the first time you go through these six questions, will begin this repeatable pattern of questions afterwards): How did it go?

This is where the rubber hits the road. You will have breakthroughs—celebrate them with your Home Team. You will also have battles. Confess your failures and your sins (**1 John 1:8-10**) and practice in your homes the Confession and Absolution you hear on Sunday morning.

The Rev. Henry J. Graf V serves as head pastor of Promise Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



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

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