Faithfulness in Motion

Glendine Soliseth, MA/MSW,
Luther Seminary/Augsburg College, 2004
A Day in the Life
Feb. 15-16, 2004
10 a.m.
Discover what it is like to attend seminary, meet professors and students, and explore degree options. For more information visit www.luthersem.edu/admissions/dayinthelife/ or call the admissions office at 651-641-3521, or 1-800-3LUTHER.

Aus Memorial Lecture
on Evangelism
March 9-10, 2004
Chapel of the Incarnation
“Evangelism and American Culture”
Jean Bethke Elshtain, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics, University of Chicago Divinity School. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Go to www.luthersem.edu/lectures/ for more information, or call 651-641-3451.

Save the Date!
Previews 2004
Offered April 22 and 29
Pastors, mark your calendars to bring your congregation’s high school youth to Previews for a sneak peek at seminary life. Visit www.luthersem.edu/previews for more details, or call 651-641-3419 (toll free 888-358-8437).

Order Lenten Devotionals for Your Congregation
Once again Luther Seminary and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary are offering Lenten devotion booklets for Lent to congregations. The Lent 2004 theme is “O Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery.” Cost is $12.50 per 25, plus exact shipping costs. TO GUARANTEE DELIVERY ORDERS MUST BE PLACED BY JAN. 26. Orders placed after Jan. 26 will be fulfilled until supplies run out. To place an order, contact the Luther Seminary Bookstore at 651-641-3440, or toll-free at 1-800-541-4187.

Sign up to receive devotionals via e-mail for free at www.luthersem.edu/email

New, from Luther Productions!
Experiencing God
(a six-part DVD series)
In this series, 10 Luther Seminary professors delve into the big questions of the Christian faith: Who is God? What does the culture say about God? Who in the world is Jesus and why does he matter? Who is the Holy Spirit? This is a wonderful series for new members groups, adult forums and confirmation classes.

Is This The Time?
Interpreting the Mystery of Revelation
(VHS, DVD and CD)
Craig Koester, professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, presents the Book of Revelation’s message from a loving, hopeful, Christian perspective. In addition, he examines the sensationalistic interpretations of Revelation, showing why these approaches are problematic.

For more information about these and other Luther Productions materials, visit www.lutherproductions.com, or call 651-646-5526.
The theme for this annual report is “Faithfulness in Motion.” The Bible is alive with stories of the journey. We are on the move, seeking to be faithful to God. But God never promised a triumphal march from success to success. Abraham not only moved out in faith, but he continued to hope against hope, even when the promise seemed remote (Romans 4:18).
The resurrection of Jesus Christ signals God’s ultimate triumph, and those who follow in the way of the risen Lord still encounter trials, sin and death on earth. In the midst of a year of strong progress at Luther Seminary, the difficulties we face draw us to God, beyond our own strengths. Let me name some large challenges and consider how we continue to abide in hope in God.

Luther Seminary Two Years After September 11

Remember the counsel we received two years ago from a trustee in the wake of the calamities of September 11? “Now is when we need Luther Seminary to move ahead.” While many seminaries pulled back, we sensed he had spoken the word of the Spirit. We have continued to implement the seminary’s plan, Serving the Promise of our Mission, even as the world deals with terrorism, the soul of the nation is tested by warfare, and the value of our endowment declined with the stock market.

In previous issues of Story magazine, we have reported how the seminary has struggled to understand our Christian calling amid armed conflicts in the world, with students, faculty and sister churches from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Meanwhile, the decline in our endowment, averaged over a three-year period, gave us less to work with in this present year and has required even deeper cuts for 2004–2005.

At the same time you, Luther Seminary’s Partners and other donors have sustained and increased your giving, even as you have faced financial challenges of your own. There are more of you than ever before. You are a blessing to us! Thanks also to the committed leaders in the churchwide offices and synods, the ELCA has maintained its support while benevolence income has declined.

This past year, we reached critical milestones on the journey to implement our strategic plan, Serving the Promise of our Mission. Our students have caught the vision. We inaugurated a doctor of ministry program in congregational leadership and mission, and our third cohort of students is already signing up. In May, the student government took the initiative to work with the deans in helping assess how well their education is preparing them for leadership in mission. This fall, the enrollment of new students is up by 13 percent. We are deeply encouraged as we meet them in discipleship groups.

Interviews with 30 current faculty over the summer disclosed deep engagement in our shared purpose. All three of our new faculty are experienced pastors and teachers with a calling to the church’s mission. Each was already exercising significant leadership where they were. With the support of her congregation, Cross of Glory in Lockport, Ill., Pastor Kelly Fryer accepted our invitation to a new position in congregational mission, dividing her time for the coming year with her pastoral call. Dr. Rolf Jacobson came to us as assistant professor of Old Testament from Augsburg College, Minneapolis. Dr. Richard Bliese, our new academic dean, was Augustana Heritage Associate Professor of Global Mission and Evangelism and director of graduate studies at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, while also serving as a pastor at St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church in Glenwood, Ill. We are blessed by their arrival.

We are abiding in hope, in spite of real challenges. Yes, we are making significant cuts...
and realigning our programs. Yes, we are dealing
with forces beyond our control. As president, if I
did not know that this is a faith venture, I could not
sleep at night. But the reason for our strength is a
humbling and joyful truth. God is faithful. We abide
in hope.

The Western Mission Cluster Following
the Death of Timothy Lull

Then where was God when our friend and teacher
of the church, Timothy Lull, died so suddenly?
We were working together with Pacific Lutheran
Theological Seminary and its gifted president
toward the full consolidation of all of our work in
internships, contextual leadership, clinical pastoral
education and cross-cultural studies. This plan was
a fruition of several years of collaboration, supported by our
Lilly grant which ends this December. In May, our boards
adopted our commitment to put all of this in place on July 1. Two
days later, Tim, recovering from surgery, died suddenly, apparently
from an embolism.

We are all still reeling from his death, especially his wife,
Mary Carlton, their children and his family, including his sister,
our dean of students, Pastor Patricia Lull. Having
known and loved him for 25 years, I find myself
reciting the words of the service of burial, “Help us,
we pray, in the midst of things we cannot under-
stand, to believe and trust in the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection
of the dead.” Tim embodied our theme like few
others. He was “faithfulness in motion.”

What now for the Western Mission Cluster?
Both of our faculties, our boards, PLTS’s new
interim president Dr. Ted Peters, and the Western
Mission Cluster Task Force, chaired by Dr. Judy
Larsen, are seeking to meet the challenge together.
We are providing a higher quality and more efficient
educational experience for students and congrega-
tions in our contextual leadership initiative. We
are reaching out to the broader Western Mission
Network with our colleges, synods, camps and
congregations. We believe God has called us into a
new era of leadership development for the church.
Once again, instead of pulling back, we in the
Western Mission Cluster are moving forward and
“abiding in hope.”

Anticipating the 2005 ELCA Votes on Homosexuality

Bishop Mark Hanson led the churchwide assembly
in Milwaukee in August with remarkable spirit and
skill. His evangelical preaching and inspiring intro-
ductions of the five strategic initiatives clarified the
calling of the ELCA and focused attention on what
role the churchwide organization might best play.
The seminaries are especially engaged in the “lead-
ership” initiative, eager for the
attention of the church on its
leadership needs.

The media, however,
focused on the failure of the
effort to delay voting until 2007
concerning efforts to change
ELCA policies against the
blessing of same sex committed
relationships and the ordination
of non-celibate homosexual
candidates. Outside and inside
the assembly, rainbow scarves
identified advocates of changing the standards
“now” as a matter of “justice.” The deliberation was
respectful, measured and intense. An eastern
bishop articulated the contrary apprehension.
“How could we be expected to vote responsibly in
2005 on possible changes when the larger study on
sexuality would not yet be completed? The next
two years are going to be very difficult.”

Beware of self-righteousness!

Our Lord’s encounters with the Pharisees are etched
in our souls as a warning against those who fail to
see their own need of God’s justification of the
ungodly. In a time when our media culture disdains
moralism as the control of personal freedom by the
unenlightened, a new self-righteousness may
“... because God is calling and sending the church of Jesus Christ into apostolic mission in the 21st century world of many cultures and religions, we will abide in hope.”

emerge: “Thank God I am not a Pharisee!” Confident “we know what justice is” in the complexity of sexual identity and behavior, we rally quickly to “progressive” causes. Soon we are cool, self-assured, and desensitized to hazardous behaviors and values. Unless both this political correctness and the moralistic righteousness it despises are chastened by the Spirit, they will accelerate, what one friend calls, the “casual drift away from our church’s biblical moorings.”

Seek first the righteousness of the kingdom of God!
Morality and justice are two proper forms of the question of righteousness, with morality more individually focused and justice relating to the neighbor and community. In an era when the house of the culture is on fire with greedy exploitation of sex, the deep scriptural witness to God’s righteousness must be heard. While the Bible gives profound witness to our intimate human relationships with particularly sharp condemnations from Jesus against divorce, God’s word runs still deeper. God’s law is a schoolmaster driving us to Christ and his righteousness. In all of our lives, surely in our sexual lives, none is righteous, not one.

For the most part, we have grasped this in our communion practice. Whether or not they have identified themselves as “Reconciled in Christ,” almost every congregation welcomes people with all kinds of sexual identities and practices to the altar without demanding a more stringent repentance from some than others. It is the Lord’s table, not ours. In the church, we know that only Christ’s hospitality for sinners offers the reconciliation we desperately need.

Do not commit adultery!
When an earlier churchwide assembly debated the social statement on abortion, the deliberation was profound and faithful because we did not succumb to the questions thrust upon us by the politics of the age, i.e. “Are you for the rights of women? Or are you for the rights of the unborn?” Instead, led by sound biblical and ethical teachers, we began with the fifth commandment, “Do not kill!” We didn’t waste great effort on hypothetical questions about exactly when life begins, but we pressed ourselves to answer, “God help us, in what circumstances will we terminate human life?”

The wisdom of the assembly was deep with human anguish and faith. A soldier told of killing in war. A woman wept when she recalled her daughter’s rape. A man spoke quietly about ending life support for his dying father. God’s law was not mocked. No one pretended that abortion is not the termination of human life. In adopting the statement, we confessed together, and we trusted together in the mercy of Christ.

Martin Luther, that old Saxon for whom our tradition is named, had a remarkable capacity for
earthly affirmation of sexuality. Where did this former monk find the freedom to rejoice at the blessing of seeing Katie’s pigtail braids on the pillow next to his? In a church where celibacy had become a legislated burden, how was he able to understand marriage as an honorable and necessary “estate,” in which the whole society has a stake?

The wisdom that objected to “living together without benefit of marriage” knew that the blessing of the ritual was for the community as well as for the persons involved. Luther interpreted the sixth commandment as the biblical protection of marriage. The “estate” of marriage is civil and public. We all know men and women, young and old, who live together without being married, with or without our approval. But we hold our clergy to a public standard of marital fidelity for the community’s good.

Is an “estate” possible to bless the committed intimacy of people of the same sex and to protect the community? In 1993, the ELCA conference of bishops found no basis in either Scripture or tradition “for the establishment of an official ceremony by this church for the blessing of a homosexual relationship.” Will this boundary be moved? Without a legitimately recognized estate for committed sexual relationships, heterosexual or homosexual, ordination to the public office of ministry is impossible.

My friends tease me with the nickname, “David the Hopeful.” I smile because I know God is the ground of our hope not our optimism. I will admit, however, that it is harder to remain non-anxious when almost every day someone adamantly agrees with the bishop: “The next two years are going to be very difficult.”

In mid-September I sat with a group of pastors at the Northwestern Minnesota Synod leaders retreat. We discussed the state of the church and the seminary until late in the night. The conversation about the sexuality discussion was candid, including the quiet distress of a senior pastor who wondered aloud, “What will I do if the church I love leaves me out in the cold?” The primary tone, however, was confident. “I was much more worried two years ago before Dr. James Childs, who is heading the sexuality task force, helped our whole synod assembly discuss the question. We certainly did not agree with each other on many things, but we began to discover that our disagreements did not need to divide us as Lutheran Christians.” Someone else praised the fairness and wisdom of the ELCA studies on sexuality, Journey Together Faithfully. “Almost everyone will find their convictions deeply respected in this material. We can understand each other better.”

The most promising comment, however, came from a young pastor. “We are going to disagree in this vote. Only the gospel of God’s reconciliation in Christ can keep us together. This is the main thing. Keep the seminary focused on preparing evangelical leaders to help us find our way together beyond the vote. This is the main thing.”

This is exactly what we must do, and we are prepared to do it. Many debates will continue on this campus because future leaders need to ground their convictions in the scriptural witness to the gospel and to understand those who disagree with them, but neither this particular debate nor the vote in 2005 is “the main thing.” Luther Seminary’s strategic initiatives are all built around the church’s needs for leadership in the time of mission ahead: biblical preaching and worship; congregational mission and leadership; children, youth and family ministry; world Christianity and Islam; and Centered Life. This is the calling of our mission.

In our financial challenges, we will “pray to God and tell the people” what is needed. We will grieve the death of those we love, but not as those who have no hope. And, because God is calling and sending the church of Jesus Christ into apostolic mission in the 21st century world of many cultures and religions, we will abide in hope. *
Harmonious voices lifted in song, the golden tones of the two bell choirs—even the cacophony of hammers and saws as Bethel Lutheran, Rochester, Minn., constructs its new 1000-seat sanctuary—all of it is music to Jon Strommen Campbell's ears, and his have been professionally trained. His opportunity at Bethel came after he earned his master of sacred music degree at Luther Seminary. “The MSM program really gave me a sense of vocation,” he says. “I grow as a person of faith as I do what I love.” Now Jon's ears are helping him consult with the builders and engineers who will make sure that Bethel's new acoustics sound like heaven.

Jon came to seminary well prepared, having spent his youth active in choral music. There are few sacred music programs available in the U.S., and Luther Seminary shone like a beacon. “Just to have the audition was a thrill to me,” Jon says. “I was passionately excited afterward.”

A lot of what Jon took away with him from Luther is an awareness of new connections—a personal network that allows him access to industry experts and consultants, but also a sense of being a connector for others. “Being pastoral and musical, I understand the pastor's language and the concerns of theology,” he says. “But I also understand the concerns of other groups—the artists and lay members. Because of the MSM program, it's easier for me to be a bridge between the two.” Doing what he loves has brought Jon much joy. One of the delightful surprises has been working with kids. “Although not my specialty in training, the enthusiasm of the young people has been more than I expected,” he says. “Adults tend to be a little set in their ways, but kids don’t have any prejudices. They don't know something's hard, they just do it.” Jon makes daily use of the philosophy he learned at seminary: “Give them something to grow into instead of grow out of. Give them the best.”

LUTHER AT A GLANCE
Gifts to our endowment help build Luther Seminary's core strength and allow the flexibility to weather financial downturns while continuing to invest in new programs for this age of mission.

Right: Luther Seminary Ph.D. student J. Neeraj Ekka
Luther shone like a beacon

Jon Strommen Campbell, '02, Minister of Music, Bethel Lutheran Church, Rochester, Minn.
“When I was little, people would ask me ‘Are you going to be a pastor like your daddy?’” recalls John Nelson. His answer? “No!” But one year after graduating from Luther Seminary, Nelson serves at Transfiguration Lutheran in Bloomington, Minn.

“Following college I had two choices, go to seminary or move to Vail, Colo., and be a ski bum—I went to Vail.” But God’s call followed him there. “The Lutheran church in Vail asked me to run the mountain top worship services each Sunday,” Nelson said. “God was saying, ‘Fine, Jonah, you can run, but I’ll just put you to work here!’” He soon became rostered as an associate in ministry and within three years Nelson was “doing everything except presiding over communion. I felt called to serve the congregation more completely.” That year, Nelson became one of Luther’s first Internet-based students, finishing his entire first year online.

“At seminary I developed a passion for evangelism. I focused on outreach and adult education in order to empower people to live a life of discipleship and mission. This past year, I found a church interested in those same goals.” Still, “the challenge of leading a congregation in mission is much harder than I anticipated,” Nelson says. “Remember, there’s a cost to discipleship.” Nelson likens the challenge to scaling the mountains of Colorado. “I’ve discovered the climb is much longer than I thought, and I am now much more patient and poised for perseverance than I was last July.”

That perseverance sometimes has looked rather unconventional. Three weddings he’s done have involved Rottweilers, horses, and even cattle walking through the receiving line. “Faith is 24/7, not just a Sunday thing,” he says. “Sometimes you need to swallow your theological pride and do a wedding in a field with cows.” For Nelson, the question has become, “Are you willing to stand in a place you wouldn’t expect so you can proclaim Christ, and lift up how God is working in a couple’s life?” For that, he’s earned the reputation among the other pastors at his church as “the animal wedding guy.” But, as he says, “If stables and livestock were good enough for Jesus, then as his disciple, they’re good enough for me.”

**LUTHER AT A GLANCE**

Luther Seminary educates one-third of the pastors and a significant number of lay professionals for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); leaders of many global Lutheran churches are Luther Seminary graduates.

*Left: Luther Seminary students Hans Dahl, Master of Divinity, 2005 and Glendine Soiseth, MA/MSW, Luther Seminary/Augsburg College, 2004*
"I felt called to serve"

John D. F. Nelson, '02, Associate Pastor, Transfiguration Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minn.
Called to Teach

BEVERLY SELF

MASTOR OF DIVINITY GRADUATE, 2002

“Going to St. Paul was like going to Mecca,” explains Beverly Self, describing her feelings about coming to a place so rich with Lutheran culture. To listen to Self speak of her background, her family and her views of Lutheranism is to listen to a poet.

Considering her doctoral degree in English literature and master of arts in English composition and rhetoric, it’s no wonder that Self’s eloquence is equal to her passion. “We have borne out the truth,” says Self. “The Lutheran church has the most pure interpretation of the gospel of any church I know.”

Self is not making a hollow comparison. She was raised in a deeply religious family that includes Roman Catholics, Methodists, Nazarenes and Episcopalians. In fact, prior to entering seminary, Self was a licensed pastor with the Church of the Nazarene. “But I wasn’t sure God had called me to be a pastor,” she admits.

While enrolled in Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio, and still searching, Self was a licensed pastor with the Church of the Nazarene. “But I wasn’t sure God had called me to be a pastor,” she admits.

While enrolled in Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio, and still searching, Self, with her husband and son, started attending a Lutheran church. It was then that her path revealed itself to her. In her words, “I finally felt the call.”

A deeply committed scholar, Self immersed herself in the writings of Luther. “I became a Lutheran because of Luther’s articulation of doctrine. I became a 16th century Lutheran!”

Today, Self is associate pastor at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Springfield, Ohio. Much of her work involves faith formation. “The Lutheran church is awakening to the fact that there are people who know nothing about God,” explains Self. She considers that extremely exciting, as well as a challenge. “It calls you to examine your theology and how you express what evangelism means.

“When you say to people ‘God loves you, just as you are’ that’s such an incredible, revolutionary truth. My experience is that people are dying to hear that and dying to see someone who believes that.”

Five years ago, before she had even considered entering Luther Seminary, Self wrote a single page on the call she heard from God. “It describes my call to Grace exactly.”

LUTHER AT A GLANCE

In 2002–03, every dollar spent on fundraising returned $7.51 in current and deferred gifts to Luther Seminary’s educational programs.

Right: Luther Seminary students Stephanie Larson, Master of Divinity, 2005, Erik Gronberg, Master of Divinity, 2005 and Ellen Andreyana, Master of Arts, 2004
“We have borne out the truth”

Beverly Self, '02, Associate Pastor, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio
Called to the Parish

MARY BOSELL

MARY BOSELL GAINED A NEW PERSPECTIVE after she graduated from Luther Seminary. While she now serves as associate pastor at Burlington Lutheran Church in Burlington, Wash., parish ministry wasn’t always her top priority. “Global mission was my first love,” she explains. “Taking a position in a parish in America required some mental and emotional gymnastics—I’m still doing some of those.”

In 1989, Bosell went with her husband to China to teach English. They ended up living there for eight years. Both converted to Lutheranism while working for a Norwegian Lutheran mission in Hong Kong. “I fell in love with Lutheran theology,” Bosell says, “and that’s why I came to Luther Seminary.”

Bosell understands mission is still at the heart of her call. “I serve in a hundred-year-old parish that is struggling to reshape its missional identity in a changing world. To see that coming alive is very exciting.”

For Bosell, growing into the needs and demands of parish ministry has been a process of discovery. “I never signed on to do youth ministry,” she says, “yet I have become willing to do that. This is now my mission field. I’ve decided that I will learn to speak a new dialect—youth—in order to communicate the gospel to young people in this context.”

Bosell’s new life has brought new relationships that have been a source of joy. “While visiting Tierra Nueva, a local Hispanic mission, I met a man named Gonzalo and invited him to our Lenten suppers,” she said. “When he first peeked into our church basement and saw a roomful of white people speaking English, he couldn’t bring himself to come in. Now he comes to church here nearly every Sunday.”

“It’s very good for us to be in contact with people different from ourselves. People in churches like to be the ones to give, not realizing that we are also the ones who need to receive. All of us are God’s mission field. Likewise, all of us are called to participate in each other’s stories of redemption.”

Bosell seeks to bring her passion for mission to her work with youth. “My dream is to take our youth on a trip to Central America and have it led by local Hispanic Christians. How could we not be transformed by an experience like that?”

LUTHER AT A GLANCE

The generous gifts of Luther Seminary donors cover 44 percent of the $14.5 million budget. Luther Seminary donors provide over $2 million in financial aid.

Left: Luther Seminary student Megan Torgerson, Master of Divinity, 2006
“All of us are God’s mission field”

Mary Bosell, ’02, Associate Pastor, Burlington Lutheran Church, Burlington, Wash.
Student Representation
2002–2003 Enrollment

742 STUDENTS 558 FULL-TIME 184 PART-TIME

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER REGION OF THE ELCA

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

48 STUDENTS FROM 29 COUNTRIES

15 Women
33 Men

1 Australia
1 Cambodia
1 Canada
2 China
1 Egypt
2 Estonia
2 Ethiopia
2 Ghana
1 Guyana
1 Hong Kong
1 India
2 Iceland
3 Indonesia
2 Japan
1 Kenya
7 South Korea
1 Latvia
3 Liberia
1 Malawi
2 Malaysia
2 Nigeria
1 Norway
2 Slovakia
1 Sudan
1 Sweden
1 Taiwan
1 Tanzania
1 Turks and Caicos
1 Uganda

STUDENTS REPRESENTING NON-LUTHERAN DENOMINATIONS

110 ECUMENICAL STUDENTS OF 31 DENOMINATIONS

17 United Methodist
17 Presbyterian (USA)
8 Presbyterian International
8 Baptist, General
7 Baptist
5 Christian & Missionary Alliance
5 Evangelical Free
5 Evangelical Covenant
4 Baptist International
4 Non-denominational
3 United Church of Christ
2 African Methodist Episcopal
2 Baptist, National Episcopal
2 Full Gospel Baptist
2 Mennonite
2 Roman Catholic
15 Other

STUDENTS REPRESENTING NON-ELCA TRADITIONS

110 Ecumenical
23 Lutheran International
10 Missouri Synod Lutherans
2 Lutheran Brethren
1 Laestadian Lutheran
146 NON-ELCA STUDENTS

20% of the Student Body

STUDENTS REPRESENTING NON-ELCA TRADITIONS

20% of the Student Body
Financial Facts
2002–2003 Fiscal Year

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXPENSE BUDGET 2002-2003**

- **Student Academic Programs**: $9,352,283 (61%)
- **Institutional Support**: $3,479,372 (22%)
- **Grants and Scholarships**: $1,690,256 (11%)
- **Physical Plant and Maintenance**: $916,923 (6%)
- **Total Budget Expenses**: $15,438,844

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM INCOME BUDGET 2002-2003**

- **Gifts and Grants**: $3,308,324 (44%)
- **Tuition and Fees**: $6,885,864
  - 19% Paid by Students
  - 30% Paid by Congregations
  - 51% Paid by Seminary Scholarships and Grants
- **Endowment Income**: $2,658,630
- **Churchwide and Synod Support**: $2,453,268
- **Churchwide and Synod Support**: $392,758
- **Other**: $15,698,844
- **Total Income Budget**: $15,698,844

Is the operating budget balanced? **YES**

Luther Seminary is committed to finishing each year with a balanced budget.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

- **Financial Aid and Direct Support for Students from Congregations**: $2,697,087
- **Tuition**: $7,500
- **Room and Board for a Single Student**: $4,287

**Current Fund Gift Summary**

- **Unrestricted Current Funds**: $4,276,317
- **Restricted Current Funds**: $2,609,547
- **Total**: $6,885,864

**Investment returns for past year**: 3.4%

(average of 8.2% over the past ten years)

**Size of Luther Seminary’s endowment**: $47,268,487

**Fundraising Costs**

- **Current Gifts**: 15¢ per dollar
- **Deferred Gifts**: 10¢ per dollar
- **Total Average Costs**: 13¢ per dollar
Luther Seminary and Foundation  
2002–2003 Consolidated Balance Sheet

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<td>Deposits and Deferred Revenue</td>
<td>321,882</td>
<td>295,328</td>
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<td><strong>$ 1,496,050</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 1,642,577</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Gift Obligations</td>
<td>$ 6,304,589</td>
<td>$ 7,353,339</td>
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<td>Notes Payable</td>
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<td>2,491,839</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Leases</td>
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<td>134,384</td>
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<td>Advances from Government for Federal Student Loans</td>
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<td>1,986,093</td>
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<td><strong>Total Long-Term Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$ 11,965,655</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$ 12,210,535</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 13,608,232</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanently Restricted</td>
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<td>$ 49,450,438</td>
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<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 81,450,508</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 80,042,226</strong></td>
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*figures unaudited
The Internet has taken the diary concept and thrown away the lock as well as the key.

With the creation of the Web log (known as a blog), a growing number of individuals are keeping online journals that list daily activities, record thoughts, and provide personal commentary on a multitude of topics. People use simple software that allows them to post daily with ease, include links to other sites, and encourage readers to post their own comments.

Why would someone place something so personal online, and allow others, even strangers, to reply? Simply put, people are hungering for relationship, said Mary Hess, assistant professor of educational leadership. She studies media and popular culture within the context of faith. She explained that, in today’s mobile society, few stay in one place long, and even the family structure is not what it once was. Hence, the need for community is no longer met. “Along comes this technology, and the desire to be connected to people is overriding privacy,” she continued. Now, people have a place to go to have conversation about things that really matter to them.

Hess began her blog, “Tensegrities,” (www.religioused.org/tensegrities/) as a way of keeping track of Web sites she finds interesting. It has grown to include more than that. “What I do is rant,” Hess said with a laugh. “I have a set of issues—what I’m thinking about at any given time. It’s a good thing talking to a lot of people about this.” A frequent presenter, she finds she can refer people to her blog for additional information, Web links and as a place to continue the discussion.

“Tensegrities” comes from a term created by philosopher/architect Buckminster Fuller: “tension” + “integrity” = “tensegrity.” “He used it to describe the incredibly stable nature of the structures he could build by holding competing forces together while respecting their integrities,” writes Hess in her blog. “I like to use it to describe what it is to be a person of faith living in a global media culture.” Tensegrities is but one example of a blog. They are as different as the people authoring them. Here are four more bloggers and their blogs.
A Daily Diary

Loer’s former seminary co-workers and classmates suggested he keep a journal of the “daily ups and downs of ministry.” Although he has never been much of a journal writer, Loer admitted he was intrigued by the idea because of his love of technology. “I built a simple Web interface that records my journal entries each day and post them for everyone to see. There is an option to make specific entries private, so if I need to rant a bit about particulars that would not be appropriate for the whole world to see, I can do so,” he said.

Loer finds the blog is an interesting ministry tool, as well. “First, just organizing my thoughts and activities is a helpful exercise for the sake of my sanity. It’s also the kind of creative exercise that helps me with the high demands of creativity (confirmation prep, Bible study prep, sermon prep) I encounter on a weekly basis.”

Loer sends out a weekly e-mail with a short devotion, some news items, and a link to his blog. “It’s my way of inviting people into my life in a real and meaningful way. It often translates into deeper face-to-face relationships, too. And relationship—between us and God, and us and each other—is what ministry is all about.”

A Sabbatical Snapshot
Mary Hinkle, assistant professor of New Testament, keeps two blogs: a personal one (www.maryhinkle.typepad.com), and one that concentrates on preaching (www.pilgrimpreaching.org).

“I can write about anything—from ants in the kitchen to a new book on assessment strategies in adult education.”

Mary Hinkle, assistant professor of New Testament

She started the personal blog as a way of archiving her sabbatical this school year. “I wanted to record daily events as well as reflections on how my work was going, and a Web log makes that possible. I can write about anything—from ants in the kitchen to a new book on assessment strategies in adult education,” she said.

The preaching blog began “as a way to stay connected with my friends who are preaching every week and as a way to prepare myself better for listening to a sermon on Sunday,” she said. “I also wanted a disciplined way to keep my exegetical work connected to something that matters, namely the weekly proclamation of the Word. The Web log is a good reality check for me. If I can’t think of anything sermon-worthy on a text for the week, then maybe there is something wrong with the way I am doing exegesis.”

“Sometimes I don’t know what I think about something until I write about it. Regular writing helps me think and speak more clearly. These are important skills for anyone in ministry to continue to develop,” Hinkle concluded.

A Cross-cultural Chronicle
Master of divinity student Linda Webster kept a Web log during a six-week cross-cultural mission experience at Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota (www.luthersem.edu/blog). Webster, along with fellow Luther Seminary students Comfort Osei and Rena Peterson, stayed at the Pine Ridge Retreat Center this past September and October. Webster wrote candidly about her experiences, impressions and feelings—but admitted that she didn’t paint the total picture of
reservation life. “I tried to be kind. Things are so harsh. We really have no concept of the devastation heaped upon this culture.”

Throughout the mission experience, her sense of calling to work with the Native American people grew. Because she wanted to educate others about the hardship of reservation life, Webster sent a link to her blogs to friends around the world, as far away as Japan and the Sudan. “I wanted to share my experiences with them,” she said.

**Learning Lessons**

When he was a missionary in Slovakia, Clint Schnekloth, ‘02, created an e-mail list to keep people apprised of his ministry. He transitioned into blogs when he received a fellowship to study in Germany. As part of his fellowship he traveled around the country interviewing pastors and lay people about their thoughts on the Lutheran Church in Germany and its connections to the Reformation today. Many friends, family and others were eager to hear about his travels and conversations. Because blogs are so easy to use, he could do frequent updates for his growing readership. “It was a great tool for me because I write more often if I have some kind of audience,” he said.

Back in the U.S., Schnekloth and his friend Greg Walter, ’00, decided to create a Web site centered around the Augsburg Confessions. “The intent is to provide confessional and biblical instruction, and reflection to support the preaching and teaching office of the church,” Schnekloth said.

They soon found that maintaining a Web site was too labor intensive. Schnekloth recalled the ease of maintaining a blog, and soon Lutheran Confessions (www.lutheranconfessions.blogspot.com) was born. They structured their lessons as an ongoing conversation about the Augsburg Confessions.

When Schnekloth received his call as associate pastor to St. John’s Lutheran Church, Oregon, Wis., he wanted to reflect theologically on other issues, as well. By using his blog as a forum for theological discussion and discernment, he discovered a helpful tool for his ministry. “I think sermon prep isn’t just about writing the sermon. They say you should spend one hour of prep for every minute you preach. I think that one hour is better served in continued study of Scripture, and study of the catechisms and the confessions,” Schnekloth said. He added that what he ponders online can and does inform other conversations he may have at church, say, at a new members’ class. Recent entries include discussion of worship styles.

**Want to Find Out More About Blogs?**

**Some blog software and host sites:**

- Moveable Type: www.movabletype.org/
- Blogger: www.blogger.com
- Lutherans Online: www.thrivent.com/lutheransonline/faq-weblog.html
- Blog Spot: www.blogspot.com

The views expressed in these Web logs are those of the Web log author and not those of Luther Seminary.

Clint Schnekloth, ’02, associate pastor, St. John’s Lutheran Church, Oregon, Wis.
For years Luther Seminary’s Youth and Family Ministry Program has served as a benchmark for excellence for similar programs around the U.S. Instead of resting on its laurels, the program, headed by Roland Martinson, Carrie Olson Baalson Professor of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, raises the bar even higher by developing innovative learning techniques, new degree programs and new curriculum strategies.

There are 100 students currently enrolled in the youth and family ministry concentrations of the five degree programs (Ph.D., D.Min., M.Th., M.Div. and M.A.) and one non-degree certificate program. Twenty-four new students began this year, the largest group ever, Martinson said. The plan is to increase total enrollment to 150 students in the next three years, and to 175 students within five years.

In order to accomplish this, the objective for all of the youth and family degree programs is to create a flexible, nurturing learning environment for students while they are doing the work to which they are called, Martinson continued. The M.A. curriculum is being revised and reshaped to reflect the needs of the students. The new curriculum will begin in 2005-06. In addition, the way students take courses will change. Along with on-campus studies, they will be able to receive credit by attending “intensives” (one-week courses held on campus), studying online (already part of the curriculum), or attending workshops held on campus or elsewhere. Martinson foresees an increase in faculty and tapping pastors as adjunct instructors.

The Youth and Family Ministry Program will also strengthen its field education and support system components in the M.A. degree programs, which are administered by Youth Leadership, Minneapolis, Minn. All youth and family students must do ministry while taking courses. Also, each student—whether in the residential program on campus or a part of the distributive learning program that lets people study around the globe—is a part of a five- to six-person cohort, with a mentor/coach assigned to each group. This cohort provides a community of support for the students, and attends to “all the challenges that occur outside of coursework,” Martinson said.

Martinson is enthusiastic about another new aspect: each student will graduate with a competency-based, individualized “portfolio,” which will record evaluated experiences, and profile the student’s strengths and challenges.

Along with the new M.A. changes, Luther Seminary is currently designing a new D.Min. in Youth and Family Ministry that will utilize the same cohort structure as the doctor of ministry programs in Congregational Mission and Leadership and in Biblical Preaching (www.luthersem.edu/dmin/). The first cohort could begin in 2005-2006. The doctor of ministry degree provides advanced professional study for practicing preachers.

Learn More about Youth and Family Ministry

In order to continually gather new information about youth and family ministry, Martinson is conducting several studies, including:

- Faith Factors (www.faithfactors.com) has compiled information about the faith lives of youth and young adults.
- The Study of Exemplary Congregations in Youth Ministry (www.exemplarym.com) is a study of congregations who offer exemplary youth and family ministry.

Learn more about the Luther Seminary Youth and Family Program by visiting www.luthersem.edu/admissions/degrees/, and click on “Master of Arts” and then “Youth and Family Ministry.”
Luther Exhibit Draws Many to Seminary

Luther Seminary was the first U.S. stop for the traveling exhibit “Martin Luther: the Reformer.” This beautiful exhibit chronicled the life and times of Martin Luther, with stunning high quality facsimiles of artifacts from 16th century Germany. About 2,000 people and 45 groups toured the display in August and September.

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*Single life rate 11.3% at age 90 and over.

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- Wish to learn in a collegial environment that promotes accountability and spiritual well-being?

THEN CONSIDER THE

Doctor of Ministry Degree in Biblical Preaching

Luther Seminary is accepting applications now for the first cohort beginning June of 2004.

Apply by Feb. 15

Online application available at www.luthersem.edu/dmin

Or call the Office of Graduate Theological Education at 651-641-3203 for an application or additional information. Accepted applicants will be notified by April 1.
Best Buy CEO Contemplates Faith and Leadership in the Workplace

By Sheri Booms Holm, director of publications

It was like one of any number of breakfasts where local business leaders gather to learn from one of their own. But instead of talking about increasing profits or expanding markets, the question pondered was: How does my faith apply to my work?

Luther Seminary invited Twin Cities area businesspeople to a special breakfast at the Minneapolis Club on Oct. 28 to hear from Brad Anderson, vice chairman and chief executive officer of Best Buy Co., Inc. Anderson and his wife Janet are members of Luther Seminary’s Leadership Circle; Janet is a trustee of the Luther Seminary Foundation and serves as its chair-elect.

Throughout his speech Anderson went back to the theme of “failure.” What could the CEO of a $23 billion company know about failure, and what does that have to do with faith? Quite a bit, as it happens.

Anderson calls himself a “failed seminarian.” He attended Northwestern Seminary (one of Luther Seminary’s predecessor institutions) one year, but greatly disliked his homiletics (preaching) class. “I laugh about it now, because I do so much public speaking,” he told the audience.

After leaving seminary, Anderson went to the state employment office for help finding a job. One look at his sociology degree and seminary education, and he was told “good luck.” He took a job at a small store called Sound of Music “because I could listen to music and get paid for it,” he said. After a couple of days he tried to quit, but they talked him into only giving his notice. Soon, he found he enjoyed his work, and was pretty good at it, too. He worked his way up to manager. But Sound of Music was in a poor financial state. The owner drove out to meet with Anderson because he liked his ideas, and hoped some of them could turn the floundering company around.

Today, that company is Best Buy.

Throughout his career, Anderson has had what he calls “theatrical failures.” “I’m public about the mistakes I make. I have to be honest and face consequences or I won’t learn from them,” he said. He likes to use them in his presentations to show that a company can’t be frozen with failure. Any company that is going to grow requires that people take risks, he explained. “Risks mean failure every so often. Employees need to know that they can fail and still be part of the team, otherwise, no risk and no growth for the company.”

It’s important to admit failure and then move on, Anderson continued. And that’s where faith comes in.

“Look at the concepts of sin and forgiveness. Look at their application from a business link,” he said. “With the best of intentions can come the worst decisions. We profoundly need forgiveness.”

When asked about what he feels is his calling, Anderson reflected that calling isn’t a warm and fuzzy “isn’t that nice and fulfilling” concept. He pointed out the “dangerous callings” in the Bible, and how difficult it was for many to accept. “Moses didn’t want his calling. But there is a sense of calling outside the man—it’s bigger than I am,” he said, adding that, for him, “calling has a very different meaning now. It’s about creating a culture of accountability.”

This culture of accountability pervades Best Buy. “The mission of Best Buy is ‘to make technology and entertainment products affordable and easy to use’, ” Anderson said. “This is what the top 50 companies have in common—the commitment to something larger than themselves—greater than making money. An organization needs something people can hold onto and build, based on trust. The ideas that work must be true.”
Anderson adheres to four core values in his company:
1. Honesty and integrity,
2. Embracing challenges and change,
3. Unleashing the power of people,
4. Having fun while being the best.

All of these are ways of helping both Anderson and the Best Buy employees feel a sense of call in the work they do.

And these translate into basic Christian values, too, values the employees recognize. Anderson told a story about visiting a top performing store in South Los Angeles. Before he arrived the employees were encouraged to make signs similar to what one would find at a football game. Anderson walked through a sea of people holding signs declaring, “We’re #1” and “Go Team!” When he came to the last sign it read “John 3:16.” The individual holding the sign said to Anderson, matter-of-factly, “You know what this means, don’t you?” “Yes,” Anderson replied, “I do.”

Want to Learn More About the Connection Between Work and Faith?

Centered LifeSM, an initiative of Luther Seminary that helps congregations uncover, support and utilize members’ gifts for ministry in daily life, recommends these resources for learning more about the faith-work connection:


*Healing the Purpose of Your Life,* by Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn and Matthew Linn. New York: Paulist Press, 1999. An exploration of how we discover our unique callings and develop them as gifts—for ourselves, others and the earth.


spirituality@work: 10 ways to balance your life on-the-job, by Gregory F.A. Pierce. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2000. An invitation to pause, reflect and act with the God who is already present. Pierce boldly confronts and honestly evaluates our struggle to find meaning in the workplace.

*Listen! God is Calling!* Luther Speaks of Vocation, Faith and Work, by D. Michael Bennethum, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003. An excellent resource for developing the skills to listen for God’s call in every aspect of one’s life.
The Faithfulness in Ministry Cross award was established in 1991 by the Luther Seminary Alumni/ae Council to “identify, recognize, celebrate and give thanks for alums, both clergy and lay, who have lived lives of faithfulness in ministry.” Candidates must be alumni/ae of Luther Seminary or its antecedent schools, and are nominated by fellow alums or other colleagues. It is with thanksgiving that Luther Seminary honors this year’s recipients: Rod Anderson, Ed Nesselhuf and Bruce Williams.

Rod Anderson, ‘74, knows that ministry in the suburbs isn’t just about location, location, location. It’s also about being a visible presence in the community, and about establishing a reputation as a place where people’s needs are met.

Anderson, the senior pastor at St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie, Minn., is being recognized for his faithfulness in urban/suburban ministry. During Anderson’s 26-year tenure as senior pastor, St. Andrew has grown from just a few hundred members to more than 9,000. It has become an anchor for a community that is heavily influenced by both business and housing expansion.

Thanks in part to a recent feature article in The Lutheran, St. Andrew has developed a national reputation for its work transition group, a ministry for those seeking employment of which Anderson serves as the group’s host.

“Rod’s faithfulness in ministry compels him to connect the employed of St. Andrew and those in a job search. Each week, there is a group of anywhere from 75 to 125 at the church for lunch and time to network,” said Mike Zacher, a major gifts consultant in the Office of Seminary Relations at Luther Seminary. “Each session begins and closes with prayer and scripture, the group celebrates when any find employment; it offers a word of grace and hope in a challenging time.”

Anderson’s service stretches beyond his congregation, however. He serves on the board of trustees at Gustavus Adolphus College and at Luther Seminary, and on the board of the local food pantry. He also is a weekly contributor to the Eden Prairie newspaper, writing on current and theological issues.

“In an era when large congregations and their pastors have a tendency to operate on their own, Pastor Anderson has demonstrated a consistent pattern of being a partner with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” said Richard Mork, ELCA Division for Outreach. “He is an encourager of those who take on challenging positions for the church.”

Ed Nesselhuf, ’71, takes Jesus’ charge personally. His ministry has not only been a model of what it means to bear the burdens of another; it has been the model for doing so with those in prison. His aim: to create congregations that provide ministry with inmates, not to or for them.

“He understands grace, the wideness of God’s mercy, and the theology of the cross. He has been obedient to a call that has meant an insecure paycheck,” said Bishop Emeritus Norman Eitrheim. “His avocation and gift of writing poetry—especially cowboy poetry—has opened doors of ministry for him.”

After 12 years of parish ministry (with two congregations in South Dakota), he was called to be the pastor-developer of the first prison congregation in the U.S. His first work: to build a Lutheran congregation in a prison in Maryland that initially had only two Lutherans. As the ministry grew, congregations were started in two prisons—one for men, one for women.

A decade of dreaming, praying and grass-roots research and development led to the development of Prison Congregations of America, a non-profit organization dedicated to lifting up Jesus’ call to reach out to people in prison. To this point, PCA has been instrumental in developing congregations in prisons across four states.

The road has been a challenging one. His efforts have included countless...
meetings with church and civic leaders, extensive fundraising, covering administrative details, and personal fiscal and emotional investment.

“Throughout the struggle and the stress, Ed has remained hopeful. He continued to believe in his dream,” said Leroy Iseminger, a colleague from the South Dakota Synod. “He has demonstrated for me the tenaciousness of faith. In many ways, he has been a prophetic voice. He has had to convince others that God has truly called him to this work and given him this dream and passion that burn deeply within him.”

If small towns don’t grow, they die. The same is true with churches. In more than 30 years of parish ministry, Bruce Williams, ’67, made it a mission that the church in South Dakota would grow. His work, particularly as mission developer and senior pastor of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, helped realize that vision.

Even as Gloria Dei was dedicating its first building, it designated the offering from the service for new mission start congregations in the state. “In spite of our state’s flat population, Bruce has had the foresight and vision to lead and encourage synod and national offices to continue to develop mission congregations here in South Dakota in areas of potential growth,” said Ron Beckman, pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls.

Since then, Williams has been a part of encouraging and supporting the start of seven new congregations. “I saw firsthand Bruce’s vision and wisdom at work. He has been a precious mentor to the pastors of these mission start congregations.”

Williams’ passion for serving the church has led him to be involved as a member of the Augustana College Board of Regents, an active participant in South Dakota’s Lutheran Camping ministry, and a member of the board of directors of Lutheran Social Service of South Dakota.

“His passion for the ministry of the whole church was the focus of his doctoral thesis… one only needs to look at the ministry of Gloria Dei in Sioux Falls to see that these concepts were not just theory, but were at the very center of the development of this congregation. Pastor Williams was able to take a vision and make it a reality,” said Robert Hansen, a colleague in ministry.

Williams retired from parish ministry in 1999—but even now, he remains “open to serving the church through a faith-based organization utilizing the God-given abilities and experience I have received.”

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The ‘00s

Dawn Alitz, ’03, was called to serve as director of children’s ministries at Farmington Evangelical Lutheran Church in Farmington, Minn. She was consecrated as a diaconal minister in November.

Jill Bergman, ’03, was called to serve as an associate pastor at Hosanna Lutheran Church in Forest Lake and Hugo, Minn. She will oversee the senior adult ministry.

Shawn Brandon, ’03, received his first call as co-pastor to Baudette Lutheran Parish in Baudette, Minn.

Scott Johnson, ’03, received his first call to Peace Lutheran Church in Barrett, Minn.

Justin Lind-Ayres, ’03, was called to serve as an associate pastor of Pilgrim Lutheran in St. Paul, Minn. He will work with children, youth and family ministry, visitation, and mission and social concerns.

Deborah Stehlin, ’03, was called to serve as faith and life pastor at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Apple Valley, Minn. She will work with children’s and youth ministry.

Susan K Wright, ’03, was ordained in September. She is an associate pastor at First Lutheran Church, St. James, Minn.

Daniel and Dawn Spies, both ’02, were called to serve at Ezekiel Lutheran Church in River Falls, Wis., in September.
Alum News (continued)

Carrie Grev, ‘00, received the Horizon Award from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D. The award is given to recent graduates who have quickly excelled in their career. Grev is an ELCA missionary in Hong Kong and has developed a Friday lunch ministry program and an English gospel camp. She also teaches workshops, leads music and worship, develops opportunities for ministry exchange between the United States and Hong Kong, hosts guests as a representative of the church and plans events. She was honored at the Augustana Viking Days alumni banquet in October.

The ‘90s

Pedro E. Lopez Jr., ‘91, serves at Park Place Lutheran in Houston. He is also the new coordinator for Hispanic/Latino ministries at the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of the ELCA. He and his wife, Elida, recently celebrated their 13th wedding anniversary.

Victor Eduardo Jortack, ’93, was called to serve as an associate pastor at Saint John Lutheran Church in Owatonna, Minn. He was installed in June.

David Fenrick, ’94, married Patricia Renee Miller in September at Luther Seminary. He is employed at The Center for Global Education at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. Patricia is the director of Feeding Children International in New Hope, Minn.

Michelle Simonson, ‘97, was called to serve as pastor of family ministry and spiritual life at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Burnsville, Minn.

Jason Talsness, ’97, was called to serve as pastor at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta. He still keeps a snowshovel in his garage and can be reached by email at amazinggracerev@yahoo.com.

The ‘80s

Ann M. Svennungsen, ’81, was elected president of the Fund for Theological Education, Inc., Atlanta. She will succeed James L. Waits, who will retire at the end of 2003. The Fund was established in 1954 to attract gifted young people to the ministries of the church. It has also awarded scholarship support to racial and ethnic minority candidates for doctoral work in theology. Svennungsen was senior pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead, Minn.

David L. Carlson, ’82, is the associate professor of behavioral science and director of undergraduate medical education in psychiatry at the School of Medicine at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. He has a call to the Eastern North Dakota Synod, ELCA, where he co-leads a program addressing transitional issues for newly ordained clergy, and assists clergy groups that meet monthly to process cases and issues in pastoral care. He is a psychotherapy supervisor and teacher for the university’s psychiatry residency program and provides conflict resolution services for various academic and professional agencies. He has three daughters and lives in Fargo, N.D.

Carolyn Mowchan, ’82, published her book, Connecting with God in a Disconnected World (Augsburg Fortress) in August. The book is designed to encourage adult readers to explore and examine the barriers that sometimes keep us from experiencing a closer relationship with God in Christ, as well as our relationships in faith with one another. Mowchan serves as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Spooner, Wis., with her husband, Will. She is a frequent contributor to the Augsburg Fortress quarterly devotionals.

David A. Sorensen, ’82, published a book with his wife, Barbara DeGrote-Sorensen, called Let the Servant Church Arise! in August. In the book they explore all aspects of Christian servanthood and how it can have a profound effect on both church and civil communities. David and Barbara have authored many books. Together they serve as stewardship coordinators for the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA.

Rusty Edwards, ’85, was added to the Distinguished Alumni list by the Interlochen Center for the Arts this fall. His hymn, Sometimes One has to Sing Off-Key, was translated into Chinese and published in Voice of Sacred Music by the World Association for Chinese Church Music.

Heather Oberdeck, ’01, was consecrated and called for word and service as a diaconal minister at King of Glory Lutheran Church, Billings, Mont. Her specialization is youth and family ministry. She is the first diaconal minister in the Montana Synod. Pictured, from left: Pastor Thomas Schlotterback, Heather Oberdeck and Montana Synod Bishop Richard Omland.

Heather Oberdeck, ’01, was consecrated and called for word and service as a diaconal minister at King of Glory Lutheran Church, Billings, Mont. Her specialization is youth and family ministry. She is the first diaconal minister in the Montana Synod. Pictured, from left: Pastor Thomas Schlotterback, Heather Oberdeck and Montana Synod Bishop Richard Omland.
The ‘70s

Wallace Obinger, ‘78, was called to serve as senior pastor at Luther Memorial Church, South St. Paul, Minn.

John Lee, ‘74, was called to serve as an assistant to the bishop of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. He began this new position in December. Previously he has led congregations in North Dakota and northern Minnesota. Along with working with the bishop and staff, he works with lay ministry leaders and first call pastors.

Susan Hedahl, ‘75, published her book, Who Do You Say That I Am? 21st Century Preaching (Augsburg Fortress) in August. The book provides some basic definitions of preaching in the post-modern age from a Lutheran perspective. She is a professor of homiletics at Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. She has authored several books and is currently working on a theological mystery novel.

The ‘60s


Gordon Lathrop, ‘66, released a new book entitled, Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology (Augsburg Fortress 2003). It explores the content to which the central symbols and interactions of Christian liturgy yield, for their participants, a new proposal for their organization and experience of the world. Lathrop is the Charles A. Schieren Professor of Liturgy at the Lutheran School of Theology in Philadelphia.

In Memory

Ivern Frost, friend of Luther Seminary, and wife of author and former professor Gerhard Frost, died Sept. 18 at the age of 91. During their seminary years, she was known for her gracious hospitality to colleagues and students. She took an active role in her husband’s writing, serving as chief critic, editor and encourager until his death in 1987. She is survived by her four children and two granddaughters.

Arnold Gregerson, ‘56, died on June 24 in Spokane, Wash. He served as a chaplain in the U.S. Air Force and as a pastor in the Nezperce/Craigmont, Idaho area. In 1971 he went to Chewelah, Wash. and served at St. Paul Lutheran Church in a tent ministry until his retirement in 1990. Following his retirement, he served as an interim pastor in American Falls and Pierce, Idaho. He is survived by his wife, Donna, four sons, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

John Jones, ‘66, died at his home in Wakonda, S.D., on Sept. 15. Jones was ordained into the ministry of the American Lutheran Church in 1966. Following his ordination, he served parishes in Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, South Dakota and Iowa. He also served as a part-time chaplain at an alcohol dependency treatment center.

In June 2001, Jones retired from active ministry and moved to Wakonda. During his retirement, he served as a pulpit supply preacher.

One of his favorite activities for 39 years was taking his family and youth and adult church groups canoeing in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in northern Minnesota. He is survived by his wife, mother, three children, two sisters, a brother, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Michael D. Furney, ‘51, died in August at his home in Mesa, Ariz. Before attending seminary, he enlisted in the army in WWII and served in the South Pacific for nearly three years. He felt a call to the ministry while serving overseas and gave his first sermon on Thanksgiving Day on board ship coming home. When discharged, he continued his studies and graduated from Augsburg College, Minneapolis. He completed his postgraduate studies at Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1951 and was ordained in May that year.

Furney served many years at Redeemer Lutheran in Minneapolis and later at Bethlehem Lutheran in Bayport, Minn. After retiring in 1983, he continued his ministry part-time at congregations in St. Paul, Minn. In 1993 he, along with his wife, Elaine, and son Robert, moved to Mesa. There he served for several years at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Last September he and Elaine celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary. He is survived by his wife, two sons, a daughter, four grandchildren, two brothers, and many brother and sister in-laws, nieces, nephews and friends.
Richard Bliese, academic dean and associate professor of missions, wrote a chapter for Luther Seminary instructor Kelly Fryer’s book Reclaiming the “L” Word. (Augsburg Fortress, 2003). He also participated in the ELCA’s Roundtable for Evangelical Outreach, a gathering designed to map out the ELCA’s new strategic initiative on evangelism.

Terry Fretheim, ’60, Elva B. Lovell Professor of Old Testament, wrote the introduction and notes to Genesis in the new Westminster Discipleship Bible and several articles (including “Creation”) in the Westminster Theological Workbook of the Bible.

Mary Hinkle, ’86, associate professor of New Testament, is maintaining a Web commentary on at least one of each week’s lectionary texts for www.pilgrimpreaching.org. Early entries of her Web log were linked to www.textweek.com, and the publicity has generated great Web traffic.

Arland J. Hultgren, Asher and Carrie Nasby Professor of New Testament, is the author of a chapter on “The Pastoral Epistles” in The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul (Cambridge University Press, J. Dunn, ed.). He is also co-author, with Dr. Walter F. Taylor of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, of Background Essay on Biblical Texts for ‘Journey Together Faithfully, Part Two: The Church and Homosexuality,’ published by the ELCA.

Craig Koester, ’80, professor of New Testament, delivered guest lectures on the theology of the cross in John’s Gospel and seminars on the book of Revelation at the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology in Oslo in October. He also gave the main presentation on Johannine theology at the international conference on the Gospel of John held at St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore, Md., as a tribute to the late Raymond E. Brown. The focus of the presentation was the death of Jesus and the human condition in John. His most recent publication is “The Message to Laodicea and the Problem of Its Local Context: A Study of the Imagery in Rev. 3:14-22” in New Testament Studies (Cambridge University Press). He was also featured in two video productions released this fall. One is Is This the Time? A Study of Revelation (Seraphim and Luther Productions). The other is a study of John 17 in Jesus in the Gospels (Discipleship series; Abingdon).


Alan Padgett, professor of systematic theology, spoke on “The Omnipotence of Christmas” as part of the Heart of the Matter lecture series at Borders Books in St. Paul. His aim was to explain the Christian understanding of God to a mixed audience, especially during the Christmas season, which offers a rich and complex glimpse at who God is and what God is up to in history. He also published Science and the Study of God: A Mutuality Model for Theology and Science (Eerdmans, 2003).

**Coming to a town near you:**

Terry Fretheim, ’60, professor of Old Testament, will be speaking at the Oregon Synod Bishop’s Convocation, January 7-9, 2004.


Walter Sandgren, who served as custodian at Luther Seminary for almost 40 years, died on Oct. 25 at the age of 88. Known to decades of seminarians and their families, Luther Seminary named a new apartment complex after Sandgren in 1981.
Luther Seminary mourns the loss of James Kittelson, internationally noted Reformation scholar, professor of church history, and director of the Thrivent Reformation Research Program at Luther Seminary. He died Nov. 10 of liver cancer. Fittingly, the date is also the anniversary of Martin Luther’s birth.

Kittelson came to Luther Seminary in 1997 from Ohio State University, where he was professor of Reformation history for 26 years.

He was one of the pre-eminent scholars of Reformation history. His book, *Luther the Reformer: the Story of the Man and his Career* (1986), has become one of the most widely-used textbooks about Luther. He also was senior editor with editor-in-chief Hans Hillebrand of the four volume *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* (1996).

Kittelson was president and a member of the board of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference; he was a member of the executive committee of the Council of the American Society for Reformation Research and a member of the executive committee of the Society for Reformation Research; he served on the board of directors of the Center for Reformation Research.

Kittelson is survived by his wife, Margaret Formo Kittelson; daughters Elizabeth Van Voorhis of Las Vegas and Amy Kittelstrom of Boston, and two grandchildren.

Facilitating Christian-Muslim Dialogue: Dr. Roland E. Miller Receives Race, Church and Change Award

A longtime advocate of Christian-Muslim interaction, Dr. Roland E. Miller, received the 2003 Race, Church and Change award from Luther Seminary on Oct. 14. The award recognizes individuals who have facilitated reconciliation among diverse people and demonstrated commitment to constructive change that heals and nurtures community.

Miller spent 23 years (1953-76) as a Lutheran missionary in Malappuram, Kerala, in southern India. Upon returning to North America, Miller served as academic dean and professor of Islamic studies and world religions at the University of Regina and Luther College in Saskatchewan, Canada (1976-1993), where he founded both the religious studies program and the Saskatchewan Centre for International Languages. For a decade, he chaired the Christian-Muslim Dialogue Project for the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). He also founded the Malabar Missions Society, an inter-Lutheran organization that supports the Christian church’s work in Southern India.

In 1993, Miller came to Luther Seminary as a visiting professor of missions and established the Islamic studies program in conjunction with the ELCA Division for Global Mission.

Luther’s international and ecumenical Islamic studies program now serves the whole community as well as students and pastors worldwide through both academic and lay courses, community dialogue, cross-cultural opportunities and scholarly research.

“Roland approaches the Muslim community, not from an us and them standpoint, but as we,” said Amin Kader, professor of business administration at Augsburg College, Minneapolis, and president of the Islamic Institute of Minnesota in Maplewood. “He has real knowledge and understanding of the Muslim. It is refreshing to have a man come in as an ally, as a partner, not as a man who is trying to find a fault in someone else.”

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