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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

WINTER 2016



ACCOUNTABILITY

BEING ACCOUNTABLE

LEARNING BIBLICAL RESPONSIBILITY

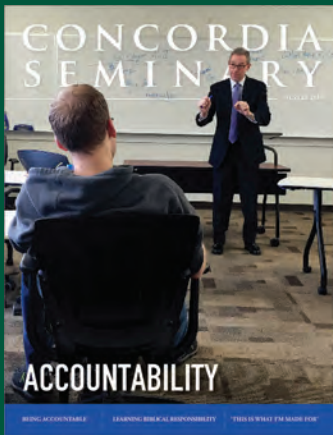
'THIS IS WHAT I'M MADE FOR'

first look...

*Stars twinkle in the winter night sky above the iconic Luther Tower at Concordia Seminary.
Photo: Mark Polege*







CONCORDIA SEMINARY

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS

FEATURES

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God created us and the world in which we live. Dr. Charles P. Arand explains how we are accountable not only to our Creator, but also to each other in the household of creation.

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Concordia Seminary student James Kirschenmann is serving as a vicar in the St. Louis church where his father was once a pastor and where he spent five years of his childhood. He feels called to the inner-city, struggling church and hopes to become its first permanent pastor in 18 years.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Concordia Seminary serves Church and world by providing theological education and leadership centered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for the formation of pastors, missionaries, deaconesses, scholars and leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Cover image: Dr. Joel Biermann, the Waldemar A. and June Schuette Professor of Systematic Theology, teaches a course on theological ethics in March 2015. Photo: Becky Pagel



The Seminary hosted the Clayton Chamber for a Leadership Clayton luncheon in October 2015. Dr. Dale A. Meyer is pictured with Judy Goodman, former Clayton Board of Aldermen member, left, and Chamber Executive Director Ellen Gale, right. Photo: Kim Braddy

Accountability. That's the thread running through this issue of *Concordia Seminary* magazine. Would you want to receive a new pastor who imagines he's not accountable to the congregation because he's ordained? Or a deaconess who's not a team player? Of course not. Accountability is practiced in the church because of this great truth: The Body of Christ "does not consist of one member but of many" (1 Cor. 12:14). The pastor — trained, examined and placed into the Office of the Holy Ministry — is accountable to the members of the body for his work and life. In a wonderfully complementary way, members of the congregation, individually gifted and given various responsibilities, are accountable "that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another" (1 Cor. 12:25).

Harmony in the Body of Christ grows out of our fear and love of God. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Cor. 5:10). You're not exempt. Your time before the Judge is coming! But our terror is transformed into awe and love that this Judge alone saves us.

*Thy works, not mine, O Christ,
speak gladness to this heart;
They tell me all is done; they bid my fear depart.
To whom save Thee, who canst alone for sin atone,
Lord, shall I flee?*

(The Lutheran Hymnal, 380, 1)

We want our graduates to have open hearts and cooperative attitudes as they work with you in the mission of Jesus. Here at Concordia Seminary we strive to model accountability to our students. The faculty, staff and Board of Regents practice accountability through annual performance reviews. "How are we doing? How can we better serve our Savior?" The Seminary is accountable to outside authorities, more than you imagine! A special spirit permeates accountability in the Body of Christ. After talking about relationships between members of the church, Paul says, "I will show you a still more excellent way," and goes on to extol love. "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 12:31, 13:13).

Not every issue is everyone's issue, and so constitutions and bylaws provide processes for accountability. "But all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). Often ignored in the church, this is an essential component in "governance," how the various parts of an institution interact to promote the mission of the institution. It's not about you or me, not about the pastor or parishioner; it's about the mission of God to us all and through us all. Martin Luther wrote, "For whatever remains of your life, live as those sent by Christ. It is the office of everyone to instruct his neighbor, etc. And this power is given not to the clergy alone ... but to all believers" (*Luther's Works*, 69, 337).

Dale A. Meyer

Dale A. Meyer



BEING ACCOUNTABLE


IN GOD'S HOUSEHOLD OF CREATION

BY DR. CHARLES P. ARAND

When “Noah” came out starring Russell Crowe, a number of Christians took issue with the movie for never mentioning the word “God.” Instead, Noah referred to God throughout the movie simply as the “Creator.” There is something both basic and profound about speaking of Jesus as both Creator and Redeemer. Not the least of which is the simple biblical truth that being the Creator of everything is what defines God as God throughout the Bible. But what does that mean for us?

A HOME FOR GOD'S CREATURES

Martin Luther asks the question in his *Large Catechism*, what does it mean to say that God is the maker of heaven and earth? He answers that it means, “I am a creature.” This may sound like such a basic statement that we need not belabor the point, but consider a few of the implications.



The Creator precedes us. He defines who and what we are. As a creature, I am not the Creator. I do not make God or define God. I do not decide what God should or should not do. God acts by His own counsel (Ps. 135:5-6). That means God is not answerable to us for what He does or does not do. It is we as creatures who are accountable to God for how we live within His creation.

God's creation also precedes us. God created the world to be a nourishing and sustaining home for all of His creatures. We are not only dependent upon God, but upon this home that He made for us. We were made from the earth for life on the earth! Thus, theologians from Gregory of Nyssa to Martin Luther to Pope Francis have spoken of our world as a home richly furnished by God for all life on earth, a home in which God intended us to flourish.

OUR ROLE IN THE HOUSEHOLD

In creating this world to be our home, God also created it to function as something of a household. You might say that it has a household economy or ecology (economy in Greek means "household management") in which each of its inhabitants has God-given responsibilities for the well-being of all.

This is especially true of us who have been made in God's image and given the responsibility of "running and managing the household." As such, we are accountable not only to the Creator, but accountable to each other for how we live together in this home that we share. In other words, we have not only mutual responsibilities but mutual accountability.

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Within the Christian tradition, we have generally identified four areas of the household in which we live our lives. These four “economies” include the family, employment within society, citizenship or community service, and the church. Within these spheres, we have specific responsibilities toward each other and we are accountable not only to God for how we carry them out, but to each other as well.

Within the family, husbands and wives are accountable to each other as well as to the wider community (e.g., in cases of abuse). Parents are accountable to the wider community for their treatment of children even as children are accountable to their parents.



“WE ARE
ACCOUNTABLE NOT
ONLY TO THE CREATOR,
BUT ACCOUNTABLE
TO EACH OTHER
FOR HOW WE LIVE
TOGETHER IN
THIS HOME THAT
WE SHARE.”

— DR. CHARLES P. ARAND

Concordia Seminary students, faculty and staff help clean a Gateway Greening garden at the St. Agnes Apartments, a senior housing complex in St. Louis, during a servant event during orientation week in September 2015. Photo: Tony Carosella

Within the church, pastors are accountable not only to God, but to the church (consisting of both pastors and people). This means that pastors are accountable to each other as well as to their congregations. Similarly, parishioners are accountable to each other as well as their pastor and their Shepherd.

Within society, government leaders are accountable to their citizens and, in some cases, to other governments (e.g., when governments carry out genocide on their populations or seek to subjugate other countries). And citizens are accountable to each other within the community as well as the government for living responsibly as answerable citizens.

As our Creator, God has given us something of an instructional manual for how we are to live within His creation so that it flourishes as He envisioned. At least that is how we might think of the Ten Commandments. In other words, don't use a hammer to pound a screw into the garage door opener. Don't live with your neighbors by destroying their reputation! Life in creation breaks apart when that happens.

RECOVERING OUR LIFE AS GOD'S CREATURES

If there is one thing that characterizes all of human history since the fall, it is that we human creatures do not want to live as human creatures. We do not want to be accountable to the Creator. We want to be like God. We want to be in charge and in control. And with that desire, we often resist and reject His household economy for life within creation, preferring to remake it according to our own vision.

Here is the most remarkable thing in the history of the universe (alongside the miracle of creation itself)! In a stunning affirmation of His creation, the Creator enters His creation and becomes a part of it at the very time when His human creatures want to rise above it. And so the Creator becomes a Creature, a human Creature, a particular male Human of the first century! In other words, the Creator embraced our life within His creation.

Not only did He embrace our creatureliness, He rescued and restored us to be creatures once again — creatures who have now been adopted as children in Christ. What is faith other than to live from the gifts of God? Faith embraces our lives as creatures, creation as our home and God's household economy for our life in this home.

Creation and redemption are not two fundamentally different acts of God. They are cut from the same cloth of God's eternal love. The One who creates is the One who redeems. And the One who redeems us is the One who created us. Thus, when we Christians confess Jesus as Lord, we are confessing that Jesus is both our Creator and Redeemer!

Dr. Charles P. Arand is the Eugene E. and Nell S. Fincke Graduate Professor of Theology, director of Concordia Seminary's Center for the Care of Creation and dean of theological research and publication.



‘THIS IS WHAT I’M MADE FOR’

Seminary vicar serves an inner-city church where he grew up

BY MELANIE AVE

James Kirschenmann was a pastor’s kid who spent five years of his childhood at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church—College Hill, on the outskirts of downtown St. Louis. It was a turbulent time in the neighborhood, filled with much racial tension.

But something about his time there from 1963-68 left a lasting impression on Kirschenmann, eventually leading him to seek a second career in the pastoral ministry after working in data communications for most of his life.

“I always felt like I had unfinished business at St. Paul’s,” said Kirschenmann, 60, who is serving his Concordia Seminary vicarage at the church this year. “I can’t exactly put my finger on it.”

If all goes as planned, Kirschenmann will become the inner-city, struggling church’s first permanent pastor in 18 years. His call will be bivocational since St. Paul’s is unable to afford the salary of a full-time pastor. He will work part time as a pastor at St. Paul’s and part time as an independent computer consultant.

Rev. Dave Andrus, St. Paul’s mission pastor, said Kirschenmann and his wife, Katherine, have brought much-needed stability to the church.

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St. Paul’s Lutheran Church—College Hill. Photo: Melanie Ave





Vicar James Kirschenmann prepares for a Sunday service in November 2015 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church—College Hill, St. Louis. Photos: Melanie Ave

GOD HAS NOT ABANDONED THIS COMMUNITY; ONE OF HIS REPRESENTATIVES IS LIVING HERE.

— REV. DAVE ANDRUS

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“His living in the parsonage, living in the community, is huge,” Andrus said. “He’s not only living there, but choosing to and wanting to. It demonstrates to church members and the community that he has a heart and a compassion for the community. That goes a long way. If a clergyman is willing to do something most people won’t, that says something about that man’s god: God has not abandoned this community; one of His representatives is living here.”

WORKING IT OUT

A native of Omaha, Neb., and the youngest of five children, Kirschenmann felt called to pastoral ministry in high school. Instead he chose a career in computers, primarily because of doctrinal and political struggles within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod during the 1970s. God’s call eventually brought him to the Seminary in 2012 when he enrolled in the Master of Divinity program.

As part of his Seminary education, Kirschenmann started serving as a fieldworker at St. Paul’s in 2013. He and his wife fell in love with the congregation. Despite its struggles, “we felt like it was home,” he said.

The church, located in one of the city’s most impoverished neighborhoods, has seen an average of 18 worshipers weekly in the last decade. Attendance finally seems on the uptick. In the last year, average Sunday attendance has increased to about 35 adults and 10 to 15 children.

“God is working this all out,” Kirschenmann said. “It’s not something I’m doing. He’s bringing all the resources to bear on it.”

‘THEY LOVE IT HERE’

On a recent Tuesday night at St. Paul’s, children filter into the basement for a weekly Bible study. One year earlier, the Bible study had four children from the neighborhood attending. Now, about 20 children attend.

For some of the children, the church has become one of the more stable parts of their lives. One girl has moved six times in the last eight months. Most of the children are growing up in single-parent households. Others live in multigenerational, multifamily households. For Kirschenmann and others who live in the neighborhood, the sound of gunshots is a more than weekly occurrence.

On this night, one 5-year-old girl runs to the door shortly after being dropped off, crying for her mom. It's only her second time to be here. In between setting out the pencils and activity sheets and cuing a video on Moses, Kirschenmann walks over in his red Converse sneakers to the crying girl. He leans down to the girl, talks to her softly and gives her a hug. Before long, she runs off to play. All is well.

After a prayer and worship time, Kirschenmann leads one group of older children through a lesson from Exodus 3. "Who are we supposed to tell people God is?" he asks.

"I am who I am," one girl answers.

"I think you got it," Kirschenmann tells her.

Volunteer Felita Moore, who lives across the street from St. Paul's, has been bringing her three children, ages 11 to 13, to the Bible study for a year. She's appreciative of Kirschenmann and his wife.

"He's done a great job with the kids in the community," Moore said. "They love it here. They're bringing a lot of change to the community."

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

St. Paul's is trying to reach the families — and the neighborhood — by showing the love of Christ to the children.

Volunteers like Teri Rose, whose great-great-grandfather was a charter member of St. Paul's in 1872, have helped keep the church open and serving the community through the years. But, she said, volunteers can't do everything.

"Having Jim here has made a huge difference," Rose said. "It's about building relationships."

Kirschenmann said he has made many neighborhood connections from his front or back porch as people walk by.

"They're welcoming us," he said. "Not only that, but they're starting to look at the things they can do for the kids and inviting us to be a part of that. It can seem daunting at times, but somehow, God is directing things so it's being fed to us at a time when we can deal with it at just the right time. This is what I'm made for."

Melanie Ave is the communications manager at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



Top photo: Vicar James Kirschenmann shares God's peace with parishioners at a Sunday service in November 2015 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church—College Hill, St. Louis.

Bottom photo: Vicar James Kirschenmann teaches a lesson from Exodus during a youth Bible study in November 2015 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church—College Hill, St. Louis.





SEMINARY STUDENTS

LEARNING *BIBLICAL* RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

BY JACKIE PARKER

Whether they're doing fieldwork at an after-school arts program for children in the Gravois Park neighborhood of south St. Louis or staffing a church booth at a convention in Knoxville, Tenn., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis students are learning that accountability represents a large part of the church-community connection.

Meet four Concordia Seminary students who shared their insights and the Scriptures that have inspired them and helped them understand that accountability not only extends vertically to God, but horizontally as well, to those where they live and serve.

"Students get accountability lessons without ever realizing it. In many cases, accountability patterns begin to emerge very informally," said Dr. Timothy Saleska, associate professor of exegetical theology and dean of ministerial formation. "Young students, directly out of college, rub shoulders with students who have experienced ministry in various settings. As they become friends, they gain insight into challenges and joys of ministry from people they know and trust. And these relationships shape them, too."



JOEL Newton

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (Eph. 2:19 ESV).

JOEL NEWTON

Joel Newton, a second-year student, recently completed his immersion fieldwork quarter at Christ Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Neb., giving him a “vicarage experience prior to vicarage,” he said.

By getting to see what goes on at a church during the week, Newton learned firsthand how a pastor is involved in the lives of his congregation members. Teaching Bible studies, attending planning meetings, leading a chapel service and even having lunch with the church’s middle school students gave him a new perspective. He talked about visiting shut-ins and how much he enjoyed the experience.

“You can see it in their eyes,” Newton said. “When you look at the face of a longtime member who can’t come to church anymore, it’s easy to see that they very much appreciate participating in a devotion or prayer time and that they miss being involved in the church.”

“Great importance is placed on taking care of people around us in hopes of spreading the Gospel,” he said. Through Servanthood Day, where the church went out into the community to serve, Newton discovered how creating community connections through actions matters.

“We get to relate to people in a community with love through service,” he said. “It’s tangible care, sharing the love of Christ and doing it through your actions. When I’m with strangers, if I show them I care through service, it helps assure them that I care. It’s more real to people. When we get to spend time with people, it helps to connect us to them.”

MATTHEW GULSETH

Matthew Gulseth, a fourth-year student, understands how important it is for pastors to create relationships with the people of their congregations. “We can’t just sit in our office anymore,” he said. “The Church needs to be there as the world crumbles under its own philosophies. The Church is there to help make people whole.”

Gulseth served as director of transformational communities at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Spokane, Wash., where he helped develop a snack program for low-income students. He was a vicar at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Arnold, Mo., and is now a fieldworker there. The church works with the Fox C-6 School District in Jefferson County to help with student needs, including homelessness.

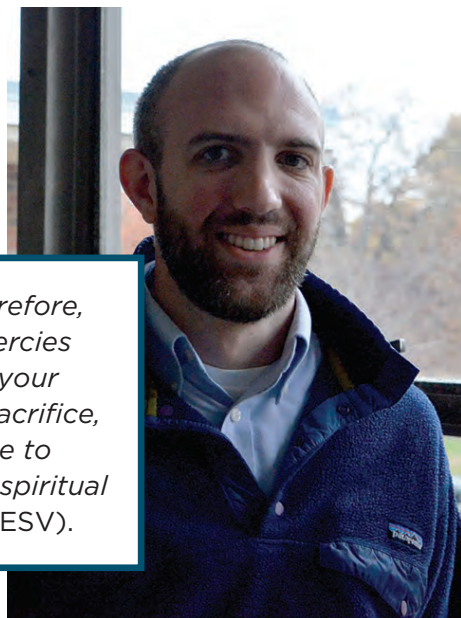
Through St. John’s, the community helps to “Fill the Firetruck” a few times a year with donations that go directly to local food pantries.

“The Church is only the Church when it exists for others,” Gulseth said, quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a noted Lutheran German pastor and theologian. “Our justification and freedom does something. It sets us loose to bring life to others. When people understand who they are in light of Christ, they are able to live for others.”

“Feeding is important but conferring the Word also is important,” he said. “The Gospel incorporates individuals into a body and brings them into a community and tells them they are not alone.”

MATTHEW Gulseth

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (Rom. 12:1 ESV).



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SETH KUNZE

Connecting with disconnected people is the mission at The Point Church in Knoxville, Tenn., and Seth Kunze, a fourth-year student, spent his vicarage there learning to do just that.

Everything about this Lutheran church is atypical. The Point meets in a movie theater, advertises on rock music radio stations and sets up informational booths at local conventions and festivals.

“We wanted to make it as easy as possible to welcome people back to Jesus and His family,” Kunze said. “It’s hard for anyone to step into a culture they haven’t been in for a long time.”

So through a “come as you are” policy, where texting questions to the pastor is encouraged, Kunze said he saw how social media helps connect the disconnected.

“We are accountable to our community because Jesus tells us to ‘see’ and ‘go’ to them,” Kunze said. “This isn’t an option. It’s a command by the Lord. We do everything we can to show we care at the level of food and housing but ultimately we care for their soul.”



Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair’ (Luke 7:44 ESV).

SETH
Kunze

Kunze said The Point focuses on reaching men ages 24 to 34 years old because the pastor believes the church could do a better job of reaching young men.

“Get the man,” Kunze said, “and you get the family.”

CONCORDIA SEMINARY

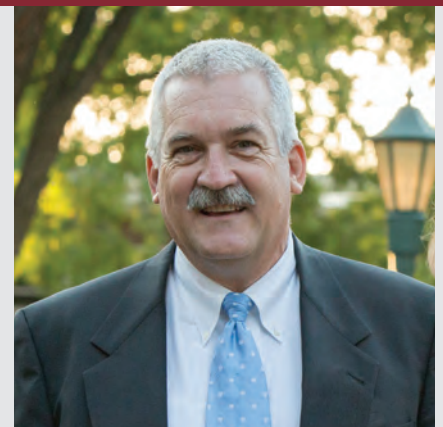
BEING *ACCOUNTABLE* TO COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

If Concordia Seminary’s Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President Michael Louis’ team is doing its job successfully, chances are you will never hear about it.

“The analogy I’ve always used is something (former NFL coach and broadcaster) John Madden used to say: ‘Everybody on the football team wants to hear his name on the loudspeaker, except for the offensive line,’” said Louis. “If you hear an offensive lineman’s name, he’s being called for a penalty.”

Louis says the same could be said for what he and his staff do to keep the Seminary accountable to federal, state and local governments, along with being a good neighbor to area businesses and residents.

Louis’ team is responsible for the Seminary’s finances, communications, facilities and grounds, human resources and other support services. He called his team’s duties foundational and rules-oriented.



Concordia Seminary Chief Operating Officer Michael Louis

KIM SHERWIN

"It sounds at first like a simple list of 'do this' instructions," said Kim Sherwin, a second-year deaconess student about the Bible passage that informs her mutual accountability with people around her. "But I think it also instructs the entire community to be accountable for each person. ... It is not enough to live as a Christian by yourself. As a community of believers, we have to look out for one another."

Her fieldwork at Intersect Arts Center at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in the Gravois Park neighborhood of south St. Louis has shown her that "our church buildings are not islands. They may be an oasis but around them are so many different groups of people," she said.

Holy Cross, a church built in 1867, is home to after-school programs for inner-city youth. Students can take ceramics, music and photography classes. The church also offers free finance and computer classes for adults and operates a food pantry for the community.

The Intersect art program gives children the opportunity to participate. It holds kids accountable, something

some of them haven't encountered before, through a rewards-based program where respectful behavior allows them to earn points they can redeem for prizes.

"We are called not only to serve our own members," Sherwin said. "We are called to serve the greater community. With Intersect, we're teaching children that the actions they take have consequences."

"I've learned that you don't have to travel around the world to look for the needs of people," Sherwin said. "They are here in our own community."

KIM Sherwin



And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone (1 Thess. 5:14-15 ESV).

"We shouldn't expect any attention," he said. "If we do, it's usually not good. We are so much more accountable than we've ever been before."

Ten years ago, the Seminary had no Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), human resources professionals or other similar specialists on staff.

Today, Louis said the CPAs on staff include himself, Chief Financial Officer Chad Cattoor and Controller Matthew Daley. Campus Facilities Planning Director Stephen Mudd is a licensed architect. The fundraising and communications team follows prescribed codes of ethics instituted by such organizations as the Association of Lutheran Development Executives and the Public Relations Society of America.

"Just because we're a nonprofit and we don't pay taxes, people think there's no accounting to anyone in the world," Louis said. "In fact, we have even more requirements to meet."

The Seminary is accountable to the federal government, namely the U.S. Department of Education. There are regular reviews and audits of Title IV financial aid programs to ensure the eligibility of students for financial aid and federal work study programs.

Jackie Parker is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

The Clery Act requires all colleges and universities that receive federal funding to share information about campus crimes to improve safety. If crimes aren't reported, funding could be at risk, Louis said.

Other federal agencies the Seminary must report to include the U.S. departments of Veteran Affairs and Labor, Homeland Security, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Internal Revenue Service and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, among others.

The Seminary also is accountable to the state of Missouri, St. Louis County, the city of Clayton and the Metropolitan Sewer District for inspections and permits.

Louis praised Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer and Meyer's wife, Diane, for working to build a strong community relationship with local leaders, including Clayton aldermen and the mayor.

"Concordia Seminary is here to prepare pastors and deaconesses," Louis said. "While doing that, our responsibility is to be a good citizen. You can't be a good Christian and citizen without being accountable to your community. Whatever our community asks for, we'll do our best to provide."

ACCOUNTABILITY TO ACCREDITING AGENCIES

When Concordia Seminary, St. Louis students graduate, their diplomas and transcripts need to hold meaning in the larger world of academia. It is important for them and it is important for the reputation of Concordia Seminary as an educational institution.

That is just one of the reasons the Seminary takes very seriously its accreditations with outside agencies, which conduct intense reviews of everything from the Seminary's financial responsibility to student learning.

In 2014 the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) reaffirmed the Seminary's accreditation with no notations.

"A potential pastor, Paul says, 'must be well thought of by outsiders' (1 Tim. 3:7). That's one reason why accreditation is very important," said Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer. "Accreditation is likewise important within the church, so you can have confidence that your professors and scholars can hold their own in presenting our historic faith and teaching it to coming generations of pastors and deaconesses."

The HLC documented the Seminary's strengths, such as its exceptional faculty, the Seminary's commitment to quality education and its strategic planning. The organization lauded the Seminary's focus on meeting the needs of its primary constituent: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The Seminary also was praised for its financial health and

commitment to biblical exegesis, which affirms that emerging pastors will be well formed in Lutheran theology.

Seminary Provost Dr. Jeffrey Kloha said he was pleased that both accrediting organizations noted the Seminary's outstanding faculty. "Their academic expertise, commitment to professional development and leadership and service to the LCMS made a significant impression," he said.

The next comprehensive accreditation review by ATS will be in 2024 (the maximum attainable reaffirmation). The Seminary's report to the HLC was so impressive that the Seminary was invited to participate in an accreditation process that is strategically oriented, with ongoing improvements and developments reported to the agency that removes the need for the major comprehensive report every 10 years.

Dr. Alan W. Borcharding, the Seminary's director of research, assessment and academic programming, said the Seminary would be unable to operate without accreditation. Students would be unable to receive federal student loans or have their degrees accepted by other graduate institutions.

"Being accredited demonstrates that our academic operations and administrative operations meet certain expectations required of all academic institutions," he said. "We also want to go beyond basic standards and make ongoing improvements that serve students and the Church."



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LAUDAMUS SPRING 2016 TOUR

Sunday, Feb. 21

8 a.m.
Mount Calvary Lutheran
Church
Warner Robins, Ga.

Thursday, Feb. 25

7 p.m.
Prince of Peace Lutheran
Church
Orlando, Fla.

Sunday, Feb. 21

7 p.m.
Abiding Savior Lutheran
Church
Gainesville, Fla.

Sunday, Feb. 28

8 a.m.
St. Pauls Lutheran Church
Cullman, Ala.

Monday, Feb. 22

7 p.m.
Grace Lutheran Church
Jacksonville, Fla.

Friday, April 8

7 p.m.
Immanuel Lutheran
Church
Washington, Mo.

Tuesday, Feb. 23

7 p.m.
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Boca Raton, Fla.

Saturday, April 16

6:30 p.m.
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Strasburg, Ill.

Wednesday, Feb. 24

7 p.m.
Grace Lutheran Church
Naples, Fla.

At each concert location, a Seminary recruiter will be available to talk with prospective students and anyone interested in church work opportunities, provide information on the admissions process and answer questions about Concordia Seminary.

For more information on the Laudamus spring tour, call 314-505-7118 or email marriottj@csl.edu.

For more information about Seminary admissions, call 800-822-9545 or visit www.csl.edu/admissions.



Photo: Jill Gray

Bach
AT THE SEM

MAY 15, 2016

THE CHAPEL OF ST. TIMOTHY AND ST. TITUS
3 P.M. AT CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS

**DON'T MISS OUR LAST CONCERT OF THE 2015-2016 CONCERT SERIES.
TO SEE PHOTOS FROM OUR PAST PERFORMANCES, VISIT WWW.CSL.EDU/BACH.**

Seminary launches online library, mobile app

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis — home of the second largest Lutheran library in North America — has made its vast trove of theological and scholarly resources more readily available to people around the world.

Users now have three new choices to get the Seminary's rich content: two websites and a new mobile app. Classes on Greek or Hebrew, Bible studies and other helps for biblical interpretation, podcasts, academic papers, journal articles, videos and more are now available online. All of the resources are free.

"It's like the sower of the good seed parable. This is like the sower casting the seed all over the place — not just where the soil is fertile, but even where people may never have heard of Christ or stepped foot in a Lutheran church," said Rev. Ben Haupt, the Seminary's director of library services.

The Seminary's institutional repository will continue to grow as new resources are produced and archived materials are converted to digital files. Items that have been available on iTunesU will continue.

THE NEW TOOLS:

SCHOLAR.CSL.EDU

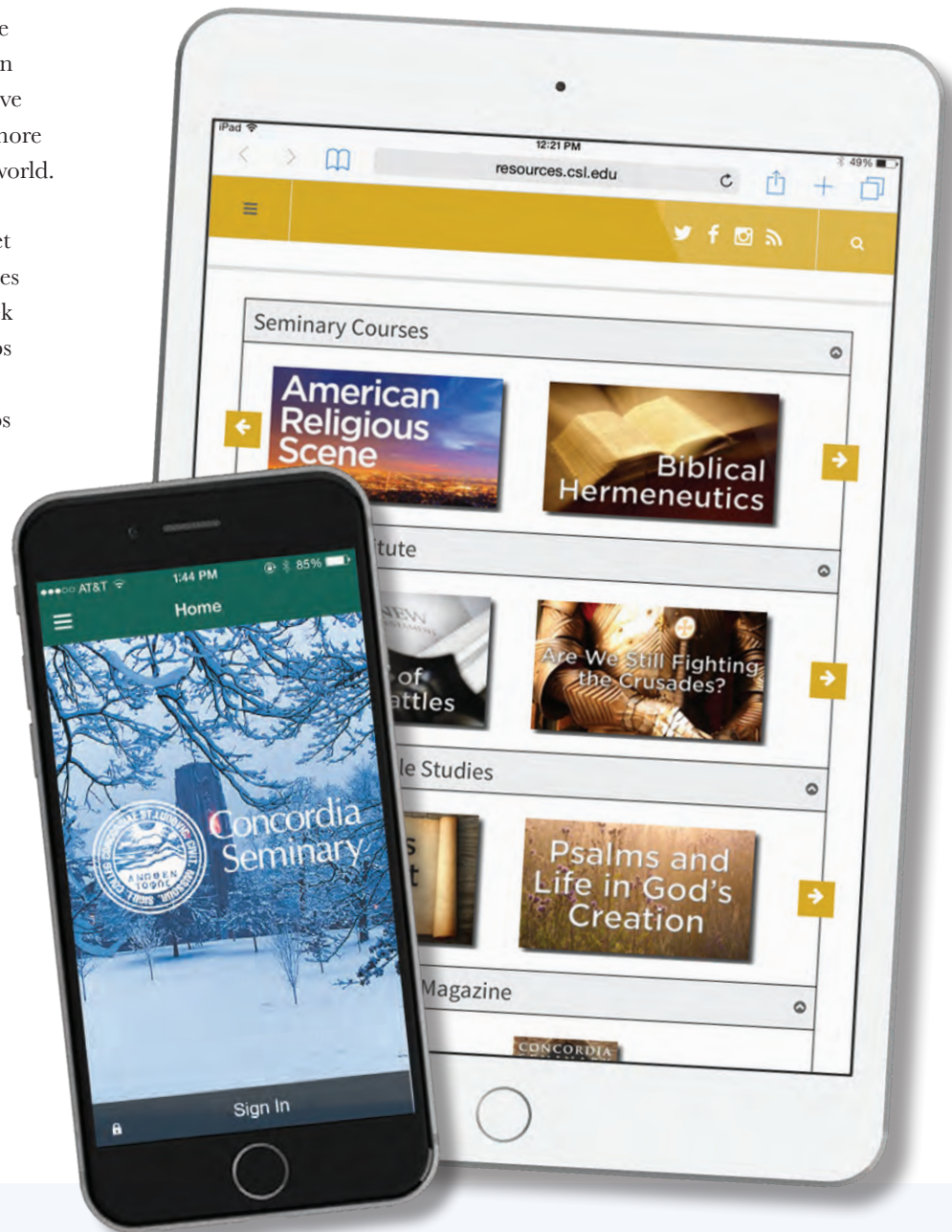
Digital versions of the Seminary's collection of published materials, conference and scholarly works, lectures and items from the rare book collection are available with full descriptions and tagging for maximum search ability. This site requires a full screen for best accessibility.

RESOURCES.CSL.EDU

The new custom-designed resources website offers a user-friendly, Netflix-style experience for accessing on-demand content. From the home page, visitors can choose from a carousel of options with the most popular items leading the feed. A key feature is easy scrolling to access a huge variety of resources. The same resources available on the scholar site are available here in a mobile-friendly format.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY MOBILE APP

Access digital resources, get a campus map, plus so much more with the Seminary's new mobile app. To get the app, search "Concordia Seminary" on the Apple and Android (Google Play) app stores.



Theological Symposium on memory and faith a success



The 26th Annual Theological Symposium Sept. 22-23, 2015, focused on memory and the life of faith. Photo: Jill Gray

About 140 guests and 150 students attended the 26th Annual Theological Symposium “In Remembrance of Me: Memory and the Life of Faith,” Sept. 22-23, 2015, at Concordia Seminary. Attendees came from several states including Oregon, California, Nebraska, Texas and Wisconsin.

The symposium brought together scientists, researchers and theologians to explore what is being learned about memory and its role in the life of faith, how it fosters community and what it means for ministry, preaching and pastoral care.

“Why are memories important? Without memories we don’t have a story to tell and we don’t know who we are,” said Dr. Charles P. Arand, the Eugene E. and Nell S. Fincke Graduate Professor of Theology.

To read more about the speakers and sessions, visit www.csl.edu/symposium2015. The 2016 Theological Symposium, “From Font to Grave: Catechesis for the Lifelong Disciple,” will be held Sept. 20–21 at Concordia Seminary. Learn more at www.csl.edu/resources/continuing/theological-symposium.

WHY ARE MEMORIES IMPORTANT? WITHOUT MEMORIES WE DON'T HAVE A STORY TO TELL AND WE DON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE.

— DR. CHARLES P. ARAND

NOW AVAILABLE

CONCORDIA SEMINARY'S “LIVING AND ACTIVE” 2016 CALENDAR

Call 800-822-5287 or email advancement@csl.edu to request a copy.



Note: Supplies are limited. Requests will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Emeritus Professor Dr. Louis A. Brighton enters rest

Dr. Louis A. Brighton, emeritus professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, peacefully was called to rest with Christ Friday, Nov. 13, 2015.

A funeral was held Nov. 20, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Savannah, Ga.



Emeritus Professor Dr. Louis A. Brighton, pictured here participating in Opening Service in 2009, died Nov. 13, 2015, in Savannah, Ga.

“Dr. Brighton was a churchman and scholar, but I’ll always remember him in a personal way,” said Concordia Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer. “For decades I worked with Lou and his dear Mary at The Lutheran Hour and Concordia Seminary, and came to appreciate him first and foremost as a man who loved people and especially loved his Savior. I am just one of countless

people that Dr. Brighton helped, and through his scholarship continues to help on the heavenward way.”

Brighton retired in 1998 after 24 years of distinguished service as professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary.

Prior to joining the faculty in 1974, he ministered to Lutheran congregations in the United States and England.

Brighton was ordained in 1952 at Concordia Lutheran Church, McKeesport, Pa. His parish ministry spanned 22 years and included serving in London as associate pastor at Luther-Tyndale Memorial Church from 1952 to 1954 and as pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church from

pastors in England that later developed into Westfield House in Cambridge. His parish ministry included service on various committees, especially those dealing with pastoral education and evangelism, and he was a member of the Board of Regents at Concordia Senior College (now Concordia Theological Seminary), Fort Wayne, Ind., from 1973 to 1974.

In 1999, Brighton wrote “Revelation” as part of the Concordia Commentary Series. After teaching a course on Revelation for 25 years at the Seminary, Brighton was recognized as one of the church’s foremost authorities on the book. His 2008 lectures on the book are available from the Seminary’s digital archives: scholar.csl.edu/revelation/.

“My dad was the best father that I could have ever had,” said his daughter,

DR. BRIGHTON WAS A CHURCHMAN AND SCHOLAR, BUT I’LL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM IN A PERSONAL WAY.

— DR. DALE A. MEYER

1954 to 1958. He served as a professor at Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE) Seminary, Cambridge,

England, in 1957 and served on the ELCE Board of Directors from 1954 to 1958.

He served as pastor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Decatur, Ill., from 1958 to 1968 and at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Lexington, Ky., from 1968 to 1974.

He helped establish the program of seminary preparation for Lutheran

Christine Moran, who lives in Savannah. “We miss him so much. The Spirit of God in him was so incredible. I felt God’s presence so strongly in him, even when I was a small child.”

The faculty, students and staff of Concordia Seminary have been blessed by Brighton’s ministry and teachings. He will be missed.

Memorial contributions can be made to Concordia Seminary’s Student Financial Aid Endowment Fund or The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s fund, “Christ’s Care for the Persecuted and Displaced.”



Ordination and commissioning anniversaries

The Seminary community celebrated ordination and commissioning anniversaries of faculty, staff and professors emeriti Dec. 2, 2015, with a special chapel service and reception. Those being celebrated included, front row, from left: Rev. Michael Redeker (20 years); Dr. Henry Rowold (50 years); Rev. Daniel Eggold (10 years); Dr. Bruce Schuchard (25 years); Rev. Thomas Egger (15 years); Dr. Arthur Graudin (65 years); Dr. James W. Voelz (40 years); and Dr. Jeffrey Kloha, provost. Back row, from left: Dr. Timothy Dost (30 years); Dr. David Schmitt (25 years); Marcos Kempff (40 years); Dr. James Brauer (50 years); Rev. Jeffrey Thormodson (20 years); Rev. Benjamin Haupt (10 years); Rev. William Wrede (15 years); Dr. William Schumacher (30 years); Rev. Harley Kopitske (55 years); and Dr. Dale A. Meyer, Seminary president. Not pictured: Dr. Victor Raj (40 years); Dr. Paul Schrieber (40 years); Rev. William Schmelder (55 years); Rev. Jonathan Stein (55 years); and Michael Flynn (40 years).



Multiethnic Symposium

The Multiethnic Symposium, with the theme “Communities of Hope: One Community in Christ,” was held Jan. 26-27 2016. The symposium is held every two years and brings together Lutherans of various ethnicities from across the country for two days of workshops, discussions and worship. The symposium explored how the church should engage in ethnic ministry and what it means — and what it will take — to become a truly multiethnic church.

The first HMong Symposium, “One Household in Christ: *Ib Tse Haw/ Hw Tsw Yexus*,” preceded the Multiethnic Symposium Jan. 23-25.

Both events concluded with the 10th annual lecture in Hispanic/ Latino Theology and Missions presented by Dr. Leopoldo Sánchez. To read more about these events, visit www.csl.edu/resources/continuing/multiethnic-symposium.

Helping the Seminary be accountable in a diverse world

BY JACKIE PARKER

Rev. Laokouxang (Kou) Seying says his heart is in education and his passion is mission work.

Seying joined the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in September as associate dean for urban and cross-cultural ministries and the Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry. He oversees the Seminary's two ethnic-focused pastoral formation programs, the Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS) and the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT).

"Brother Kou brings an innermost wealth of churchmanship experience," said Dr. John Loum, EIIT director. "He has a passion for mission and an ability for leading the Church and Seminary along the path of diversifying and awakening us to the sense and opportunities in this era of global integration and blessings."

Seying grew up in the mountains of Laos and came to the United States as a refugee when he was 12 years old. He, along with his parents and four siblings, arrived in Indianapolis in 1976 and were sponsored by St. Peter Lutheran Church. If someone would have told him as a child, "One day you're going to occupy an endowed

chair at a premier seminary in America," Seying said that would have been inconceivable. "It is simply God's grace and mercy, according to His purpose."



Rev. Kou Seying, Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry, was interviewed in November 2015 about the importance of partnerships in ministry to ethnic communities by a video team from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Photo: Melanie Ave

The first ordained HMong pastor in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), Seying previously served the LCMS California-Nevada-Hawaii District (CNH) beginning in 2004 as a deployed mission developer and strategist of Joy of Harvest Ministries in Merced, Calif.

"Professor Seying has years of experience serving and teaching in multicultural contexts, as well as working with mission churches throughout California," said

Provost Dr. Jeffrey Kloha. "He has already been connecting the Seminary to congregations, districts and the national office, and we look forward to the continued growth of our programs that form pastors for mission settings."

Much of Seying's multicultural ministry experience is in HMong, Southeast Asian and African immigrant communities, especially in the areas of leadership training. Besides serving the LCMS CNH District for more than a decade, he served as pastor of HMong Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minn., 1991-95, and taught at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn.

Seying holds a Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.; has studied systemic theology at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.; and is completing his

doctorate of philosophy at Concordia Theological Seminary. Seying and his wife, Maykou, have four children.

At Concordia Seminary, Seying is working to see how all areas of the Seminary can embrace diversity.



Rev. Kou Seying coached the Preachers soccer team in the fall of 2015, which ended the season with a 3-5-1 record. The team also won the coveted Nicea Cup against Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. Photo: Courtesy Kou Seying

“I’m talking to every department and we have a ways to go,” he said. “But it is not disappointing. That’s just the reality. We need to reflect America’s population.”

A recent study by the Pew Research Center showed the least diverse denominations in the country were the National Baptist Convention, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the LCMS.

“My position is to help the Seminary be accountable with diversity,” Seying said. “The Church has to accept this challenge as an opportunity to embrace and be accountable to the biblical mandate Jesus gives to us,” he said, referring to the Great Commission. “Our accountability begins there. You can’t ignore your neighbors just because they have a different country of birth or cultures that are different from yours. The Gospel must go to all nations

and all the world is here. If we do not embrace these opportunities, the Church, and the LCMS will be irrelevant in a very short time.”

Out of our understanding of accountability, Seying said the Seminary needs to work toward being a more welcoming place to people of all backgrounds. That means embracing different cultures and connecting with others in ways we haven’t in the past.

How we embrace the mission will impact the Seminary, its students, the churches they serve and individual Christians in the pew, he said.

“We are training pastors, deaconesses, missionaries — servants who will embrace these mission opportunities,” Seying said. “We are connected instantly and what we do here at the Seminary impacts

Jackie Parker is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

**YOU CAN’T
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FROM YOURS.**

**— REV. LAOKOUXANG
(KOU) SEYING**

the rest of the world. This Seminary belongs to God. It is not just something that belongs to the white folks,” Seying said. “It is your Seminary, it is your Church. We need to open our doors to other cultures. If we’re not visible, we’re not available. We need to cultivate our rich heritage of sound doctrine so we may interpret the present and enrich the future.”

'It's not about me. It's about God'

PH.D. STUDENT PREPARES FOR SERVICE IN KENYA

BY KIM PLUMMER KRULL



Christine Ouko, left, with the Maasai women of Kumpa Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya in Kajiado County, Central Diocese, after a Bible study in August 2015. Photo: Courtesy Christine Ouko

Christine Ouko's gentle voice grows soft when she recalls the survivors she counseled as a social work intern at a women's hospital in Nairobi. When post-election violence rocked Kenya seven years ago, she listened to stories of abuse, longing to offer more than she was equipped for with only a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology.

"I had the counseling skills and could link them to resources, but there was still a gap in between. What next could I tell this person?" she asked about the patients in the hospital's gender violence recovery center. Some of them were unspeakably young. "I realized there was a greater need than the physical — that I could not touch them spiritually and share with them the word of hope that is through God."

Today, Ouko (pronounced oh-oo-koe) is a graduate student at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. She earned her master's degree in May 2015 and is now pursuing her Ph.D. in practical theology (theology and culture).

Her goal is to help her church body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya

(ELCK), train more deaconesses in a country where challenges — HIV and AIDs, teen pregnancy, a lack of educational and economic opportunities — hit women especially hard. The ELCK is a partner church body of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

It's a quest that also holds challenges for her as a wife and mother. Her husband and three children remain in Africa. She misses them terribly. But she is focusing on a larger calling.

"If I stayed with my family, I would not be helping these people and that's what God really wants us to do," Ouko said. "It's not about me. It's about God. It's about Jesus."

FIRE OF DETERMINATION

Ouko didn't know the meaning of "deaconess" when her husband, Richard, showed her the Facebook page for the LCMS.

"This is the kind of job you want to do," Richard said, after he read an LCMS Facebook post about the Seminary's program in deaconess studies.

The program provides theological training for women to serve as professional church workers through spiritual care, mercy work and teaching the Christian faith.

At the time, Ouko was working at a women's hospital and also volunteering at her Lutheran church in Nairobi, which had opened its doors to displaced Kenyans. Richard — who had grown up in the ELCK and whom Ouko calls her "pillar" — knew of his wife's fervent desire to share Christ with the hurting souls who filled her days.

When Ouko asked Dr. Walter Obare, bishop of the ELCK, if he had heard of Concordia Seminary, his enthusiastic response also encouraged her to seek theological training. "That's my school!" exclaimed Obare, who received his Master of Arts from the Seminary in 1997.

In 2013, Ouko arrived on campus and immediately booked appointments with her professors. She worried about her limited American-English vocabulary and knowledge of U.S. culture. But her instructors calmed her fears.

Dr. Gerhard Bode, the Seminary's dean of advanced studies, said Ouko has managed well.

"She's so dedicated to serving the Church and getting a good education," said Bode, noting that Ouko completed her master's degree in two years, an accomplishment that many students "would find a challenge — and she did a very good job."

Last summer Ouko returned to Kenya on Seminary break and helped teen mothers learn life skills to improve their employment prospects and care for their babies.

"This is how she spends her summer!" Bode said. "She's modest and quiet, but once you get to talking to her, you can see her fire of determination."

"She's going to be a very good example for young people in Kenya of what they can accomplish through education," said Bode, who predicts Ouko will be "one of the most important people in the next generation of deaconesses" in the ELCK.

Dr. Gillian Bond, Concordia Seminary's director of deaconess studies, said that Seminary training will better equip Ouko to address the challenges of Kenyan women, including those with HIV or AIDS, whose struggles are compounded by cultural ostracism.

"With her good biblical and theological grounding, as well as her knowledge of the situation, she can give needed spiritual care and also raise awareness and provide education to change attitudes," Bond said.

Dr. Richard Marrs, the Seminary's director of the Master of Divinity and Residential Alternate Route programs, notes Ouko's "willingness to take on new challenges while being a mother and wife at long distance.

"She sees the benefit of the personal sacrifice now for her church body in Kenya in the long run," he said.

Her professors call her self-sacrificing, but Ouko points to the sacrifices of others. "I know someone somewhere sacrificed for me being here, so I also need to sacrifice to help others," she said, referring to donors who make possible her Seminary education, including her scholarship from the LCMS' Global Seminary Initiative, which supports international students identified by their home churches as future leaders.

"You're never blessed to be a blessing to yourself," Ouko said. "You're blessed to be a blessing to help others."

Kim Plummer Krull is a St. Louis-based freelance writer.

**SHE'S GOING TO BE A
VERY GOOD EXAMPLE FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE IN KENYA OF
WHAT THEY CAN ACCOMPLISH
THROUGH EDUCATION.**

— DR. GERHARD BODE

APPRECIATES SACRIFICES

Ouko said she was surprised when Obare told her that she's the first woman in the ELCK to earn a master's degree in deaconess studies. That was humbling, Ouko said, because being a first was never her goal.

"It means that I can go back and do what I'm supposed to do," said Ouko, who, through ELCK congregations, already has organized "Luther Ladies of Faith" — women who gather to share spiritually and explore opportunities "to achieve economic independence to sustain their families."

Her professors have no doubt Ouko will make a difference in the ELCK, a church body that she said at present has only about 50 deaconesses.



Christine Ouko, right, helps the children of the Kibera slums during a free medical camp in 2009 offered by a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod church. This picture was taken after the post-election violence in Kenya, which left many people in dire need of health care. Photo: Courtesy Christine Ouko



THE PROMISE OF CHRIST FOR ALL
GENERATIONS

THE CAMPAIGN FOR CONCORDIA SEMINARY

Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer, center, along with Campaign Director Paul Gray, left, Provost Dr. Jeffrey Kloha, Seminary CEO Michael Louis, National Campaign Co-Chair Craig Olson and Senior Vice President for Seminary Advancement Vicki Biggs toast the success of the campaign at a dinner on campus Sept. 25, 2015. Photo: Jill Gray



**Endowment Funds
 and Estate Gifts**

\$110 million

- Operational endowments
- Endowed faculty chairs
- Scholarship endowments



**Annual Support
 and Scholarships**

\$60 million

- Sustain and grow scholarships
- Retain and develop world-class faculty
- Maintain the campus

Concordia Seminary announces campaign

From a stage set before about 150 alumni, donors, faculty and students, Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer announced the public launch of *Generations: The Campaign for Concordia Seminary* Friday, Sept. 25, at a formal gathering held on campus.

With a goal of raising \$180 million, the Generations Campaign seeks to build endowment, increase annual support and scholarships, and expand library and learning technology initiatives. The campaign is the largest in the Seminary's 176-year history.

"The Generations Campaign is going to help ensure that our families for generations to come will have the opportunity to hear the truth of Jesus from pastors who know it and model it in their lives," said Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer during the launch event.

"Many of us were privileged to grow up in strong congregations. I want my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren to have that same rich spiritual experience that I have had and you have had. Concordia Seminary is all about the Gospel of Jesus Christ for all people and, now especially, for coming generations."

The campaign's kick-off gala, held in Koburg Hall, featured multimedia presentations and testimonials by several guest speakers. Many

multigenerational church worker families were recognized, including Rev. Bob Hoehner ('72) of St. Charles, Mo., and his son, Rev. Mark Hoehner ('00) of St. Peters, Mo. The Hoehners shared how important the Seminary formation experience has been to them, their families and their congregations.

WE HAVE A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE SEEKING MEANING AND PURPOSE IN LIFE, AND THE CHURCH MUST BE THE PLACE WHERE THEY ULTIMATELY FIND IT.

— CRAIG OLSON

allowing us to focus on the intellectual and spiritual development of pastors, deaconesses and missionaries who will make an eternal difference in the world."

The campaign, approved by the Seminary's Board of Regents, is being steered by a 25-member volunteer National Campaign Council. Craig and Jane Olson of Orange, Calif., are serving as co-chairs of the council.

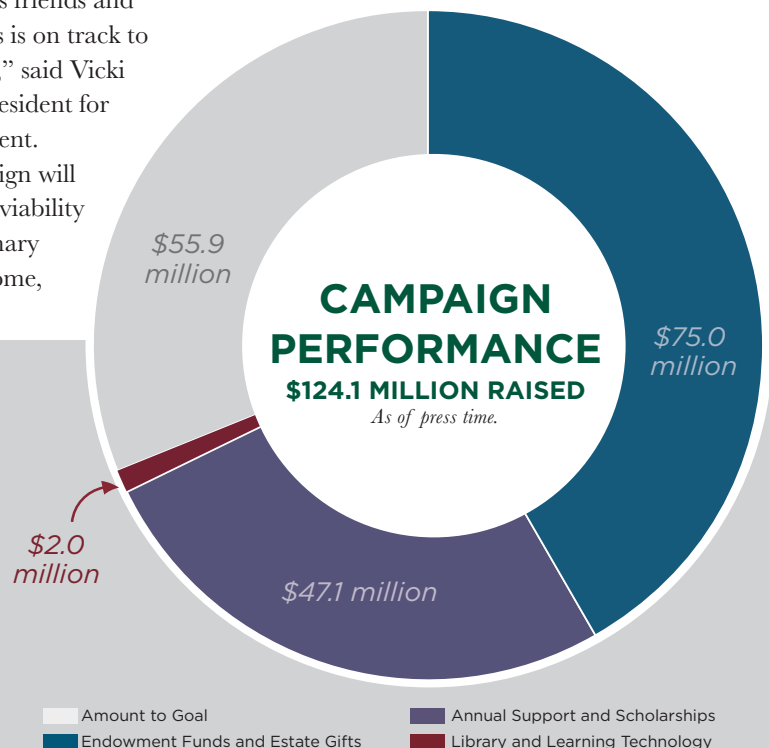
"We have a whole generation of young people who are seeking meaning and purpose in life, and the church must be the place where they ultimately find it," said Craig Olson, retired CEO of a global baking company. "Concordia Seminary is shaping pastors who will lead this evangelical effort. Producing high-caliber pastors for ministry in today's world is not simple and it comes at a price worthy of sacrifice. Your participation through prayer, service and generosity is essential."

To learn more about the Generations Campaign or to make a gift, visit www.csl.edu/generations.

At press time, the Seminary had raised more than \$124 million in gifts and pledges toward the campaign's \$180 million goal.

"Thanks to generous friends and alumni, Generations is on track to be transformational," said Vicki Biggs, senior vice president for seminary advancement.

"Gifts to this campaign will ensure the financial viability of Concordia Seminary for generations to come,



Library and Learning Technology

\$10 million

- Digital accessibility
- Facility enhancements

Seminary Guild going strong

BY MEGAN PANARUSKY



About 130 people attended the Seminary Guild luncheon in December 2015 at Concordia Seminary. Guild members brought donations of new socks, underwear and other items to the Seminary's Re-Sell It Shop. Photo: Kim Braddy

With more than \$16,000 of its annual \$20,600 goal already raised, the Concordia Seminary Guild is well on its way to funding its project list for the campus and students for the 2015-16 academic year.

The Concordia Seminary Guild is a women's organization that exists to serve Concordia Seminary. Women from all over the country are Guild members because they want to support a thriving, edifying community at Concordia Seminary and ease the financial expense on students and their families.

"Some of the ladies have been members all of their adult lives," said Guild President Joyce Bischoff. "It's nice to know we're helping the Seminary community."

Opportunities for fellowship complement the Guild's focus on service. Guild members who live in the St. Louis area enjoy meeting together at the Seminary for lunch, speakers and other programs at least six times each year.

The Guild has purchased new custom albs and banners for the chapel, new furnishings for Loeber Hall and provided funds to cover some on-campus student gatherings.

Its members also raised funds to provide a copy of the required text *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* by Gerhard O. Forde for every incoming student.

Helping individual students with tuition remains a Guild priority. So far, one fourth-year Master of Divinity student has received \$1,000 in student aid. The Guild plans to help two more students with \$1,000 each in tuition aid this academic year and award \$1,000 scholarships to two additional students. The financial aid office decides which students will receive the funds.

Other projects the Guild hopes to fund include student intramural

SO FAR THIS YEAR, THE SEM GUILD HAS SUPPORTED:

- Food Bank
- Re-Sell It Shop
- Campus security
- Families in Transition program for new Seminary families
- After chapel coffee fellowship time
- Center for Hispanic Studies
- Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology
- International students

programs, off-campus student events and fresh plants in the spring for campus landscaping and beautifying efforts led by Guild member Diane Meyer.

"Serving the Lord in this capacity has been a great blessing for me," said Bischoff, who is currently completing her final term as Guild president. "It has been a joy presiding at the gatherings and enjoying the fellowship of lovely Christian women."

Megan Panarusky is a St. Louis-based freelance writer.

CALLING NEW GUILD MEMBERS!

For more information about the Concordia Seminary Guild, visit www.csl.edu/friends/seminary-guild. The Guild is always welcoming new members. To join, email Jean Redman at grannyjar@netzero.net.

Taking care of our neighbors

BY MEGAN PANARUSKY

In June 2014, a tornado leveled about 75 percent of the small farming town of Pilger, Neb., and took with it the building of St. John's Lutheran Church. Since then, the church's pastor, Rev. Terry Makelin ('10), said the tornado has shaped the many challenges and opportunities for ministry in the community.

"Our mission statement changed," Makelin said. "We are now a mercy-giving church. It's kind of like a death in the family. It's right there; you can't avoid it. You have to learn this new vocation. We can either flee from it or we can say, 'How can we help?'"

The people of St. John's have been learning what it means to live out their vocations, or God-given callings, with their neighbors in the aftermath of the tornado that not only ripped apart buildings, but

job on hold so she could fill multiple leadership roles in the community's recovery. As Pilger's recovery manager coordinator, she has been the one to connect each person affected by the storm with the right organization to help them. Sometimes that has meant she has referred the person to St. John's.

"Both positions (on Pilger's long-term recovery committee and her involvement at St. John's) helped me to get maximum benefit for the victim," Peterson said.

While some rebuilding has been completed in Pilger, much remains to be done. Ground was broken for St. John's new building last fall, which the congregation hopes to

share the unchanging Word of God in the midst of great turmoil.

"Our doctrine, our teaching is gold," Makelin said. He emphasizes how profound it is that we are simply called to share the Word and God's mercy with the people immediately around us.

"Lutherans are in a unique position and opportunity to work in our vocations, whether the opportunity is a tornado or ... somebody's dog died," he said. "As a person's neighbor, we are there and can proclaim what God has done for the world

Moving forward from the disaster in Pilger is still not easy, Makelin said,

AS CHRISTIANS WE ARE CALLED NOT TO JUST TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES, WE ARE CALLED FOR THE SAKE OF OUR NEIGHBOR.

— REV. TERRY MAKELIN ('10)

also lives. They are learning what it is like to be responsible for the needs of the community in times of hardship.

"As Christians we are called not to just take care of ourselves, we are called for the sake of our neighbor," Makelin said.

That hasn't always been easy for the church or its members. Makelin often offers encouragement to church members who have become overwhelmed as they try to meet the ongoing needs in the community or even move forward with their own lives in the storm's aftermath.

"I've spent an enormous amount of time just picking people up," he said. "It hurts to see them suffering, and yet you know they have to. This is what they're called to do."

When the tornado hit, St. John's member Becky Peterson put her part-time paralegal



A tornado leveled St. John's Lutheran Church in Pilger, Neb., in June 2014. The only structure left standing was the church's bell tower. Photo: Courtesy St. John's Lutheran Church

begin using this spring. Members currently meet in a temporary building on the church's property.

Makelin said it is difficult to build a new church when future membership is difficult to predict. "I hope [the residents of Pilger] see us building in faith, that we put our trust in God," he said.

St. John's has been able to share about \$250,000 in donations with Pilger and neighboring towns for recovery and rebuilding efforts. It also has been able to

but moments of hope continue to surface. Some of St. John's youth have demonstrated both compassion and leadership. Small financial gifts and simple listening ears have had a big impact on the hearts of those who are hurting. And Makelin gets to share the Gospel every time he is interviewed.

"I never want the focus to be on me, and yet I recognize God has placed me here in this time," he said. "I'm blessed to be a pastor in this because I get to watch God work. Humbly enough, He uses our hands to do it."

Megan Panarusky is a St. Louis-based freelance writer.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY

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TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2016

3 p.m. CDT - Vicarages & Internships

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#selfie with @DaleMeyerda
#Helpersofjoy @thelcms
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Dale Meyer and 2 others
4/29/15, 7:48 PM from Clayton, MO

Photo: Joseph Ferry and @concordiasem

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