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The Concord

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ELCA MINISTRY BOARD ACCEPTS ORDINATION GUIDELINES FOR EXCEPTIONS

CHICAGO (ELCA News Service) The board of the ELCA Division for Ministry met here March 9-11 and approved guidelines that would help the church implement a bylaw being considered to permit ordinations "in unusual circumstances." The guidelines were approved by a 10-7 vote and recommended to the ELCA Church Council for adoption.

In November the ELCA Church Council — the church's board of directors and the legislative authority of the church between its churchwide assemblies — referred a possible bylaw for the ELCA Constitution to the Rev. H. George Anderson, ELCA presiding bishop. At its meeting here April 6-8, the council will decide if it will transmit the bylaw to the Churchwide Assembly, which will meet Aug. 8-14 in Indianapolis.

On Jan. 1, the ELCA and Episcopal Church entered into full communion. For Lutheran clergy to serve in Episcopal congregations — a feature of the new relationship — the ELCA accepted the "historic episcopate." The historic episcopate traces the ordained ministry back to the early days of the Christian Church through a succession of bishops. To participate in that succession, ELCA bishops will preside at the ordinations of new ELCA pastors. In addition to the presiding bishop, a bishop heads each of the ELCA's 65 synods.

Some Lutherans remain opposed to incorporating the historic episcopate in the ELCA, and the bylaw is seen as a compro-

A Journalistic Ministry of Lutheran Seminary Students
April 10, 2001 Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota Volume 30, Number 8

REV. A. JORIS WATLAND RECEIVES RACE, CHURCH & CHANGE AWARD

Luther Seminary Press Release

"Tenacious," "perseverant," "dedicated" and "committed" are a few of the many words used to describe the Rev. A. Joris (Jory) Watland, and his life of service. Watland, the recipient of this year's Race, Church & Change award, serves as executive director of Kokua Kalihi Valley (Comprehensive Family Services) in Honolulu, Hawaii. The award was presented on Tuesday, April 3 at 10 a.m. in Luther Seminary's Chapel of the Incarnation.

The award recognizes individuals who have facilitated reconciliation among diverse people and demonstrated commitment to constructive change that heals the community. Watland is the 16th recipient of the Race, Church and Change award.

In response to unmet health and social service needs of the multicultural residents of Kalihi Valley, Watland helped found Kokua Kalihi Valley (KKV) in 1972. What began with a $5,000 grant from Lutheran Brotherhood and five individuals in community outreach has grown to a multi-service organization meeting the needs of many cultures who, without KKV, would go unerved. KKV's services vary from medical, dental, maternal and child health to counseling, community health services and community advocacy and development. Services are available on a sliding fee scale to anyone living in the Kalihi Valley.

"Jory's long ministry of 32 years among impoverished people in the Kalihi Valley is a wonderful model for multicultural and community ministry," said the Rev. Rodney Maeker, chair of the cross-cultural committee which selects the award recipient, and director of cross-cultural education at Luther Seminary. "His service of faithfulness and reconciliation is an excellent model for seminary students and anyone engaged in Christian mission and ministry."

The Rev. Paul Hanson, a retired pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America echoes Maeker's endorsement. "Jory's ministry relies on going to the people and bringing them in rather than waiting for them to come to him," he said. "His life's work has been and will be serving the working poor in this multicultural setting."

Reverend Watland's gifts to his communities extend beyond KKV. Some of his roles include: board member and past president of the board of directors, Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations; board member, Hawaii State Primary Care Association; and board member, American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii. He is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., and Jackson High School, Jackson, Minn. He also received a certificate in graduate studies from Luther Seminary.
proved the guidelines the bishops suggested and recommended the council adopt them.

"It was one of those votes that, when you take it, everybody sits quietly afterward and lets it sink in, because it was not a win-lose vote," said the Rev. Joseph M. Wagner, executive director of the ELCA Division for Ministry. "It was a realistic struggling with a very complex issue, recognizing that we are only one step in the process."

Wagner said the vote came after more than two hours of discussion. "It was very long and extended, direct, healthy, strong conversation," he said. "Our board asked, because of the intensity and vigor of the conversation, that the original version also be transmitted to the Church Council as information for its conversation."

"The guidelines, as they were passed along by the Conference of Bishops and were recommended by our board, are a realistic middle ground," said Wagner. He said the ELCA is "committed to having very few exceptions" while recognizing "there are several synods in the church that need to have the flexibility the guidelines permit."

"We are in the process of living into full communion, recognizing the differences that are still in our church and the fact that we nevertheless have taken a clear position, have accepted it and are moving forward," said Wagner. "It's a negotiated pathway that is being worked out."

The bylaw and guidelines create the possibility for exceptions while honoring the fact that we have this relationship with the Episcopal Church," said the Rev. A. Craig Settledge, associate executive director of the ELCA Division for Ministry. They provide a process of consultation to determine "good reasons a synodical bishop may authorize another ELCA pastor to preside at the ordination service."

"The opportunity for a widely acceptable compromise is being missed," said Dr. Michael J. Root, professor of systematic theology, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. Root is a member of the DM board and was one of three Lutherans who drafted the full-communion agreement the ELCA adopted in 1999 and the Episcopal Church adopted in 2000.

"I have come to the conclusion that exceptions with clear restrictions and a definite end-date, to cover only those persons already in the candidacy process on January 1, 2001, could be seen as the flexible implementation of the new relationship and not its permanent alteration. I was pleased with the original guidelines developed by the division and discouraged by the removal of all limiting features by the bishops," said Root.

**DEADLINES**

The deadline for the final issue of the semester is May 1st.

Submissions are welcome, please contact us if you have any questions
concord@luthersem.edu
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**The Concord**

A journalistic ministry of Luther Seminary students

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Readers are encouraged to submit articles and letters to the editors for publication. All submissions should include the author's name, telephone number and, if a student, class standing. In addition, all submissions to The Concord should be prepared in typed, hard copy form as well as on disk if the item is so prepared. It is preferable that documents be in PC format. All submissions should be delivered to our mailbox in the Olson Campus Center (703) or at our office, Gullixson 10.

The Concord reserves the right to publish, edit, or disregard all submissions. Letters to the Editor: submissions should be limited to 200 words or less while "Guest Columnist" submissions should not exceed 850 words.
Mea Culpa
A Confession from your Editor...

By Scott A. Johnson, M.Div. Middler
Managing Editor, The Concord

It's been an interesting few weeks for this farmer's kid...

I had a nice little editorial about my trip to the Guthrie to see Patrick Stewart and Mercedes Ruehl in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" but upon further review, the editorial was no good, and thus it now resides in data heaven. I chose instead to make a confession and ask for your help.

In many ways, this academic year has been excruciatingly frustrating, especially the past few weeks. Like Paul, I'm beginning to see all things as crap lately; unlike Paul, however, it's because of my own weakness, not because I'm being abused. I've turned in several assignments over this period, and I'd say that most of them were crap. I've not turned in a few assignments on time, because I knew they were particularly odious crap and needed to be done better. I've not found time to get to the gym to lift weights or work out, so my body is a bit flabbier these days and I feel like crap. Since I'm not working out, my sleep schedule has gotten off a bit and so I'm sleeping like crap and feeling like crap when I wake up. Worst of all, because I'm rarely home and because I'm the unspoken-but-designated cleaner-of-the-litter box, the apartment my wife and I share with our two cats has, unfortunately, smelled like crap quite a bit lately.

(No, this is not the Discord; you'll notice that it starts on the next page. I'm being seriously amusing here. Or amusingly serious. Or I could be full of crap. You decide.)

Thing is, The Concord has suffered during this time as well. I've missed opportunities to report on campus activities, forgotten meetings, missed deadlines, lost voice mail messages. This is my confession: after a year of pretending that I could do this alone, I now acknowledge that I'm full of crap when it comes to running a student newspaper. I can write, I can even fake my way through reporting campus events if I've got the time, but I haven't clue one as to how to do what I've been doing for eight months now. You deserve better. And I want to make sure that things are better for the future.

In that vein, here's my request for help. A number of you have told me you appreciate what The Concord has offered this year - would you be willing to tell us what you'd like to see in the future? I'm serious: over the next few months I'll be working to figure out how The Concord can do its job better, and I'd like your help. I want to leave The Concord having no doubt that next year the level of crap that the next editor can foist on the campus is less than what I've allowed this year.

Email your responses to concord@luthersem.edu, or drop them in our mailbox in the Olson Campus Center (#703). They can be anonymous if desired, but I'd prefer to know who is making suggestions to further the conversation if necessary.

You've been very kind to me this year as your student newspaper editor, perhaps too kind, but regardless I thank you for it. Would you be so kind as to help me make sure that my successor is an improvement? I, and future readers of The Concord, would appreciate your help very much. Thank you, and God bless.

Notes from the Parish Nurse

Lydia Volz
Luther Seminary Parish Nurse

Physicians and dietitians still recommend that the healthiest diet is one low in fat and full of grains, fruits and vegetables (often referred to as a plant based diet). Such a diet is rich in the anti-oxidant vitamins (C, E and beta-carotene) which may protect us from some changes associated with aging, cancer and heart disease and often reduces obesity.

Diseases such as heart disease, colon, prostate, breast cancer, diabet es, high blood pressure and cholesterol levels have all been linked to diets rich in animal based foods (the usual American diet). In choosing our foods, it is also good to be aware of the many additives and non-nutrients that are included in prepared foods. If I can be of any help to you, please contact me at x537. May the Lord bless our eating and strengthen our bodies, minds and spirits for His service and the good of others.

In The House

By Robert Buck
M.Div. Junior

Throughout the year I have been writing in this space about my experience here at Luther as an "ecumenical" student. I have shared something of my background, I have told you about my church, and I have gone into some detail about many of my concerns and questions as I wrestle with the particular theological implications of my decision to pursue a seminary education here. I would like to take this opportunity, then, to thank the Luther community for the privilege of being able to publicly wrestle with God, and I would like to offer a further word of explanation and "Apology."

I decided some time ago to, Lord willing, enter the "Justice and Peace Essay Contest" that you may have heard about. Of the topics available to choose from, the one that seemed most appealing to me was: "Crisis of Identity in a Shrunked World and Christian Witness."

At the time I wasn't fully aware of the implications of the choice I had made; the topic simply seemed to be more appealing to me than any of the others. It was only a few nights ago, during a late night study session with a faithful friend that I realized why that topic was so appealing. It just so happens that the "crisis" described above is the very crisis in which I am now engaged.

If there ever truly was such a time, the mythical days when Luther Seminary was a place with smoke-filled classrooms attended only by single white male Lutherans just out of college are, of course, now long gone. We hear often of the "global village" and the accompanying "global economy", the world-shrinking effect of the Internet, and other aspects of globalization. In many respects, the world truly does seem to be getting smaller. A renewed ecumenism is probably another facet of this trend; thus good Lutherans are forced to contend with all that goes with having someone such as myself around.

Part of what it means to have a non-Lutheran and non-mainline Christian such as myself around is that I can not help but challenge many of the assumptions that Lutherans..."
Welcome to the Not-so-Spiritual Gifts Indicator, NSGI for short. Galatians 5:22-23 states, “By contrast the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” (NRSV) These are all indeed spiritual gifts that many display in abundance, evidence that the Spirit is working through us all. However, people show these gifts in varying amounts, and at times other “Not-so-Spiritual” Gifts are known to come out.

The NSGI was formed with these average people in mind. Let’s face it, we all have shortcomings and we don’t like to have others point them out to us. So, why not point them out yourself? The NSGI will allow you to do just that.

The NSGI is not designed as a scientific test and the results are not binding. You may find that you outright disagree with its findings. This is okay. The NSGI is not meant to tell you that you are one way or another; it is simply meant to give you an idea about where your shortcomings may lie.

Taking the NSGI is quite simple. It is composed of 30 statements. After reading each statement decide how strongly you agree with it and rate your agreement on the following scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

For instance, if the statement was, “I often find myself desiring cheese late at night,” and you often find yourself desiring cheese late at night, you would choose either Strongly Agree or Agree, depending on how strong your desire for cheese is late at night.

If you do not find yourself desiring cheese late at night and have a strong desire instead for Blueberry muffins because cheese just doesn’t sound good you would choose either Disagree or Strongly Disagree, depending on whether cheese just doesn’t hold interest for you late at night or if you just really disdain cheese in general and the thought of it late at night absolutely repulses you.

If you are just plain hungry at night and will eat about anything, whether it be cheese or something else, then you would choose Neutral.

Once you have finished rating the statements, go to the “tally sheet.” Next to each question number you will write a 4 for statements you strongly agree with, a 3 for statements you agree with, a 2 for statements you are neutral on, a 2 for those you disagree with and a 1 for those you strongly disagree with. Once you have done this add the result numbers from left to right and put the total in the column marked “total.”

A number of 13-15 next to a singular item indicates that you are fairly well endowed with this not-so-spiritual gift. A 10-12 indicates that you probably have this not-so-spiritual gift. A 7-9 indicates that you don’t have this not-so-spiritual gift right now but you might develop it in the future. A 1-6 indicates that this is probably not a not-so-spiritual gift that you have.

Once again, the NSGI is not meant to say that you are definitely one way or another, and the creators of the test cannot be held responsible for your findings or any lawsuits that might arise from the use of this test.

Please rate the following statements:
1. I often don’t agree with those in authority.
2. Every bright cloud has a dark lining.
3. When I was a kid my parents were often mad at me for knocking things over.
4. I often make my friends question their decisions.

We’ll continue this, but you have to find it...

LUTHER PROFESSOR WITHDRAWS FROM RACE FOR BISHOP

(The Discord) ST. PAUL, MN
Luther Seminary professor James Nestingen has withdrawn his name for consideration for Presiding Bishop of the ELCA following the release of allegations that he is actually a native of Mississippi, not Canada as has been reported in the past.

The revelations came as part of the ‘vetting’ process whereby potential candidates for Presiding Bishop are thoroughly investigated before being officially nominated for the office. Officials at ELCA offices in Chicago reported the withdrawal approximately 48 minutes after the news broke. “We are saddened to report that Dr. Nestingen has withdrawn his name from consideration, and we will pray for him and his family in this difficult time,” said an ELCA official as he carried a case of champagne into the ELCA’s churchwide headquarters on Higgins Road.

Students at Luther Seminary, where Nestingen teaches church history, were devastated when the news broke. “For years, he’s portrayed himself as one of us, from up North, you know, and now we find out that he just up and lied to us all along, then,” said a student as she walked to class. “I guess this is just what happens when sinners hold the power, for goodness’ sake.”

Nestingen had no official comment, though an acquaintance said that Nestingen was actually relieved to be out of the race. “He knew it would be tough to take his annual hunting trip up north with his friends and keep up in his garden while serving as presiding bishop, and let’s be honest, the man wears a pectoral cross like a bear wears ballet slippers.”
Hymnody Corner

Augsburg Fortress is pleased to announce the publication of the first in a series of new hymns, designed to counter the stumbling blocks of some of the more foolish traditional Lutheran hymns.

Blessed Open Possibility
Text: Nathan Loer and Jon Olson
Tune: Traditional (sung irreverently and tongue-in-cheek to the tune of BRED DINA VIDA VINGAR, "Thy Holy Wings")

Blessed Open Possibility
That Christ Jesus died for me
How can we know for sure that life is found
In the Cross of Calvary?
Oh we know that Jesus has promised
To never let us go
And yet all the faith we can muster
Screams that this just can’t be so.

As the years go by we keep wondering
Can we really know for sure
That when Jesus claimed us at baptism
Our young hearts and minds were pure?
So I guess that we’ll be content with
A faith that’s full of doubt
When we die we’re sure we could go to hell
And we’ll never é’er get out.

Now the preachers talk of eternity
And salvation yet to come
And are bold to proclaim these promises,
Which they speak to everyone.
As for us we ought to be cautious
To speak of certainties
And be simply satisfied with
Open possibilities

Something from the previous page...

Hey, you’re pretty smart...
dreams.
5. I don’t like to share things.
6. I think people lie to me quite often.
7. People should not be told you are mad
at them; they should just get the hint.
8. When I lead people into the woods
disaster usually ensues.
9. Every one is out to get me.
10. I want a car that is better than my
neighbor’s
11. People often tell me that I am not a
team player.
12. The glass is half empty.
13. Crunching glass is not an unfamiliar
sound to me.
14. Doing something just because it is
fun is not a good enough reason.
15. It is better to get than to give.
16. Just because it is in a book doesn’t
mean it’s true.
17. I usually don’t deal with problems
directly.
18. People often say to me, “They put
you in charge!!!”
19. The government cannot be trusted.
20. When someone else has something I
want one too.
21. “The Man” is full of crap!
22. There is no hope for future genera-
tions.
23. I am secretly happy when a child hits
a ball through their neighbors’ window.
24. You can’t do that.
25. I want that baby’s sucker.
26. The results of this test are bunk.
27. Manipulation works better than con-
frontation.
28. My directives are usually not fol-
lowed.
29. Someone is following me.

30. I need a raise so I can pay off my
credit cards.

Now, total your responses for the fol-
lowing traits:
Dissention: 1, 7, 21
Pessimism: 2, 8, 22
Breaking Things: 3, 9, 23
Discourager: 4, 10, 24
Selfishness: 5, 11, 25
Unbelief: 6, 12, 26
Passive Aggression: 7, 13, 27
Floundering: 8, 14, 28
Paranoia: 9, 15, 29
Keeping up with the Joneses: 10, 16, 30

Now, keeping your score in mind, read
about each not-so-spiritual gift:

Dissention — You are the conflicting
voice in most groups. Compromise is a
word that you are not familiar with and mostly
people don’t like being around you because of that.

Pessimism — Life really seems to be a
bummer to you. Friends try to cheer you up and
you reply back, “Why should I, what is there
to look forward to anyway.” You are usually
depressed and most people don’t like being
around you because of that.

Breaking Things — Whether it be nat-
ural clumsiness or a mean spirit that likes to
hear things break, disaster seems to follow you
everywhere you go. When you borrow
things from people they aren’t normally re-
turned in one piece and most people don’t
like being around you because of that.

Discourager — You think that you are
the voice of reason in most peoples’ lives.
You keep a level head and don’t let your mind
wander too far. When people tell you about
their aspirations you remind them about,
in your own words, the “real world,” and most
people don’t like being around you because
of that.

Selfishness — You want everything out
of life, literally. Stuff is very important to you
and you will do anything to get and keep more of
it and most people don’t like being around you
because of that.

Unbelief — When your mother told you
not to believe everything people tell you, you
took it to heart and now you don’t believe
anything anyone tells you. You are someone
who would accuse the pope of not being
Catholic and most people don’t like being
around you because of that.

Passive Aggression — You don’t like to
deal with problems directly you fear harming
relationships. You instead talk behind peoples’
backs, and in the process hurt them even more
and most people don’t like being around you
because of that.

Floundering — You try to lead and fail
miserably. You would make a great follower or
a worker bee but you have aspirations that are
larger than your pool of abilities. You con-
stantly build peoples hopes up then leave them
disappointed and most people don’t like be-
ing around you because of that.

Paranoia — You are constantly looking
suspiciously over your shoulder. You know
way too much about the JFK assassination.
You accuse friends of being involved in plots
against you and most people don’t like being
around you because of that.

 Keeping up with the Joneses — You are
a covetous leech. You want things just be-
cause other people have them. You want to be
something you are not and are generally not
genuine and most people don’t like being
around you because of that.

We now return you to your regularly scheduled Concord...


“GOD IS AT WORK IN THIS.”

A Concord interview with Patricia Lull

Editor’s note: I had the pleasure of sitting down with Patricia Lull, our new dean of students, just after she arrived on campus in early March.

Concord: First off, why Luther? What attracted you here?

It’s a very good question, why Luther, because I have no previous connection, and other than staying in guest housing once because it’s affordable, and worshiping in the chapel because it was nearby for another event, I had never been on campus before. So I can’t give the obvious answers of deep loyalty over a long period of time. Certainly I’d been aware of the strengths of Luther Seminary, but I think what was opportune for me has to do with the strategic plan, and a real commitment to putting mission at the center of what this seminary defines its life to be about, and also a kind of re-definition of the role of the office of dean of students, such that I think it’s a chance to be a real shaper in the life of the church. Beyond that, someplace in the process it began to feel right and it worked out.

Were there any specific attractions beyond what you just mentioned?

I think one thing that’s attractive to me is that it’s a campus of some size. I’m more familiar with a large university setting, and that it is not, but there’s enough size for me to think that it would be interesting, and it has proved to be that in my days here. I am just delighted that there is a significant international student community, and that certainly was an appeal, and of course all the richness that comes with lectures here and in the Twin Cities. I’m still in denial about the snow, but thinking beyond that to the intellectual, spiritual, and musical life here, these things all seem like great gifts.

So how are you being welcomed?

I’ve been very, very warmly welcomed. I had good correspondence by email by some key people here long before I came that made it a lot easier to embrace the transition. The staff left some nice gifts in the house that was available for me to rent, and I think that’s part of the welcome. The drive and walk had been shoveled on that house, which in winter was a definite sign of welcome. Beyond that, people have simply been very receptive to introducing themselves, opening their lives, and a lot of things in terms of campus have been opened to me.

You come from campus ministry professionally; how do you see that impacting your leadership here at Luther Seminary?

Much of what came to interest me in campus ministry in the 16 years I served in administrative ministry and at particular sites came from my work with young Christians. Now, granted, sometimes young Christians are older in age, but a lot of what I hope will unfold at Luther will be in terms of discipleship. A very particular particular interest of mine is the role of catechesis in the life of Christian faith. I’ve done some writing and I’m getting ready to do some more writing in that field, and I think there are ways in which, because of a background in campus ministry, working with young adults, and now in this setting, working with adults of a variety of ages who have sensed a call to public service, the transition isn’t as big as it might seem on the surface.

Do you feel that the relationship Luther has with ELCA campus ministries and ELCA colleges is strong, weak, could it be improved, and do you see that as part of your role?

I’m too new to know how strong that is presently. I’m absolutely convinced that it could be strengthened, and even prior to coming here I was working on some common cause with others in the ELCA in terms of outdoor ministry, our ELCA colleges and universities, campus ministry, volunteer corps, and really trying to think how we could get things going in a common direction. I know there’s a will to strengthen those alliances.

Are there any images, metaphors, or specific scriptures that inform your ministry or have shaped what you’ve done in your career?

I’ve often said that the key verse, which is coming up again in the lectionary, is “God was in Christ reconciling the world,” the cosmos, to himself, and I think the vastness of that vision has been very important to me. I’m a fan of Niebuhr’s famous book of typologies, Christ and Culture, and the one I’ve been thinking about most recently is Christ into culture as a kind of motif for the 21st century. Partially out of my time in campus ministry I have come to know the deep hunger that people have for spirituality, pretty widely found in universities, hunger for a deepened religious life, not always in traditional forms, and I think somehow the challenge becomes how to take Christ into culture knowing that God has already reconciled the world. That would probably be the key verse if I had to choose one image from all of scripture.

You mentioned Niebuhr - are there any other writers or theologians who are important to you?

Oh, let me name a couple of favorites. These would be the people I read most often. I’m recently on a Luther kick, and partly that was enhanced by attending a Luther seminar for a couple of summers at the Graduate Theological Union, but also by a trip to Lutherland in Germany. I had just a marvelous time there in October, and I would really encourage people to go to our ELCA Wittenberg Center. Seeing the geography, being in the Wartburg, being in Eisenach just helped me read Luther in a very different way. Bonhoeffer has been of interest to me in the last couple of years; some of my work in catechesis and discipleship, long before knowing that I was coming here, has really been grounded in taking a look at what Bonhoeffer did in his generation with the next generation of theologians. I also read a lot of other authors beyond the theological community. I sometimes think Wendell Berry, the Kentucky poet/farmer/novelist, has influenced me more, at least my preaching, more than anyone else that we would think of in the theological community, so I had to name him right up there as well.

One last question: the press release said that you had been called to Luther Seminary: what do you see implied in that call and how do you see yourself living out that call to ministry here?

One of my communications with President Tiede has really stuck with me, and maybe this is a line he uses universally but it’s a powerful one; he said somewhere in the process, toward the end, when I was discerning whether I would accept the call, “I hope there’s enough challenge for this to seem like a true call.” I really appreciated that; I hadn’t thought of it in those terms. I think many of us, when we look at a fresh start, list what seems perfect, what seems ideal, what seems better than where we are, and his language, I think deeply rooted in love for this institution and realism about enough challenge for it to seem like a call, is something that I’ll continue to carry with me, particularly as those challenges become more apparent. The nature of call, I think, is a reminder that God is at work in this, and I would say for many who know me, who are quite stunned that I’m at

continued on next page
April 10, 2001

Interview
continued from previous page
Luther Seminary because I don’t have a connection that would be obvious in terms of a path that would lead here. I would have to say that I see God’s hand at work in much of what has prepared me at this point in my life for a really rich ministry here.

Parish Nurse — continued from page 3
Spring is here! If you would like a walking partner, meet in BH 114 at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The Sharing Group for Healthy Living provides an opportunity to exchange ideas on diet, exercise and stress relief and encouragement to practice good health habits.

In Our Mailbox...
Sometime last week an MA student invited me to lunch to discuss life at Luther Seminary from one student's perspective. The conversation was instructive on a number of counts and included some observations of her experiences in both classes and chapel. She invited me to go to chapel over any two-week period and to listen to the assumptions about who was in the congregation. I have done this now for several weeks and have been astonished to discover how often all of us - preachers, announcers, and those leading prayers - assume that those who are gathered are MDivs headed for internship or CPE or first call. Mind you, I did not notice this pattern until I had been encouraged to notice.

We here at Luther speak a great deal about reading our audience, knowing our community. I would invite us all to begin this knowing by considering the makeup of our own daily congregation. We are students, faculty, staff, and visitors, Lutherans and other Christians. Students are studying in all manner of degree programs or are taking only one or two courses. Others are here for a meeting or Kairos, or to help with an auxiliary, or to visit with a youth group. Hopefully chapel is for all who gather there. I invite all of us to begin to notice who we are and to preach the Gospel and sing and pray for and with all those gathered. The community would be much enriched.

Pax,
Diane Jacobson

Features
The Concord • 7

A Timely Message
By Nancy Hamm
MDiv Middler

At a time when the rigors of our studies are compounded by the rigors of oncoming spring, and with finals looming just 'round the bend, all of us, students and professors alike, are cringing under the press of time. The easy smiles of summer are often foreshadowed by furrowed brows and looks of grim determination. It is very important for us not to lose sight of how much we love what we're doing here.

Therefore, whenever you're feeling particularly burdened, it's helpful to remember that time is relative and you really have all the time you need.

I'm not just speaking metaphorically. In fact, I'll prove to you that time is as elastic as the waist band on your now-packed away long johns. To illustrate this truth, I want to show you how you can compress all of the important events of an entire century into less than thirty lines of verse.

It's best to read or sing them aloud and at a fairly good clip. Thus, if you're inclined to set the words to music (and I hope you are) most LBW hymns would not be suitable—"Ein Feste Burg" in particular. However, the Major General's romping monologue from Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance" should work quite well.

It's a quick, albeit complete, summary of the rather late early middle ages. Those of you familiar with the Gonzales and Placher texts will hear some deeper resonances as you read below. But even if you've never heard of the Middle Ages, you'll feel better after your brisk recitation ... so plunge forth!

It is the very model of the papacy of Rome
That Leo crowned Charlemagne because of his portfolio.
The Saxons broke and holy smoke! he won against the Frisians
And all were forced to be baptized and turn to God as Christians.
Charlie died and Louis rose to be the pope, the Pious one.
The empire sank and Louis croaked and then there came the Norsemen.
Jack Sprat Charles the Fat just ate and sat and ate and sat;
When Norsemen raids became the risk, he changed his diet to lutefisk.
The kings and lords became the hordes and land was granted feudally,
And vassals under various lords did claim the land so cruelly.
Then came the conflict of the time, the one the Carolingian,
That had to do with Jesus' blood and presence in Communion.
For Charles the Bald, as we recalled, the matter made him sadder;
Ramatmus came to clarify the matter of the matter.
But time had told this time of old of this exaggeration:
The change of change of bread and wine in transubstantiation.
So many came and were baptized as Christians in conversion,
And those who conquered too were led and others by coercion.
The model of the papacy descended in decay,
And John and John and John and John were popes without delay.
Then Clement II crowned Henry king and died shortly thereafter,
And Bruno left to go to Rome which brings us now to Placher.
The piece is o'er as you've surmised and all that can's been summarized.
So say a prayer and study well and you'll do great as time will tell:
Farewell, for now, oh students dear. Fear not, behold, be of good cheer!
For humor too is God's great gift, and frozen Lutherans need a lift!
It was a week of lectures at Luther Seminary from March 19-23. Mary Lou Baumgartner (left, with student Angie Way) addressed the seminary throughout the week as Luther's Alum-in-Residence for 2000-2001. On March 22nd, four internationally respected scholars presented lectures on the new edition of the Book of Concord. Lecturers were, from left, James Nestingen, Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and Timothy Wengert.

—— In The House ——

continued from page 3

understandably take for granted. This, of course, also and perhaps to a greater degree occurs in the reverse. Many of my assumptions about the Christian faith seem to be constantly under attack, simply by virtue of my presence in a community where the "rules" that I was socialized to accept as "normal" simply don't apply. Despite the fact that I thought I had already undergone a major expansion of my worldview and Christian perspective after leaving my Texas home at the age of eighteen, I am now having my horizons expanded, so to speak, well beyond what I perceived their bounds to be. For example, before coming to Luther I never knew that when it comes to the Bible, I am a fundamentalist. Nor was I aware of my status as an "Evangelical". I knew that I was Pentecostal, but those other labels simply had no meaning for me. Why would they? Those types of labels only have meaning vis-a-vis alternative understandings of the faith, from which I was largely shielded and of which I was ignorant. Only after stepping into my new-found Lutheran world did I realize that I was among a growing majority of Christians that are regarded at best as simplistic, unlearned, and theologically unsophisticated and at worst stupid and an embarrassment to the faith. Consequently, my very identity as a disciple of Jesus Christ is constantly being called into question, and once again in my life I feel as if I am being remade.

This is a painful and unpleasant process, but undoubtedly a good one. Nonetheless, a natural question for me might be: why are you here anyway? Sometimes in my imagination I even hear it a little more pointedly: why am I here? Quite simply, I am here because God has called me to be here, or perhaps more accurately, I have been sent here because God has called me to serve His Church. I was strongly encouraged by each of my nominally non-Lutheran (isn't that a twist?) pastors to pursue my seminary education here as opposed to other local seminaries. The fact that Luther was the only local seminary that offered the dual-degree program (with an MSW) was also a huge factor. More importantly, I know now that I am here because God wanted to re-make me, to tear me down and build me back up.

So, I ask you, the community, to bear with me and others like me. Be patient as I ask hard questions in class and write about them in this space. I'm not trying to make trouble. I ask because they're important and vital to my faith, and maybe to yours. I ask also because of my ecclesiology. You see, my view of the Church and dream of what it can/should be is one in which none of our (dare I say) abominable denominations has a lock on what the Gospel is all about, one in which God is finally only revealed and made known to the world to the degree that God is revealed and made known to all of God's people, which means that I can't really know or understand God until I know and understand you, each one of you, and vice versa.

So please, be patient with me, because "here I stand. I can do no other."