Please pass on these important dates to someone you know who may be discerning a call to ministry.

Important dates

Scholarship weekend
Feb. 21-22
All applicants for the Presidential Scholarship should plan to attend!
Visit www.luthersem.edu/admissions for other events.

Dokimazo (dok-im-ad’-zo)
April 3-4
Verb: 1. A Greek word meaning to put to the test, prove, examine, discern
  2. An event at Luther Seminary filled with the sharing of stories and discernment of the call to Christian public leadership

Scholarship deadlines 2016/2017

Priority dates for Seminary Scholarships
June 1 for fall starts
Nov. 1 for J-term/spring starts

Presidential and Wallace Scholarships
Jan. 31

Admission Application Deadlines 2016/2017

Spring 2016: Dec. 1
Summer 2016: May 1
Fall 2016: July 1
J-Term 2017: Nov. 1

www.luthersem.edu/refer
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Teaching and learning in the global church

One of the exciting aspects of serving Luther in this call as president is the privilege of meeting our alumni serving around the world. I continue to be amazed at the global reach and the contributions Luther has made to leadership development in member churches of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). This summer, when I was at the LWF council meeting in Geneva, it was my great joy and delight to participate in the election of a Luther alum, Fidon Mwombeki, ’97, to his position as director of the LWF department for mission and development.

Luther continues to strengthen our global reach through expansive use of our digital resources available freely to all. Our preaching and Bible study resources (Working Preacher, God Pause and Enter the Bible) are used in 230 countries and territories with a combined total of 3 ½ million visits in the past year.

Our faculty are regularly teaching, leading and listening with our partners around the globe. Associate Professor of Early Church History Lois Farag spent a week at Oxford University presenting a paper while Academic Dean Craig Koester spent time in Ephesus, Turkey, doing the same. Guillermo Hansen, associate professor of global Christianity, societies and cultures, has been called upon to think with our Central and South American colleagues what a sustainable theological education, with participation from faculty in the global south, might look like in a new era of digital education. Dirk Lange, associate dean of graduate theological education, has been hard at work coordinating the liturgical events as the global communion commemorates the Reformation in 2017.

Lange and Hansen were in Windhoek, Namibia, over All Saints weekend this year. Part of their work included facilitating conversation on global theological education. Our faculty together has done a remarkable job reimagining a new kind of Ph.D. which includes significant time in one’s own context. We are now in the process of raising the start-up and endowment funds to fully support this program. This work will continue for the next several years.

Luther’s global reach also benefits our alumni serving immigrant congregations in the United States. Leaders in the global communion have things to teach us about mission, evangelism and the power of the gospel to reignite a movement of God’s Spirit in our midst.

We are blessed by our students who come from around the globe and who enrich our residential community. We are blessed by our faculty whose commitment to participating in global conversations keeps their research in dialogue with scholars around the world. We are blessed by friends and supporters who make this global ministry possible. 🙏

Robin Steinke, President
Luther Seminary honors 2015 graduates

On May 17, Luther Seminary’s 135 graduates gathered with friends, family, staff and faculty for Commencement, held at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. A baccalaureate service and class picnic were held the day before at Luther Seminary. The graduates celebrated their accomplishments, reminisced about their time together and looked forward to their continued future in ministry.

To view photos from the event, visit www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Commencement.

Luther Seminary celebrates global music

On May 7, Luther Seminary students, staff, faculty and the wider community gathered for a global music celebration. The event was sponsored and hosted by the student group Dismantling Racism: Living into Beloved Community, led by students Philip Nushann and Katelyn Rakotoarivelo.

The event began with a performance by David Young, a Liberian gospel musician, and continued with songs from Ethiopia, Madagascar, Peru, South Korea, Nigeria and more. Several current and former Luther Seminary students were among those sharing their musical talents. Music and musicians from around the world blessed and filled the chapel with energy, passion and excitement. In addition, international students completing their studies at Luther Seminary were recognized by the Office of International Student and Scholar Affairs at this event.

To view photos from this event, visit www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Global Music Celebration.

Festival of Homiletics convenes in Denver

On May 11-15, pastors, preachers and other church leaders gathered for the 23rd Festival of Homiletics in downtown Denver. This year’s theme was Preaching from the Mountain: Heralds of Good Tidings. Incredible speakers, including Walter Brueggemann, Michael Curry, Yvette Flunder and Anna Carter Florence, offered inspiration and challenge to preachers in light of this theme.

Sally Peters, director of Luther Seminary’s Center for Lifelong Learning, commented, “Denver’s first Festival of Homiletics was a great success ... Nearly 1,800 pastors and preachers from every U.S. state, plus Canada and other international countries, gathered to learn, worship and be restored and renewed.”

For an overview of the experience, visit www.festivalofhomiletics.com and select Blog. For photos of the event, visit www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Festival of Homiletics.
Many Luther Seminary students arrive with a passion for cross-cultural mission and service, drawn by our reputation for ties to world ministry.

Today, many of those former students are leaders of faith journeys around the world, enriching the lives of others while deepening their own spirituality through their own unique experiences.

Kirsten Laderach: Mission to Madagascar

When Kirsten Laderach, '11, was drawn to the missional conversation, her sending congregation encouraged her to explore Luther Seminary.

“Luther Seminary presented me with what felt like an endless list of opportunities to experience and grow my faith,” says Laderach, who is now an ordained ELCA pastor.

While in seminary, she traveled and lived with communities in Iowa and Chicago’s south side. She spent winter break at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, and her postgraduate year traveling as Luther’s 2011 Graduate Preaching Fellowship recipient.

It was all valuable experience for Laderach’s current role as leader of a group of Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) volunteers in Madagascar. Arriving in the country in March of this year, she recently welcomed nine young adults who committed to confronting issues of wealth and poverty, racial privilege, economic disparity and globalization—all within the context of their faith.

“I work to connect these volunteers with placement sites where both the volunteers and sites can share and grow together,” she says. This includes traveling around the island, planning orientations and retreats and meet-
ing with the FLM—Malagasy Lutheran Church, the third largest church in Madagascar and one of the fastest growing Lutheran churches in the world.

Laderach is one of four Luther Seminary graduates running country programs this year—all friends she met in school and can now count as colleagues.

“I am blessed with the opportunity to be in nearly constant conversation about faith—mine and that of others.”

Jacob Hale:
Bridging faith in Afghanistan

Jacob Hale, ’08, is a co-representative of the Mennonite Central Committee in Afghanistan, a relief, development and peace arm of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Churches. He shares that role with his wife, Kelly, whom he met while serving the same role in South Sudan.

“Afghanistan lies at the crossroads of the Islamic world, and the world in general,” he says. “The religious tapestry is very complex.”

They describe their mission in Afghanistan as one of capacity building—helping others fulfill their visions for their own communities. But there can be barriers.

“Afghanistan has often become a proxy in other nation’s conflicts, so Afghans are rightly suspicious of others,” Hale says. “Working with a Christian organization in a Muslim context, our shared commitments to those in need are an essential starting point in conversations with neighbors, co-workers and partners as to why we are working here.”

For the Hales, a call to service isn’t work—it is a way of life, deeply rooted in Christ’s example.

“To be able to listen well, we need to empty ourselves of the various privileges we hold. Christ is always there in front of me, calling me to empty myself as he has, to listen and hear and to treat the insight and experiences of the people I work with, with respect and reverence,” he says.

He adds that his time at Luther Seminary underscored for him the fact that all faiths share many beliefs about justice and responsibility for those who are marginalized, oppressed or in need.

“I was impressed with Luther Seminary’s academics, but also the faculty and student diversity,” he says. “It helped me broaden my understanding of my faith and the way that faith informs my commitment to serve others. There is no better setting to study the global church than a place where it is so well represented.”

The Hales are also setting a spiritual example for their baby daughter, Lilian, who was born in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where MCC has a regional office.

Colin and Jeni Graangard:
Heart and spirit in the Holy Land

“Luther Seminary presented both of us with an exceptional academic community with deep ties to world mission and ministry,” says Colin Graangard, who, along with his wife, Jeni, is currently leading the YAGM program in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Today, the Grangaards, both 2009 Master of Divinity graduates, juggle their YAGM responsibilities with parenting their 2-year-old daughter, Josie.

“Every day, we plan and we plot, and then something comes up and we start over,” Jeni jokes. “They say that if your day is only 30 percent thwarted, it’s a good day. With a toddler, 30 percent is miraculous!”

It’s a busy life, yes, but one both Colin and Jeni feel is their destiny.

Their current role brings together the couple’s respective passions. Colin was a YAGM volunteer in Scotland from 2004-2005. After graduating from seminary, Jeni was awarded the Graduate Preaching Fellowship from Luther Seminary, which allowed the couple to spend five months in Israel and Palestine.

“We had long felt called to return to this place and people,” Jeni says. “The call to YAGM, along with the return to Israel and Palestine, is the perfect combination.”

In accompaniment with ELCA partners in Jordan and the
Holy Land, the Grangaards accompany six young adult volunteers in their year of service, giving support, guidance and space to grow spiritually and learn.

“Being Lutheran in the Holy Land is a profound experience,” Colin says. “This is a society that identifies people by their religious background. Being Lutheran here means learning from the example of the Palestinian Lutherans, who have lived so long identified as a minority oppressed by world powers and occupation, yet continuing to share a powerful Christian witness calling for peace, justice and hope in God’s power to transform.”

“While in college, I was traveling to Mexico. I met a woman who told me, ‘Without faith we die. Every day is a gift from God.’ It’s been 14 years since I heard those words and they remain with me,” Jeni says. “Faith is a way of life, Jesus is a way of trust. Faith in Jesus frees me to embrace my neighbor.”

William Obaga: Leading the global church

William Obaga, ’14, is the World Mission Prayer League (WMPL) associate director for Africa, a role he has held since June last year. He and his wife, Margaret, ’08, are stationed in Germany through a partnership between their native Kenyan Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany.

“My role at the Prayer League involves conversations with existing, new and potential partners, finding areas where we can work together in leadership training and missionary mobilization” Obaga says.

It’s an ambitious undertaking. The World Mission Prayer League is a pan-Lutheran mission society serving all Lutheran churches. With 6,000 members who pray daily for mission work, WMPL has scores of missionaries around the world who engage in everything from direct evangelism to medical work to educating diaconal workers, discipleship leaders, theological educators and other areas of leadership development.

His daily experiences are both varied and rich and there is no such thing as a “typical day.” He provides guidance to the Prayer League’s mission work in Africa, networks with other partnerships in Western Europe and acts as liaison with the headquarters in Minneapolis. He travels to visit missionaries throughout Africa, while continuing to enrich his own faith and knowledge.

Meanwhile, Margaret is busy working in the Department of Intercultural Theology of Mission EineWelt (Mission One-World). This is the international partnership organization of the Lutheran Church in Bavaria based in Neuendettelsau, near Nuremberg. Working as a pastoral theology teacher and researcher in conflict management and family systems, she helps liaise with more than 40 Lutheran partner churches around the world. She also receives invitations as a guest preacher from various congregations. Both the Obagas are often invited to present at seminars throughout Germany.

At the heart of William’s work is music. He holds a special interest in African Christianity and its church music—both academically and personally. He is not only part of church music leadership, but performs in a brass choir at the church of the Diakonie Neuendettelsau. He also receives invitations to offer church music leadership at seminars and congregations, especially in the deanery/district of Ansbach.

“I hear the Lord calling me to establish a local choir to perform global music, particularly choral anthems in African languages and style,” he says.

A lifelong Lutheran, Obaga credits his education for further bolstering his faith, knowledge and desire to continue to build on mission and participate in inter-Lutheran, cross-cultural conversations and scholarship.

“Going to Luther Seminary was the best thing that ever happened to me,” he says. “Recommended to us in 2003 by an alumnus who was a missionary in Kenya, Luther offered programs where both my wife and I could fit in. At Luther one mingles into its unique diversity of cultures, ecumenical engagement, different levels of student interaction, a diversity of first-rate professors and a rich variety of curricular offerings of the highest standards.” 📖
THOMAS ODURO, ’04, EARNED HIS PH.D. FROM LUTHER SEMINARY, WITH DISTINCTION, IN THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. His Ph.D. experience further informed his role as president of Good News Theological College and Seminary in his native Ghana.

Good News Seminary is an international learning institution based on a tradition and mission of wisdom, spirituality and diligence. As its leader, Oduro administers and directs the organization’s research and teaching, using his own educational experience as a guide.

Good News Theological College and Seminary is a collaborative ministry among African Initiated Churches, Mennonites and Lutherans. That’s how he made the connection to further his studies at Luther Seminary.

“A fellow seminarian recommended Luther Seminary as an ideal place to study,” says Oduro, who also earned his M.A. from Luther in 1994. “Its academic program is comprehensive, relevant and of the highest standard. It kept me focused and determined to get the best from my education.”

Oduro has grown his, and the church’s, draw and reputation through the region. In a 2013 article in the Mennonite Mission News, Oduro was featured for his ability to encourage Christians to move out of their comfort zones. He describes Jesus’ ministry as a three-legged stool, combining teaching, preaching and healing. As he was quoted:

“Jesus Christ is all to me. He has saved, guided, taught and healed me,” he says. “The Lutheran faith itself is embedded in the gospel, and is my source of knowledge of what Christ has done for me, what he expects me to do and what the future holds for me.”

Oduro supports our mission to think together as a global community, working to link the Good News Seminary’s work to the rest of the world through formal teachings and personal connections. At the core of his work is his conviction of faith.

In addition to his distinguished role at Good News, he also holds posts as chairman of International Higher Education, Ghana; chairman, theological resource team of the Organization of African Instituted Churches; advisory board member, Center for Early African Christianity; and is a member of the advisory council of the Dictionary of African Christian Biography. He is also the author of “Christ Holy Church International.”

It all keeps him very busy, but Oduro does find time to enjoy the everyday comforts of dining, conversation, reading and listening to music.

He and his wife, Jemima, have six children.

ABOUT

Good News Theological College and Seminary

The vision of the seminary is described by its core values—wisdom, spirituality and diligence. Students are trained to take on the spirit of wisdom in their daily ministries, thereby expanding and enriching their spirituality. In order to reach their goals, the students are trained to work hard, whether under pleasant or unpleasant circumstances.

Students are equipped to study and interpret the Word of God in its totality. The need to evangelize in a multicultural and global oriented world is also emphasized. Students learn that the Lordship and vicarious death of Jesus Christ is fundamental to finding answers to the multi-faceted challenges of the world. They also come to understand that being filled with the Holy Spirit is essential for effective, relevant and practical ministry.

All these align with the institution’s mission statement: To provide sound Christ-centered education to the church and society, fully equipping both men and women with character, knowledge and skills for servant leadership in the African context.
Pastors Tim Mason, ’91, and Simon Lee, ’78, minister to unique congregations

By John Klawiter, M.Div. ‘12

Tim Mason: Fulfilling a dream

Do you ever ask kids, “What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Tim Mason’s answer always came easily: “I want to be a missionary!”

Now Mason is the pastor of Calvary by the Sea in Honolulu. Fulfilling that childhood dream was not as simple as continually listening to his inner child, but his path did bring him to Japan and eventually to serve Japanese people in Hawaii.

That childhood dream was begat out of a visit from Katie Clark, a missionary to Papua New Guinea, who visited his congregation in Coon Rapids, Minn. “I hung on to every word she said. She was sharing the message of her work with kids and even though I had dreams of being a pilot or a doctor, this dream of mission work was always there,” Mason said.

Mason spent 10 weeks in New Guinea before finishing his undergraduate degree. His goal was to get his Ph.D. in order to teach at a seminary or university abroad. When doors to Germany for his internship site were closed, his adviser opened another to Japan.

“I had no idea or interest in going to Japan,” Mason said, “but I had one of the best years of my life in Tokyo.”

That year taught Mason about the complexities in Japanese life and converting to Christianity. Japanese people who decide to become Christian are choosing to believe in something that is not Japanese. This is especially delicate when it involves the eldest son in a family, since much of the Shinto or Buddhist understanding of the afterlife is tied to the cor-
rect practice of the rituals at the time of death.

“If the eldest son hears the gospel and hears there is a God and the God is love, then they care for the poor and the hungry and want to become a Christian,” Mason said. “But his decision threatens the entire thread of ancestors.”

Mason notices that many people that move to Hawaii from Japan are more easily able to practice Christianity. “There is a lot of freedom to explore different expressions of faith that isn’t present in Japan,” Mason said. “The pressure is not from society; it’s from their family system. Hawaii frees up everybody to explore different things.”

Being on an island presents unique cultural challenges that the gospel helps him address. “What I’m doing with grace through Lutheran theology is the heart of what you preach in a Hawaiian culture that’s a mishmash of different religions, beliefs and values,” he said. “You stick to love, acceptance and grace. You treat people with respect because you’ll see them next week, since we’re all stuck here together on this island and there’s nowhere to run. The relationships are important and what’s respected is authenticity.”

One of the important characteristics about Calvary by the Sea is that it’s a place for people to come for healing. “This is the place where broken and rejected people come and find acceptance,” Mason said. “I don’t care what baggage they have when they arrive. They need to hear the gospel.”

Calvary by the Sea also lives the gospel by feeding people. Between 1,500-2,000 people a month come to the church’s food pantry. “Everybody is hungry, so this is our niche,” Mason said. “We also provide places to do laundry, take showers and provide legal aid. That’s a huge part of our ministry.”

Another unique feature is the congregation’s involvement in environmental stewardship. With their proximity to the ocean, they have a large invasive species of algae that they pull up and give to local farmers to use as fertilizer. They
can then use that opportunity to teach kids and school groups about marine stewardship.

“We’re a welcoming place,” Mason said. “We understand that people will make a judgment within seven seconds so we have ‘tribes,’ basically ushers, who put together the sanctuary. When new people arrive, they feel welcome. That’s a huge part of our congregation that they take a lot of pride in.”

Being in Hawaii also means that people are coming and going frequently. “If people come for a few weeks, they can still be welcomed to join the choir. It’s immediate—they’re part of us. It’s one of the things I love about this place.”

Mason has embraced his life in Hawaii and his congregation has embraced him. It’s a childhood dream come true.

Simon Lee: Truly global leadership

Simon Lee, pastor of the Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu, took a different route to arrive in Hawaii. Lee was born and raised in Hong Kong and attended Luther Seminary, where he received a Master of Arts in pastoral counseling in 1978.

He was called to the Chinese Lutheran Church on July 4, 1981, and realized immediately that there was a problem. Lee is fluent in Cantonese, but 95 percent of that congregation was from Taiwan—and only spoke Mandarin.

“It was a brand new experience,” Lee said. “I can speak some (Mandarin). I thought I was quite fluent, but they had a problem listening. I was called, and they gave me the opportunity to learn and grow.”

At first, they didn’t have a church building, so the congregation held two services that worshipped at the English-speaking church in the afternoon and evening.

“By the grace of God, we grew so much that the facility could no longer accommodate us,” Lee said. “So we tried many other places until we purchased land in 1997.”

Land in Hawaii, as you might guess, is not cheap. For $1.4 million, they were able to buy a tiny parking lot—less than half an acre. Then, they had to raise funds for an architect and building contractors to build the new church. By the very end of 2004, the project was finished. The Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu was dedicated and opened on Jan. 1, 2005.

Another interesting dynamic in the congregation led to the creation of a third service. Many of the church’s second-generation Chinese members are English speakers, so a service held in English and geared toward youth started in 2002. In 1981, when Lee was first called to the church, attendance was about 80 people. Now, with three services together, there are more than 400 attending.

As with Calvary by the Sea, Lee’s congregation deals with Hawaii’s constant turnover by actively reaching out.

“What’s next for Lee? “I was called in 1981 and I have been here for more than 34 years. I’m now 68 and hopefully I can retire when I’m 70,” he said. “I’m still looking for the pastor to take my place, but I’ll continue to stay to support the ministry.”

Lee was given the Luther Seminary Faithfulness in Ministry Servant Cross Leader Award in 2008 for his vital role in ministry after serving for more than 25 years.

As Lee’s career as a pastor will soon come to a close, it’s clear that the impact from his ministry will be felt for generations to come. 📚
Students bring to seminary a wealth of experiences, and serving in global mission has played no small role for current M.Div interns Josh Kestner and Ally Streed. Kestner spent a year in Palestine with the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM), while Streed spent three years in Japan through the ELCA global mission program J-3.

What draws a person to global mission? Why leave everyone and everything familiar to live in an unfamiliar place with unfamiliar people?

Ally Streed: A dream realized

For Streed, her experience started with a childhood dream to live in Japan. When she heard a speaker at her college discuss J-3, it sparked her interest. “I was most drawn to the relational aspects with students and teachers,” she says. “The opportunity to work closely with others was significant for me.”

Upon arriving in Japan, Streed first spent six months in language classes in Tokyo before moving to the city of Kumamoto to teach English conversation at a Lutheran school for junior- and senior-high students. Although it was a Lutheran school, the student population reflected that of greater Japan—less than one percent of Japan is Christian. In light of this, one memory in particular stands out to her: “I had a student who wanted to learn more conversational English, so we met twice a week for lunch. I prayed before meals. She wasn’t Christian, but she started praying at one of our lunches each week, and she began attending our Lutheran English service at church. By the end of our two years together, she articulated a very beautiful and profound prayer for not having been a Christian.” Here, Streed saw God manifest in a relationship, which is where she experienced God the
most in Japan. “Respect and care for others is ingrained in their culture,” she says, “unlike the U.S. where suspicion is the norm. Whatever their religion, they are very open and caring for each other.”

Josh Kestner: A new community
Kestner also experienced God most in relationships with others, particularly their hospitality. While living in Beit Sehour, near Bethlehem, Kestner worked at a Lutheran school assisting with English and other classes, as well as participating in the life of the community and a local church. “I became a part of the community so quickly,” he says. “I was so worried about trying to learn a language and be a part of the culture, and they made it really easy for me. I was surprised by and thankful for their hospitality; right away people invited me for coffee, dinner and into their homes.” He saw God in people when they cared for others. Since they live in an occupied territory, they have to have each other’s backs and hold each other up. He says, “It was amazing to meet the people living there and to see what God is doing in a place that seems so broken but has so much love and hope.”

“Mission” defined
Both Streed and Kestner spoke of the model of accompaniment in mission that the ELCA fosters. Kestner was nervous at first about considering YAGM, because he had often heard that mission meant conversion and that didn’t resonate with him. But he was soon drawn to mission being about accompaniment, about walking alongside people, being vulnerable with them and building relationships. “Mission is all about helping the other and reaching out to the other, making contact, making families out of strangers,” he says. “Though it’s not always about helping someone but about making that connection.”

Likewise, Streed grew up learning the history of the crusades and harming indigenous peoples, but she says the accompaniment model “takes away the ‘us vs. them’ dichotomy—we are all together accompanying one another in mutual learning and growing. Mission is showing the love of Christ, showing grace, being a witness to these things.”

Lasting impact
Serving in global mission has shaped their time in seminary and current ministry as well. Streed found a passion for international mission and mission with diverse populations, influencing the courses she takes and where she feels called to ministry. Kestner brings his experiences of having to navigate a new setting and experiencing God in Palestine to ministry, keeping in mind what different contexts need and how he can participate in what God is already doing in a place.

Showing God’s love in mission matters deeply to both Streed and Kestner. Kestner says, “I experience God’s love for and through other people, and I hope others can feel God’s love through me, too. This is what I strive for.”

Streed says, “There’s a difference between being a good person and living in response to the love of Christ. Having the faith convictions I have and feeling the call to share the love and grace Christ has shown me with others means it’s no longer just me caring but Christ profoundly caring through me.”
Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. —Acts 20:28

You’re all familiar with our mission: Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities. That commitment was clearly demonstrated last year.

**We’re helping reduce student debt.**

One of the reasons prospective students do not pursue a call to ministry is the cost of theological education. For the past decade, we have collaborated with donors, volunteers and partners to address this problem, and the results are impressive. In the 2014-15 fiscal year, 40 percent of students graduated completely debt free. That number is up a full 10 percent from last year. Our revised scholarship program, in its fourth year, allows students to receive more financial aid. Our financial coaching program is teaching students how to better manage their finances and pay down debt while in school.

**We’re planning for the future.**

After successful accreditation visits from the Association of Theological Schools and the Higher Learning Commission, we have started our strategic and campus planning processes. The former is a dynamic process that will allow for creativity, collaboration and effective prioritization. The goal of the latter is to help create a better student experience and be responsible stewards of the seminary’s resources.

**We’re reaching leaders the world over.**

Over the past year, more than 3 million leaders have visited WorkingPreacher.org, our free online resource. Those users came from 230 countries and territories. And though it was developed for preachers, it has become an invaluable tool for lay leaders, Bible study groups and more.

Thank you for your continued and valuable support in helping us educate leaders in so many ways.

Robin Steinke
President
Meet Abby and Joe

Abby Matter is a senior pursuing her Master of Arts in children, youth and family ministry.

Read Abby’s story at www.luthersem.edu/abby.

Abby was one of 622 students enrolled at Luther Seminary during the 2014-15 academic year. Of those, 46 percent were women.

Master of Arts students like Abby made up 17 percent of enrolled students.

ELCA members accounted for 73 percent of the student body. Thirty-one denominations and faiths made up the remaining 27 percent of students.

Abby received one of 469 scholarships awarded in 2014-15.

The cost of Abby’s tuition last year was $15,500. When accounting for additional off-campus living expenses, a year of study cost approximately $35,000.
Abby was one of 622 students enrolled at Luther Seminary during the 2014-15 academic year. Of those, 46 percent were women. Master of Arts students like Abby made up 17 percent of enrolled students. ELCA members accounted for 73 percent of the student body. Thirty-one denominations and faiths made up the remaining 27 percent of students.

Abby received one of 469 scholarships awarded in 2014-15. The cost of Abby’s tuition last year was $15,500. When accounting for additional off-campus living expenses, a year of study cost approximately $35,000.

Joe was one of 200 students hailing from Region 3 of the ELCA. Luther Seminary claims students from all nine regions.

Joe was one of 155 graduates on May 17, 2015.

As a full-tuition scholarship recipient, Joe received part of the $2.2 million awarded during the 2014-15 academic year. On average, students receive $6,985 in scholarships and grants from Luther.

Joe is one of 3,527 alums currently serving in ministry. Alums serve in all 50 states and 47 countries.

Joe was among the 57 percent of Luther students who pursued an M.Div. degree in 2014-15.

Shortly after graduating in May, Joe Natwick returned to his home state of North Dakota, accepting a call to serve as associate pastor at St. John Lutheran Church in Dickinson.

See Joe’s story at www.luthersem.edu/joe.
## Finances 2014-2015

Luther Seminary and Foundation consolidated balance sheets, June 30, 2015 and 2014

### Assets

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### Liabilities and Net Assets

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<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
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### Endowment

Total Market Value (as of 6/30/15)*: $89.37 million

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<td>3.04%</td>
<td>10.02%</td>
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For more complete list of Luther Seminary’s Annual Report numbers, visit [www.luthersem.edu/annualreport](http://www.luthersem.edu/annualreport).

Learn more about giving to support future church leaders at [www.luthersem.edu/giving](http://www.luthersem.edu/giving).

### Unrestricted Operating Income (Millions)

- Private Gifts, Grants and Releases: $7,991,388
- Tuition and Fees: $5,724,707
- Endowment Draw: $3,617,883
- Auxiliary Enterprises: $1,395,163
- Churchwide and Synod Support: $1,653,829

**Total Unrestricted Operating Income**: $20,382,970

### Unrestricted Operating Expenses ( Millions)

- Student Instruction: $5,328,912
- Institutional Support: $6,364,687
- Scholarships: $2,190,253
- Auxiliary Enterprises: $1,502,180
- Physical Plant and Maintenance: $2,869,516
- Student Services: $1,518,431
- Academic Support: $1,482,078

**Total Expenses**: $21,256,057

*Includes $1 million invested by the endowment into Luther Seminary.
Camp Day deepens counselor experience, impact

On June 3, about 100 Bible camp counselors from various camps gathered at Luther Seminary to learn more about the impact they have as camp counselors. They started the day with the first of two lectures given jointly by Eric Barreto and Michael Chan on the importance of reading the Bible with camp youth. Each counselor also attended two of the five faculty-led workshops, covering various topics including the person of Jesus, engaging theologically with youth and ministering to youth in a digital age. In addition to cultivating knowledge, students were afforded opportunities to strengthen their relationships with each other and with God through a community meal and a closing worship service.

For more about Camp Day, visit www.luthersem.edu/campday. To see photos from Camp Day, visit www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Camp Day.

Celebration of Biblical Preaching 2015 sought Courage to Preach

Pastors, preachers and church leaders gathered at Luther Seminary in early October for the 2015 Celebration of Biblical Preaching. This year’s theme was The Courage to Preach.

Keynote speakers Otis Moss III, Karoline Lewis, Luke Powery, Michael Brown and Barbara Lundblad encouraged the audience to step up to the pulpit week after week and say something that’s worth hearing; something bold on behalf of the biblical text and on behalf of God. Together participants entered into the vulnerable space that is the place of courage for proclamation. In addition to hearing incredible speakers, participants were also invited to attend workshops centered on preaching courageously.

To see photos from the Celebration, go to www.flickr.com/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Celebration of Biblical Preaching.

A Community of Saints gathers at Luther Seminary

A grand cohort of Luther Seminary donors gathered on Sept. 26 to celebrate their contributions to the Luther community. This year Community of Saints celebrated under the theme “Greet the New Morn.” This theme recognizes new leadership at the seminary as well as the new leaders that donors help send out into God’s world. Donors gathered to hear faculty and student panels, attend engaging workshops and participate in worship featuring former St. Paul Synod Bishop Peter Rogness.

For photos of the event, visit www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2015 Community of Saints.
Francis Tabla, ’08  
Ebenezer Community Church, Brooklyn Park, Minn.

For Francis Tabla, founding pastor of Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park, Minn., his work includes ministering to a congregation of more than 400 immigrants, primarily from his home country of Liberia, West Africa.

Tabla says ministering to this group involves understanding the unique and multiple pressures these immigrants face.

First, Liberia endured 15 years of civil war. During this conflict, about 300,000 Liberians were killed and thousands of families were displaced.

Second, immigrants who fled the unrest to settle in the U.S. now face a second challenge as they face possible deportation back to Liberia by the U.S. government. The U.S.-based Liberian community fears deportation both because Liberia’s infrastructure has largely been destroyed, and because the refugees have now forged strong ties to their adopted homeland.

Third, in the past two years, Liberia was one of the West African countries to be most heavily affected by the virulent Ebola outbreak, which claimed almost 5,000 lives and sickened more than 10,000 in that country alone. Many of the U.S. Liberians still have family in their home country, and the epidemic became a tremendous strain as they watched it unfold from afar.

Against this backdrop, Tabla says ministering to his fellow Liberians has been rewarding, yet difficult, as he struggles to help his congregation address their troubled history.

“In 2000, when I first came to Minnesota to do a survey about the possibility of planting a church, my survey results at the time showed that there were 20,000 Liberian immigrants here in Minnesota,” Tabla says. “Today we are being told that there are about 30,000. Brooklyn Park is seen as the capital city of Liberia in Minnesota. The first group of Liberians to come settled here, and in our community, the word spread. Minnesota also has the largest contingent of Liberians in the United States.”

By Kelly O’Hara Dyer, Correspondent
Tabla, who received his Doctor of Ministry in biblical preaching with an emphasis in stewardship from Luther Seminary in 2008, initially moved to Minnesota in 2000 specifically to form a church as a mission outreach for his fellow Liberians.

“I was pastoring at Ebenezer at the same time I was doing my work [at Luther Seminary],” Tabla says. “It was very demanding, but also very rewarding as I look back now. We started with about eight people [in 2000], a Bible study group, and we met in the evenings in St. Paul at the Pilgrim Baptist Church. From those first eight people, we have now grown to 432 members.”

As for the recent past, Tabla says serving his congregation during the Ebola crisis was a deeply challenging experience.

“The Ebola crisis was one of the most difficult times in the life of our church,” Table says. “On a daily basis, I would receive phone calls from members of the church whose relatives had died. It came to a point where I dreaded my phone ringing because it would be another church member sobbing because a family member had died—parents, siblings, loved ones. When that happens, you stand before the congregation as a pastor and you see such uncertainty on their faces. We fell back on prayer, fellowship and the support of the congregation. All of that helped to bring hope and healing. Three of our churches also collaborated to be able to send supplies to Liberia. In the midst of their pain, they sought out an opportunity to be of help.

“It’s just like with the immigration issue, as well,” Tabla continues. “Some [Liberian immigrants] have become U.S. citizens, some are green card holders, and of course, all of the kids who were born here are citizens. However, many are on a status called Deferred Enforced Departure, (DED) which is a temporary protected status. When the Civil War subsided, that status was terminated and Liberians were expecting to be forced to leave. But [Liberia] is not ready for all of these people to come back. The infrastructure was destroyed and the country was devastated, so how do you bring all of these people back? The U.S. came up with the DED, and sometimes that status goes for one year, sometimes for two. It affects our community whenever it’s about to expire and there is fear and apprehension in our community.”

As part of Tabla’s ministry for his congregants, he has also become involved in the political realm, working to convince the government to extend the immigrants’ stay in the U.S.

“As a pastor, you see that fear,” he says. “I’ve been in Minnesota for 15 years now and I’ve done so many rallies to get Congress people to give their support to immigration bills to help our people. It’s been a long struggle.”

Amid this uncertainty and challenge, however, Ebenezer has also experienced both growth and joy. The church recently broke ground for its first dedicated church home in Brooklyn Park.

“Over the years, our congregation has been on the cutting edge in terms of stewardship,” Tabla says, noting that this is particularly humbling given all the other financial demands Liberians face, particularly in supporting family members who remain in their homeland. “We were able to purchase 4.3 acres of land a couple of years ago, and we paid it off in 2013. By the grace of God, we’ve just been able to secure a loan that will enable us to construct our first portion of our church, estimated at $2.8 million. We’re going to be the first immigrant congregation from Africa that I’m aware of that will buy land and build a project of this magnitude. By the time the project is ultimately finished, it will be a little bit over $5 million.”

Alem Asmelash ’04 and ’02
Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Minneapolis; University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview

Luther Seminary alum Alem Asmelash is another graduate who works intimately with a number of different immigrant communities, both as an associate pastor at the 140-year-old Trinity Lutheran Congregation in Minneapolis and as a chaplain at the University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview.

Asmelash, who is originally from Ethiopia and was raised in Sweden, speaks six languages, including Amharic (the native language of Ethiopia), Tigrinya (the native language of neighboring Eritrea) and Swedish. He graduated from Luther Seminary twice, in 2002 with a Master’s in Theology, and in 2004 with a Doctor’s in Theology, and in 2004 with a Doctor of Ministry.

Asmelash began work as a chaplain at Fairview in 2003, and was called to Trinity as a half-time pastor in 2004 specifically to strengthen the church’s outreach to immigrant and refugee families.

The church, which is located in an area that is home to nu-
merous immigrant groups, now meets in Augsburg College’s Foss Center, after losing its previous building to a road construction project in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood.

“We are currently the only church in Cedar-Riverside, and the church has this vision not to be guarded within its own culture, but to go out like Jesus, outside of our comfort zone,” Asmelash says. “The church wanted someone like me who knows the culture and a little bit of the language. If you are respecting of the culture, they respect you back. [The immigrants] see me as one of them, so it becomes easier to reach out.”

Trinity and Asmelash have both worked to make new immigrants welcome in a number of ways. Today, for instance, Trinity holds services in both Amharic and English, a reflection of the fact that the area remains a concentrated immigrant neighborhood for East Africans.

“The majority of our immigrants are Muslims from Somalia. (We have) Ethiopian Muslims also,” Asmelash says. “What I do is act as a pastor for outreach ministry. I just hang around [in the neighborhood,] meet people, counsel people and I invite them to come to the church to worship with us. Many of them have come, even if they have the Orthodox religious background.

Trinity and Asmelash have worked to come alongside their community, in part by offering needed help and support to the children in the area.

“We have Monday through Friday homework help, and I bring the kids in for that, and our church also works to tutor the kids,” Asmelash says. “A number of University of Minnesota and Augsburg College students have been tutoring the kids and helping them with their homework. The kids often want to come [to the church], but the parents don’t push them to unless they see something good [that we can offer.]”

Another of the ways that Trinity and Asmelash practice their outreach is by providing a space for a dialogue between the Muslim and Christian communities.

“In the Muslim community here, they had a mosque in Cedar-Riverside that burned down,” Asmelash says. “The leader of the mosque no longer had an office, so we offered the use of our basement here at Trinity. I think that was very welcoming and respecting of their religion. When they finished [rebuiding] their mosque, in order to say thank you, they invited the community to visit and Trinity was there, too. Another of the things we did as a church, with Fairview Hospital, is to select 10 imams and we taught them how to visit patients in a hospital setting, about grief, about counseling, about coping with change and loss. We helped teach these very well respected imams those things, and [by extension], worked to reach the community through them. With Fairview, Augsburg College and Trinity, we are always working together to reach out to the community in Cedar-Riverside.”

By Kelly O’Hara Dyer, Correspondent

Laurie Eaton, ’03, currently serves as pastor at Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis. The congregation has a long, rich history of being of service to immigrants who arrive in Minnesota with challenges such as not speaking the language, and sometimes, with no formal schooling at all.

Nearly 40 years ago, Eaton says Our Saviour’s members first recognized that a then-new wave of Vietnamese, Hmong and Laotian immigrants was settling in the neighborhood near 24th and Chicago where the church was located.

That group of immigrants was fleeing the long-lasting aftermath of the Vietnam War, and had begun to relocate to Minnesota in an effort to start a new life. However, as with many new immigrant populations, both poverty and language issues were proving difficult for the new arrivals to surmount.

In response, Our Saviour’s organized English as a second language (ESL) classes at the church in 1981, with parishioners volunteering their time to teach both English and other day-to-day life skills to the new arrivals. Classes were held in various areas within the church, including the basement.
The mission statement from the Our Saviour’s website reads, in part, “...we are ‘called, nurtured, and sent—to celebrate, serve, and do justice.’”

“It is the ‘being sent’ aspect of our mission that we understand as outreach,” Eaton says. “While there are many ways that we serve beyond the walls of this church, we also believe that faith formation—that is, growing in our understanding and living out of our Christian identity—is intimately connected to the relationships and experiences that develop as we seek justice and find ways to serve our neighbors.”

Over the past four decades, both the needs and the groups that Our Saviour’s serves have changed, but its commitment to that service has not.

As that first wave of Vietnamese, Hmong and Laotian immigrants became proficient in English, found jobs and assimilated more fully into American culture, they began to move out of the area, only to be replaced by new immigrants with similar challenges, including Liberian refugees, followed by Somalis and others, many of whom were fleeing war-torn countries.

As a result, the various outreach efforts Our Saviour’s pursues have evolved in step with their neighborhood. Services such as an emergency shelter for homeless individuals was added to the church’s efforts, as were a wider variety of ESL programs and skill-building classes, including ones on math and computers.

After a devastating church fire in 1995, which forced a temporary relocation of many of the church services, a new building was dedicated in 2000, complete with an extensive classroom system in the lower level to accommodate this ongoing teaching program.

As the services the church provided to its immigrant neighbors continued to expand, in 2002 it voted to create a separate 501c3 nonprofit to continue the work, in part to gain access to additional grants and funding opportunities to expand the work.

Today, the program has evolved from its modest early start, and is now known as Our Saviour’s Community Services. Ties to the church remain strong, although the administrative and legal formation of the group is now separate. Classes continue to take place in the church’s lower level.

In fact, in August 2015 alone, more than 150 students, most of whom are from immigrant communities, participated in almost 3,000 hours of classroom instruction at the church.

“[This work] is a great deal part of the identity of Our Saviour’s,” Eaton says. “It’s part of the ethos of this place.”

In fact, Eaton says, although Our Saviour’s remains a destination church for many of its parishioners, the average age of attendees has been skewing lower in recent years, a fact Eaton attributes to the strong social justice activities in place through the church. She believes those activities make the church an attractive worship site for many younger members.

“Those [younger members] want to be part of something like this,” she says.
A global view
Luther Seminary faculty lead, learn and collaborate internationally

By Kelly O’Hara Dyer, Correspondent

Although Luther Seminary is tucked into a quiet, tree-filled campus in St. Paul, Minn., the view from many faculty members’ office windows opens onto a global landscape.

As the traditional role of the church in the U.S. and Western countries evolves, and as global Christianity continues to grow, many Luther Seminary staff members are reflecting on what it truly means to be part of a worldwide faith community. They are also working to support and enhance the global church through a combination of travel, teaching, study and networking around the world.

This commitment to serving the church on a worldwide basis takes many forms: educating Luther Seminary students from a global perspective, working with outreach efforts such as the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and developing innovative seminary programs designed specifically with international students in mind.

In each instance, the underlying intent is to recognize that today’s church has grown to encompass numerous cultures, each of which has a rich faith history and valuable insights into theological questions and ministry.

We asked three Luther Seminary faculty members to describe their work for the global church, and to tell us why they believe the future of church work has grown outside the traditional geographic borders of a Western tradition.

Guillermo Hansen, Associate Professor of Global Christianity, Societies and Cultures; and Martin Luther King Jr. Chair

Guillermo Hansen was named associate professor of global Christianity, societies and cultures on July 1. Under this new job description, his focus encompasses theology, global Christianity and communities and cultures.

A native of Argentina, Hansen joined the faculty in 2008. In his home country, he held several positions in the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina and Uruguay, ranging from clergy member to director of studies for the ministerium of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. Additionally, he has done work with the ELCA and served as a theological adviser to the Department of Theological Studies in the LWF.

As a teacher, Hansen wants seminary students to understand the evolving role of the worldwide church, and how it changes as new Christian faith communities emerge in regions such as the global south (a term that collectively...
refers to Africa, Central and Latin America and most of Asia.)

“People in our congregations need to learn anew what it means to be Christian, not merely in the U.S. or North America, but in relation to a body that is global,” Hansen says. “I don’t use very much the language of ‘global mission,’ in the sense that it’s not that we’re called to mission in the rest of the world unilaterally, as was the model for many decades.”

Instead, Hansen believes the church and its leaders must work to understand the unique cultural and historical aspects of Christian faith communities outside the Western sphere, and to walk alongside those communities in a way that is both culturally appropriate and supportive.

“The situation is changing now with the growth of Christianity in the global south,” Hansen says. “That term is ... a social, cultural, political or economic one that usually refers to the regions of the world that have experienced colonialism, for instance, or that have experienced horrendous political and social turmoil or places in the world that experience on a daily basis what it means to live in an environment subject to powerful economic, political and environmental forces.”

One aspect of understanding the growth of global Christianity is recognizing that cultural and regional differences influence how Christian communities relate to the gospel, and proclaim their faith.

“For me, it is very important we grapple with this notion that our ministry and call includes a wider perspective,” Hansen says. “Students need to acquire the skills to understand their own culture, and know how humanity has been shaped by a particular history that is also loaded with cultural assumptions that color their understanding of the Christian faith. We are now much more inclined and prone to engage other ways of expressing the Christian faith, and to learn from other experiences.”

Hansen also believes that approaching ministry on a global basis opens the doors to a richer, deeper understanding of faith for all Christians.

“Over the last 30, 40 years, the theological reflections have been pluralized, in that we have lots of material now coming from the global south reflecting on the same theological topics of the Christian faith such as God or the Holy Spirit or the sacraments,” he says. “There are new insights regarding the meaning of Christianity stemming from these new developments and students are very eager to learn from them.”

Robin Steinke, President
Robin Steinke, Luther Seminary president, also sees the impact of the growth of global Christianity, particularly as that expansion will affect the work that the seminary does now and in the future to educate church leaders.

Steinke says one way the seminary is exploring these possibilities is by reexamining what it means to be a theological institution located in the U.S., when robust growth in Christian communities is taking place globally.

“The question of why this kind of global work is critical is that first, the church is growing globally and I think we might learn some things with deeper engagement with our global partners,” Steinke says. “We’ve been asked to think creatively in partnership with a seminary in Asia. We’ve also been asked to work with Central and South America, and those conversations are in their early stages. And we’ve been asked to think with our brothers and sisters in Africa. I believe we might learn from them and that might be helpful in coaching and teaching our students. And we might be helpful in coaching and teaching a generation of new pastors and teachers in the global communion.”

From an educational standpoint, Steinke believes the seminary is well positioned to deliver new forms of theological training, particularly for a global audience.

“I think Luther Seminary in particular has a capacity to help provide instruction [to students on a global basis], both in person and online,” Steinke says. “We have the ability on our own technology platform to try to respond to this need. We also have a depth of faculty strength along a spectrum of the theological landscape. And our work on Working Preacher, Enter the Bible and our daily God Pause devotionals all has a global market. We’re at somewhere near 3½ million hits on Working Preacher in a given year, from more than 230 countries and territories.”

Steinke has also been deeply involved with the LWF for the past 15 years. The LWF is a global communion of 145 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing more than 72 million Christians in 98 countries.

“When I travel around for LWF, there isn’t a place I go where I don’t either run into a Luther Seminary graduate or run into someone who’s been deeply influenced by a Luther Seminary graduate,” she says. “And that’s really a humbling experience. We’ve inherited this great treasure, and now [we need to think about] how do we continue to carry this into a new and sustainable future? I also think that more and more, our domestic mission outposts, congregations and other kind of mission places are in multifaith, multi-ethnic and multiracial communities. A deeper engagement with our global partners can help strengthen the kinds of competencies that we see can be effective in these new kinds of ministries here domestically.”
While the seminary is working to explore new opportunities for serving the worldwide church, Steinke also says that this work is simply a continuation of past efforts to spread the gospel and share fellowship with other Christians around the globe.

“In one sense, this is nothing new,” she says. “God’s mission for the world has never been about ‘only my congregation’ or ‘only my synod’ or ‘only my denomination.’ Because of new ways of communicating, we can actually see what God is up to in other parts of the world.”

Dirk Lange, Associate Dean of Graduate Theological Education; Associate Professor of Worship; and Chair of History/Theology Division

Dirk Lange, associate dean for Graduate Theological Education at Luther Seminary, has a unique and up-close perspective on the meaning of a truly global church.

For the next two years, Lange has been asked to work with the LWF and church leaders from around the world in preparation for the 500th commemoration of the Reformation, which will happen in 2017. As part of his appointment, Lange will spend roughly 40 percent of his time working directly on initiatives tied to the commemoration, while also continuing to teach at the seminary.

“The primary thing I’m working on right now is a historic event that will take place on Oct. 31, 2016, to launch the 500 years in Lund, Sweden,” Lange says. “What is extraordinary or historic about this day is that we are commemorating the 500 years of Reformation with our Catholic sisters and brothers. That we can be together for this significant occasion is the result of a long process of dialogue that’s been going on for 50 years between Lutherans and Catholics.”

Lange says that lengthy dialogue culminated 16 years ago with the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, a document that was signed by both the LWF and the Vatican.

“After that came some other documents and then a publication called ‘From Conflict to Communion,’” Lange says. “In that publication, the dialogue commission looked at the origins and consequence of the Reformation from both Lutheran and Catholic sides. Both Lutherans and Catholic have come to a joint agreement on the value of [the Reformation] so that now they both can express a deep joy for the gifts of the Reformation, but then also repentance, in that we both mutually ask forgiveness for the violence that we’ve done to each other as a result of misunderstandings and the walls that were built on both sides. We come together in joy and in repentance and commit ourselves to a common witness and service in the world. This will all take place in the Cathedral of Lund.”

Through these ongoing efforts, both the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church are continuing to work together and commit themselves to common witness to Jesus Christ and common service.

Lange is also at work on the international worship planning group preparing the worship for the 12th General Assembly of the LWF to be held in Windhoek, Namibia, in May 2017.

“The LWF has had a long relationship with Namibia. While it was still subjugated to South Africa, the LWF was instrumental in helping Namibia reach independence,” Lange says of the venue. “I was asked to be the consultant for the worship during the general assembly. The international worship planning committee seeks to prepare worship services that combine both local and global elements that name the Namibian reality and the global presence of the Lutheran communion. We will also be planning the Reformation commemoration of the 500 years. There is no better place to do this than in a country like Namibia and its church that continues the work of the Reformation into the 21st century.”

As part of his international work for the church, Lange is also quick to echo Steinke’s comments about the wide-reaching role that Luther Seminary alumni play in the world.

“Those of us who travel a lot for the LWF or for Luther Seminary notice this in our international travels,” he says. “As we are on commissions or lecturing in various places, there are always many global church leaders and professors who come up to us and say they are graduates and express their deep gratitude for the work of Luther Seminary in graduate theological education.”

Lange also says that engaging with Christian communities on a global basis and finding new ways to serve and support members of the faith community in its widest context is something he believes is critical as the church moves into the next 500 years of the Reformation.

“Through my international work, I get chances to meet people involved [in the church throughout the world,] particularly in the Global South,” Lange says. “[At Luther Seminary,] we want to focus our programs even more on the global need for theological leadership in the church, especially of course in the world of theological education in seminaries or universities but also for other church organizations and non-governmental organizations.” 🌍
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8    PREPARE/ENRICH Certification Workshop
12    Working Preacher Lectionary Study (webcast)
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3-5    Speaking the Word Freely

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The Lay School of Theology at Luther Seminary is a program of informal, non-credit classes taught by seminary professors for lay persons who want to learn more about matters that relate to their Christian faith and life.

**Winter: Feb. 8-March 7**

“A People for God’s Name:” Believing and Belonging in Luke and Acts (webcast available)
7-9 p.m. Mondays

**Seminar leader:** Eric Barreto, Associate Professor of New Testament

**Jeremiah: Judgment, Trauma and Hope**
Noon-2 p.m. Mondays

**Seminar leader:** Michael Chan, Assistant Professor of Old Testament

**Martin Luther—A Grand Assortment of Insights: Part 2**
7-9 p.m. Mondays

**Seminar leaders:** Steven Paulson, Professor of Systematic Theology; Gracia Grindal, Professor Emeritus of Rhetoric; Guillermo Hansen, Associate Professor of Global Christianity, Societies and Cultures; Mark Granquist, Associate Professor of Church History; Mary Jane Haemig, Professor of Church History

The 2016 course catalog will be posted online in November. You can view it at www.luthersem.edu/kairos.
Faculty and Staff Notes

**Eric Barreto**, associate professor of New Testament, delivered the Global Voice Lecture at Lancaster Theological Seminary. The lecture was titled, “*A People for God’s Name:* Race, Theology, and the Bible Today.” While in Lancaster, he also taught and preached at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lancaster, Pa. He presented a lecture at the Progressive Youth Ministry Conference in Chicago. He preached and taught at Trinity Lutheran Church in Free-land, Wash. He spoke at the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Men in Mission’s annual breakfast. This summer he spoke at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit.

**Michael Chan, ’09**, associate professor of Old Testament, launched the Faith and Firearms Project, an ethnographic research project that studies the intersection of guns and religion in America. Minnesota Public Radio host Kerri Miller interviewed him on the same subject. He traveled to Israel as part of the Christian Leadership Initiative with the Shalom Hartman Institute. This was the second part of a two-year grant. He was a resource speaker at the Outlaw Ranch in Custer, S.D.

**Adam Copeland**, director of the Center for Stewardship Leaders, presented a keynote address on religion and faith formation in higher education at St. Olaf College. He also spoke at Building a Stewardship House, an event sponsored by the ELCA’s Southwestern and Southeastern Minnesota synods. He read “A Broader Appeal: How Crowdfunding Inspires Creative Ministry” for the cover of The Christian Century. He contributed “Analyzing the Spiritual Rhetoric of Kickstarter.com” to the Journal of Religion and Popular Culture (Fall 2015). He published an essay titled “Teaching Digital Wisdom” in “Hybrid Pedagogy: A Digital Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Technology.” He authored the lead article about young adults and giving for the November issue of The Lutheran magazine.

**Terri Elton, ’07**, associate professor of leadership, taught Foundations of Ministry with Children at Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C. She led the Leading in the Midst of Change presentations at Theoprobe in Winter Park, Colo., and presented “Change Dynamics Within a Congregation” at the Southwest Minnesota Synod leaders’ gathering. She led “Engaging Adolescents in a Digital World” for Luther Seminary’s Camp Day and “Family Faith Habits Foster Faithful Living at Family Camp” at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Montana. She presented “The Whole and the Parts: The Disruptive Nature of Rethinking Confirmation” at Luther Seminary’s Rethinking Confirmation. She also addressed the Hope Leadership Conference in West Des Moines, Iowa. She is writing a piece of the ELCA Practice Discipleship curriculum, “Wondering About Confirmation,” that will be completed in December and shared with the church in 2016.

**Terence Fretheim,’60**, emeritus professor of Old Testament, is a visiting professor of Old Testament this fall at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong.

**Mary Jane Haemig**, professor of church history and director of the Reformation Research Program, presented a paper about “Reformation Observances in 1917 Minnesota: The German Hero in the American World War I Context” at the American Society of Church History spring meeting in Minneapolis. As director of Luther Seminary’s Reformation Research Program, she made arrangements and led program planning for Teaching Martin Luther in the 21st Century, a consultation for teachers at ELCA colleges, held at Luther Seminary.


**Andrew Keck**, director of library services and director of institutional effectiveness, led a roundtable discussion about theological seminaries at the Higher Learning Commission meeting in Chicago. He participated in three panels on collection development, scholarly communication and library directors at the American Theological Library Association conference in Denver.

**Craig Koester,’80**, academic dean and Asher O. and Carrie Nasby Chair of New Testament, was the presenter and leader of the English language seminar at the Colloquium Bibliicum at Leuven University in Belgium. The topic was imagery in the book of Revelation. He was a participant in the Society for New Testament Studies conference in Amsterdam. He presented a paper on John 2 at the Colloquium Ioanneneum in Ephesus, Turkey. He published an article on prayer and identity formation in Revelation in the South African journal HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies.

**Karoline Lewis,’94**, associate professor of biblical preaching and the Marbury E. Anderson Chair of Biblical Preaching, was the keynote presenter at the Moravian Minister/DCE Retreat in North Carolina and at the Celebration of Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary, where she also preached. She was the keynote presenter for the New Hampshire United Church of Christ Clergy Conference Convocation, held in Biddeford Pool, Maine. She has, over the last six months, published articles in Lectionary Homiletics, The Christian Century and Currents in Theology and Mission.

**Steven Paulson,’84**, professor of systematic theology, was a reader for the oral defense of Wade Johnston’s Ph.D. thesis, “Indifferent Matters: Matthias Flacius Illyricus, John Hooper and Adiaphora,” at Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant, Mich. He preached at the closing of Strandvik Lutheran Church in Cormorant, Minn. He led Jesus the Savior, a class for Luther Seminary’s Lay School of Theology.

**Andrew Root**, associate professor and Carrie Olson Baalson Chair of Youth and Family Ministry, was appointed to the Joy and Adolescent Faith and Flourishing advisory board of the Theology of Joy and the Good Life project based at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. This three-year research project has been made possible by a $4.2 million grant from The John Templeton Foundation. He’s co-leading a $1.2 million grant, also from The John Templeton Foundation, granted to Luther

Do you want to invite a faculty or staff member to present in your congregation? Visit www.luthersem.edu/resourceguide for up-to-date topic listings and contact information.
Seminary. It is titled Science for Youth Ministry: The Plausibility of Transcendence.


Dwight Zscheile, ’08, associate professor of congregational mission and leadership, was keynote speaker for the Baptismal Living Day for the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa and for a leadership conference in the Episcopal Church in New Hampshire in May. He taught Congregations in the 21st Century at Bexley-Seabury Seminary and led the Anglican/Lutheran Residential Study Conference for the Diocese of Rupert’s Land and the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod in Canada. He led the clergy retreat for the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama and a leadership event for the Episcopal Church in South Carolina. He preached and facilitated a leadership retreat for Cathedral Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Pa.


Terri Elton is working on a book with Rabbi Hayim Herring, who holds a Ph.D. in organizational management, titled “Congregations and Faith-based NonProfits 3.0” that will be completed by January (Rowman and Littlefield).

Mark Granquist, associate professor of church history, served as the editor for “Scandinavian Pietists: Spiritual Writings for 19th Century Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland” (Classics of Western Spirituality Series), (Paulist, 2015).


Eric Barreto will be a respondent to a panel at the Bible, Empire and Reception History Conference at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., in November. In addition, he will present a response and paper at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Atlanta.

Michael Chan will continue the Faith and Firearms Research Project with a number of speaking events in Wisconsin and Minnesota. In addition, he will present a paper on the book of Daniel at the Society of Biblical Literature and a paper on the Faith and Firearms Project at the American Academy of Religion. He will make a presentation at a Region 3 leadership conference.

Adam Copeland will be the keynote presenter at the Stewardship Symposium, hosted at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University in Columbia, S.C., on Jan. 29.

Terri Elton will address the Religious Education Association in a presentation titled “Re-imagining Confirmation: Themes, Practices, and Particularities” in Atlanta in November. In February she will present an intensive care course at the ELCA Extravaganza titled “Wondering About Confirmation” in Anaheim, Calif.

Karoline Lewis will lead a number of adult forums this fall. These will be held at various churches in Minnesota, including Roseville Lutheran, Mt. Olivet Lutheran in Minneapolis, Saint Andrew’s in Montemedit as well as adult forums in Red Wing and White Bear Lake. In January she will lead Luther Seminary students to the Holy Land. She will also lead the women’s retreat at Mount Carmel Lutheran in Milwaukee in February.

Steven Paulson will present “Proclamation on the Plains” at Luther House in Sioux Falls, S.D., Jan. 3-5.

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**FACULTY PUBLICATIONS**

**Michael Chan**

- In conjunction with Terence Fretheim and Brent Strawn, published “What Kind of God?: Collected Essays of Terence E. Fretheim” (Eisenbrauns, 2015).
- Co-authored, with Eric Barreto, “The Bible and Theology” (Fortress, forthcoming 2015).

**Terri Elton**

- Working on a book with Rabbi Hayim Herring, who holds a Ph.D. in organizational management, titled “Congregations and Faith-based NonProfits 3.0” that will be completed by January (Rowman and Littlefield).

**Mark Granquist**

- Associate professor of church history, served as the editor for “Scandinavian Pietists: Spiritual Writings for 19th Century Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland” (Classics of Western Spirituality Series), (Paulist, 2015).

**Matthew Skinner**

- Published “Intrusive God, Disruptive Gospel: Encountering the Divine in the Book of Acts” (Brazos, 2015).

**COMING SOON**

**Eric Barreto**

- Will be a respondent to a panel at the Bible, Empire and Reception History Conference at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., in November.
- Will present a response and paper at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Atlanta.

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**Festival of HOMILETICS**

**Prophetic Preaching in Times of Change**

**May 16-20, 2016 | Atlanta**

[www.festivalofhomiletics.com](http://www.festivalofhomiletics.com)
**Alum News**

**’10s**

Tom Liddle, ‘14, and his wife, Monica, have been approved for missionary service with the Protestant Church of East Timor (IPTL). Tom will help develop pastoral leaders for rural congregations and assist with IPTL’s social outreach foundation, which runs two clinics and a rural vocational school.

Mark Dixon, ‘11, currently pursuing a Ph.D. in church history at Princeton Seminary, was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and will spend a year studying church history in Halle, Germany, with his family.

**’00s**

Robert Myallis, ‘08, was selected into the Chautauqua Clergy Leadership Program, a two-year fellowship of the Chautauqua Institution in New York.

Bernard Sande, ‘08, died in July. He graduated with an M.A. in Old Testament studies and had planned to build a church and a school to train pastors near his home in Kenya.

Christopher Miller, ‘07, was elected to a three-year term on the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Board of Trustees in October 2014.

Kyle Schiefelbein, ‘07, graduated with a Ph.D. in liturgical studies and systematic theology from Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif. He currently oversees online education and teaches Lutheran history at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University in Berkeley.

Cynthia Williams, ‘07, was ordained on May 28 with full elder orders in the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. She was also selected as a 2015-17 Collegeville Institute Fellow.

Christopher Byars, ‘07, was called as pastor to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (LCMC) in Washington, Ind., on Sept. 1. He and his wife, Dawn, also celebrated the arrival of their daughter, Roslyn Grace, in May.

Peter Bartimawas, ‘05, was just elected as the Bishop of Gongola Diocese of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria.

**’90s**

Eric Berg, ’99, associate professor of philosophy at MacMurray College, has been invited to write a lengthy entry for the upcoming Oxford University Press publication, “The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther.”

Fidon Mwombeki, ’97, was elected director of the department of mission and development for the Lutheran World Federation.

John Polk, ’85, was recently named the director of chaplaincy for the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Bradley Jenson, ’84, published “Luther and Bach on the Magnificat: For Advent and Christmas” (Wipf and Stock, 2015), which he co-wrote with Dr. Randi Lundell and Dr. Peter Hendrickson.

Tom Holmes, ‘82, published “Pongsak: Advocate for Asian Ministries,” the story of one Thai pastor’s struggle to enable Asian Christians to create their own ecclesiastical structure and culture.

Joseph Erickson, ‘81, presented the opening keynote address at the fifth Asia-Pacific Conference on Service-Learning on May 28 in Taipei, Taiwan. Erickson was also a guest of the faculty of Lingnan University in Hong Kong.

**’70s**

Ronald Baesler, ’76, published, “The Good, the Bad and the Holy: Stories and Musings from a Lifetime of Ministry.”

Dean Johnson, ’73, regent of the University of Minnesota, has been elected to chair the Board of Regents for the next two years.

**’60s**


Clifford Biel, ’62, died April 12. He spent his life serving congregations in Brazil and Mondovi, Wis. He also founded Prince of Peace Covenant Church prior to his retirement.

**’50s**

Allen Peterson, ’57, a retired Lutheran pastor, died surrounded by family in Alexandria, Minn., on Aug. 28. He served churches in Hancock, Grand Meadow, Milaca, Crystal and McGrath, Minn.

James Hofrenning, ’53, was honored at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Fargo Moorhead Communiversity, which he founded in 1965.

For more alumni news, visit www.luthersem.edu/alums

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www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary/

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Events calendar

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
Lift Every Voice
Jan. 18
Luther Seminary
With an election year approaching, take time to reflect on issues of race and voting rights.
Nekima Levy-Pounds, Director, Community Justice Project

**Mid-Winter Convocation**
Translating the Reformation: Martin Luther as Pastoral Theologian for Today
Feb. 1-3
Luther Seminary
www.luthersem.edu/convo

**Andrew S. Burgess Lecture in Global Mission**
Feb. 1
Luther Seminary
Elieshi Ayo Mungure, Area Secretary for Africa, Lutheran World Federation
www.luthersem.edu/lectures/burgess

**Dokimazo**
April 3-4
Luther Seminary
A time for prospective students to discern their calling to Christian public leadership, share their stories and learn more about Luther Seminary
www.luthersem.edu/dokimazo

**Terence E. and Faith L. Fretheim Lecture in Biblical Theology**
April 19-20
Luther Seminary
Dennis Olson, Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary
www.luthersem.edu/lectures/fretheim

**Festival of Homiletics**
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**FEB. 1-3**

**2016 Mid-Winter Convocation**

**TRANSLATING THE REFORMATION:**
**Martin Luther as Pastoral Theologian for Today**

**Keynote Speakers:**
- **Mary Jane Haemig,** Professor of Church History and Director of the Reformation Research Program, Luther Seminary
- **Robert Kolb,** International Research Emeritus Kolb Professor for Institute for Mission Studies, Concordia Seminary
- **Ronald K. Rittgers,** Professor of History and Theology, Valparaiso University
- **Timothy Wenger,** Emeritus Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor of Reformation History and the Lutheran Confessions, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

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#LSconvo2016
Advent devotional 2015
“Creator of the Stars of Night”

Luther Seminary invites individuals and congregations to pray and reflect with this year’s Advent devotional, “Creator of the Stars of Night.”

This year’s devotional is written by faculty members Mark Throntveit, Lois Malcolm, Adam Copeland and Cameron Howard. It is available at www.luthersem.edu/advent as a printed collection. It is also downloadable as a large-print PDF. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to open the file, and once opened, you may save the PDF and print as many copies as you or your congregation need. God Pause subscribers will continue to receive daily devotions in their inbox. During the season of Advent, the daily God Pause devotional will be pulled from “Creator of the Stars of Night.”

May “Creator of the Stars of Night” be a source of joy, peace and reflection for you this Advent season. Questions? Email semrel@luthersem.edu.

Support global church leaders
Gifts to the Sustaining Fund will be matched through Dec. 31

“I came to seminary with an interest in global mission. It was well nourished during my years at Luther Seminary through faculty and students from around the world. When I served an urban congregation in a community of [Somali] immigrants, Luther Seminary’s seminars and workshops about Islam were invaluable in shaping my ministry. I now belong to another urban congregation, and we regularly host Luther Seminary students who are exposed to our culturally diverse neighborhood and support programs for the many immigrant people who find a home near the church.

I have watched Luther Seminary raise up leaders for a global church, whether here at home or in distant lands. Our gifts to the Sustaining Fund make this possible. Please join my wife, Cam, and me. Give to the Sustaining Fund at Luther Seminary today.”

Pastor Paul Rogers, ’69
Minneapolis

Use the enclosed envelope or give online at www.luthersem.edu/promise
A shared commitment to learning and leadership

In our shared work of ministry, Greg and Cheryl Myhr are two of our most dedicated partners.

“We’re part of a community of saints. This isn’t just a personal thing, but a community thing. It’s more than just me,” Cheryl says.

This is a conviction that has been developed and deepened in many facets of the Myhrs’ lives—at their congregation, Lord of Life in Maple Grove, Minn.; through lifelong learning classes at Luther Seminary; and in their everyday lives.

“The congregation we belong to has really encouraged and enabled us to serve, to put apostolic faith into action,” Cheryl says. “It’s equipped me better to share my faith with other people.”

Luther’s Lay School of Theology, which the Myhrs have attended for nearly a decade, has reinforced that.

“Lay School is an amazing resource. ... We learn so much and grow so much. We’ve been able to take back to our small group the things we’ve learned,” Greg says.

The Myhrs’ exposure to a diverse group of Lay School faculty, who have broadened their biblical knowledge and strengthened their faith—as well as the impressive Luther Seminary interns who have come through Lord of Life—have encouraged them to support Luther financially. Members of the Heritage Society, they give both annually and through their estate. They consider this support just another part of their responsibility as members of this community of saints.

“It’s an investment in the future church, an investment in our kids and grandkids and future generations,” Cheryl says. “They need pastors and churches that will expand their relationship with God but also encourage them to go out into the community and make an impact. Leadership is critical to everything.”

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP RAISE UP FUTURE CHURCH LEADERS.

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