2006

The Concord, 01 May 2006

Luther Seminary

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.luthersem.edu/student_newspapers

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.luthersem.edu/student_newspapers/74

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives & Special Collections at Digital Commons @ Luther Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Newspapers by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Luther Seminary. For more information, please contact tracy.iwaskow@gmail.com, mteske@luthersem.edu.
Labor at Luther
An issue for those who serve with grace

Rick and Gay
Dining servants who feed our souls

Glenn, Jeff, and Dennis
Keeping us real and running

Justice and Vocation
Mark Salo and Kierkegaard offer Christ

Plus: A dedication, a note of thanks, and a few announcements
Announcements

Attention Faculty and Staff:

Have you read any good books lately? How about movies and music?

The Concord will be publishing its annual summer reading list (expanded to include other media now) next week, completely based on your recommendations. Submit up to three titles with a sentence or two explaining your suggestions (concord@luthersem.edu)

Emergent Church Workshop
May 4th in the OCC from 1:00 - 9:30 pm
(Come when you can leave when you must)
12:00 – 1:00 Panel Discussion with Dr. Rollie Martinson, Amanda Weitzel, and others
1:00 - 4:00 Open and Self-Guided Activities
4:00 – 5:00 Discussion with Emerging Leaders

The day will conclude with a concert by Jonathan Rundman at 8:00 in the Chapel of the Incarnation.

You try it.

The Concord is seeking a Managing Editor and staff for the 2006-2007 academic year. Training and coaching in layout and design are available. Email concord@luthersem.edu or see Marc Ostlie-Olson with questions.
For a Living
In gratitude for those who work here
By Marc Ostlie-Olson, Managing Editor

“Yet it is necessary to impress upon the common people that they who would bear the name of Christian owe it to God to show ‘double honor’ to those who watch over their souls and to treat them well and make provision for them.”

Martin Luther, The Large Catechism

S
ometimes I wonder if the reformers, in their righteous, and right condemnation of ecclesiastical hierarchy and the tyranny of the church’s lords didn’t allow an academic and intellectual hierarchy to spring into the vacuum their success created. Though he praises as God-given even the vocations of those who change diapers and clean pigpens, Doctor Luther is no slouch at drawing lines between the illiterate commoners and the literate clergy: the peasants and the princes. Though he is credited with offering the German people a mass and a Bible in their own tongue, Luther was constantly aware of the complexities each contained, and operated at times on a “need to know” basis. Certainly Brother Martin was a product of his age, and we ought not apply modern democratic social and political standards to reformation Wittenberg. But might we not apply such standards to the more contemporary “Luther” in which we live, move, and get our bearings?

We who seem to exist by our wits and our way with the ethereal tools of language and concept still eat from plates and cups that are often filled and washed by unseen hands and unconsidered bodies.

We who seem to exist by our wits and our way with the ethereal tools of language and concept still eat from plates and cups that are often filled and washed by unseen hands and unconsidered bodies.

living are provided for us by the labor and the generosity of others. The labor and savings of immigrant farmers generated the faithful tithes that built Luther seminary. Their descendants continue to support the mission of our institution with dollars and cents earned and stewarded in manifold ways. These are not the only donors.

This issue of the Concord recognizes and celebrates those who serve the seminary with the labor of their bodies and the hours of their days. From the grounds crew to the registrar’s office to dining services to the faculty secretary, there are those who do not stand in the front of our classrooms, but work behind the scenes. Devoting more than the few years required for a degree, these people dedicate years of their lives to this institution – some even decades.

Jon Anttila served the seminary for 25 years. Rarely in the spotlight, this institution could not have functioned without his attention to the details and decimals behind the “bigger deals” that came and went year after year. According to one entry in Jon’s memory book, not only was he “the best-dressed man at Luther Northwestern,” but his humor and warmth, hard work and honesty, his character and true humility, were true human resources, and will be missed. We offer this issue of the Concord in thanksgiving for Jon’s life and work and for all those whose living and labor supports the work of God in this place.
Gay Schafer and Rick Anderson
Feeding souls, rocking on.
By Daniel Lee, MDiv. Senior

Gay Schafer
You’re in charge of catering services, correct? But you also work in dining services?
I oversee the catering and the cafeteria.
All at once?
Well, not ideally, but quite often yes.
Where are you from?
I grew up in North Minneapolis and haven’t lived outside the state.
As catering services / dining manager what do you end up doing most of the time?
My overall job (I believe) is daily operations. I find that most of my day is spent making sure things happen so that everything can function as it should.
Catering to the students is my priority on a daily basis. We also provide services to groups from off campus, but, then again, you never know what kind of riff-raff you get, ha, ha...
Would you consider the students riff-raff in their own way?
No. The students are little angels...they’re wonderful.
How long have you worked here and how did you get your job?
Five years. Prior to working at Luther I was preparing catering food at Byerly’s, and felt as though I needed to make a move. I found this ad in the employment news and was immediately attracted to it. After a couple of interviews, I was offered the job, and I felt like it was where I needed to be—hopefully it would be the last job I’d ever work.

What attracted you to this job?
Just the whole atmosphere...it was a very peaceful setting when I first came on campus, and it began to feel like home almost from the beginning. I was welcomed by a couple of students the first time I walked through the doors—I fell in love with the place before I even started working here. It’s my home away from home.

Do you still think it’s welcoming?
I do. I absolutely enjoy the international students. I had no idea we’d have such a wide-spread group of people. I just love that aspect.

Did anything surprise you after you began working here?
I think a lot of things surprised me. I had thought that a lot of people (this being a seminary) would want to give the impression of being better than others. And I found it was just the opposite. The students don’t put on a facade just because they’re in seminary.

What would you like people to know?
As far as I’m concerned, everyone who walks though the cafeteria doors is on the same level, regardless of what role they play at the seminary.

Do you feel appreciated?
I do...most of the time...by the people that matter. And you can’t receive satisfaction from other people’s affirmations. You have to appreciate your own work. And I do.
"A good meal makes one feel more charitable toward the world than any sermon."

-Arthur Pendenys

**Rick Anderson**

*What type of work experience did you have before coming to Luther?*

I had worked many food services jobs in my life, yes. Before coming here I fixed stringed instruments. I spent eight years as a luthier, and I got a divorce, and in order to fill up spare time, I took a job advertised in our church bulletin (Prince of Peace in Brooklyn Park) for a dishwasher. From then on it grew more and more comfortable, and more and more advantageous for me to be here. They offered me a very positive full-time position, and I’ve been here ever since.

*Do you still work with stringed instruments?*

I’m getting back into it. I now have my shop being set up, and am starting to think of strategies on how to put my hands to work in this capacity...talk to me again in a year.

*Do you play as well?*

Yeah, guitar, bass and drums.

*What appealed to you about Luther before coming here?*

Just a positive vibe...I was really happy to be here, even if it was after an eight-hour day, putting in a whole bunch more hours. I was serving at first, setting up lay-school, and really enjoyed visiting with everyone coming through...just a real positive vibe.

*Did anything surprise you about Luther after you started working here?*

I get surprised just by seeing what’s going on around me. When I talk to everyone around, they are able to voice the kind of thought I’m just starting to form in my mind. I grow and learn...it’s just like radiation...I get the opportunity to learn without too much effort.

*Do you feel appreciated?*

Yes, very much so. Day to day we learn to love each other better. All the way up to the president, people are very, very positive. I must have said it a dozen times now.

*What would you like people to know?*

We really enjoy the work we do here. You may not know it, you may think it’s just another job, but it really is a joy. Gay is constantly singing, and if she’s singing it will catch on, it’s really wonderful.

I empty myself for the sake of seeing how I might do my work better. Which makes my leisure time all that much more fulfilling. Music is a separate and wonderful place to be, and work is a separate and wonderful place to be. Rock on.
Dennis Garner:

Who are you and where are you from?

I grew up pretty close to here in New Brighton. I went to Mounds View High School.

What do you do around here?

I'm more or less in charge of maintaining the grounds. I keep the grass, shrubs, trees, and flowers in good health, and keep all our mechanical equipment maintained and running well. As the grounds crew chief, I oversee raking and snow removal as well as cleaning supply distribution and event set-ups. I also assist Jeff (Melin) and Glenn (Steffans) in their work. There is quite a bit of mutual assistance between the three of us.

Was there anything surprising about coming to work for the seminary?

Not too much. I was expecting to find an "easy" place to work—good people, a degree of enjoyment with your job—people here for more than just a paycheck. I found that to be true. One thing that did surprise me was the size of the grounds, especially for this location—this is spectacular! The skyline view from Stub is lovely.

Do you feel appreciated for your work here?

It's easy to see the work done in the summer—flowers evoke appreciation. It's harder in the winter because our work is more limited—mainly snow removal. I definitely feel appreciated, but it's different at different times of the year.

Are you religious?

I guess it depends on what you mean. To me it means accepting Christ as my savior—and I do, and I have tried to help my family do the same. Church has always been a large part of my life—but at this point in my life I rely more on my faith than ever before, to get me through certain things—much more than I used to. I know that I can't live a perfect life, or I wouldn't need a savior.

Were your expectations for working here met?

For the most part, yes. I expected a more or less 'Christian' workplace. And by that I don't mean somber, but friendly. I find it enjoyable how much fun—more than I expected!—we have with each other. I totally enjoy working with these young people (the Grounds Crew). I love to hear what they are discussing with one another, learning and working. They are from all over the country and the world, and it's been a pleasure to get to know them. I should have found this job 40 years ago!
Is there anything you’d to say to the community or have them know about you?

This is the most beautiful campus around. I think it's a terrific place. Enjoy your time here! You're going into a field that presents some of the most difficult challenges—use and enjoy your time here.

Jeff Melin and Glenn Steffans

Who are you and where are you from?

Jeff: My name is Jeff Melin, and I live in White Bear Lake.

Glenn: I'm Glenn Steffans and I'm from over there, too.

What do you do around here?

Jeff: We share the duties of maintaining the buildings. I take care of LDR, Fulham, Stub, Bockman, and Gullixson. This means everything from light bulbs and window shade repair to maintaining the boilers.

Glenn: I maintain Northwestern, the OCC, and all the houses that the seminary owns nearby, and in the winter we both do snow removal. We also oversee improvement projects and work with the subcontractors.

Jeff: We subcontract for plumbing, heating, painting, electrical, construction, and housekeeping.

Was there anything surprising about coming to work for the seminary?

Glenn: The students and all the people here in general. They are surprising in good and bad ways.

Jeff: The professors aren't as much of a family as I would have expected. I mean they are all teachers and should all get along, but they don't seem to relate the way I would have thought.

Ward (laughing): That's not the Christian way, is it?

Jeff: The same goes for the staff, I guess.

Glenn: Yeah, we don't get together much outside of work. People don't go out for drinks together or anything.

Jeff: It doesn't feel as much like a community here.

Do you feel appreciated for your work here?

Jeff: Yes. I've been here 17 years, so I must like it! And I plan to retire from here...and in not too long.

Glenn: Yes. People seem pretty thankful for the upkeep we do. I like working here as well. I like the variety of jobs—there's something different each day.

Are you religious?

Glenn: In my own way. I'm not a church-goer, but I do believe in God.

Jeff: We used to go to midnight Christmas services, but I can't stay up that late anymore! I guess I'm skeptical of the church and religion in general. It often seems like it's more of a business.

Glenn: I agree. The seminary seems like an example of that sometimes—that we've become less a school and more a convention area. I think we do a lot of stuff that shouldn't be done, sometimes leaving the students to simply fend for themselves when this or that event comes along.

Jeff: When it comes to religion, I guess I'm also a little worried by students here sometimes, too. We've seen a lot of them come through here, you know, and we see lots of them that can't take care of themselves. If that is the case, how can they heal a community?

Is there anything you would like the people that go to school here and work here to know about you?

Glenn: Nothing especially.

Jeff: Not really. Maybe not my phone number...but it's in the book, it's too late!

---

1. Ward, a retired heating subcontractor, was back visiting and sat in on the interview. He worked at the seminary 2-3 days a week for twenty years. Every time he changed companies, the seminary shifted their contract to that company to keep him on because he knew the buildings and the equipment so well.
As the token Norwegian on campus, I was asked to share a few words about wages in Norway. My knowledge on this topic is limited to my own experiences so it must be noted that some of the following numbers may not be precise. Also, since I have been away from Norway for awhile, things may have changed somewhat.

That said, the first job I held was at my Uncle’s hardware store in the supply storage section. I was 16 years old at the time and was paid according to Norway’s minimum wage guidelines, which were about $9-10 an hour. A different pay scale exists in Norway for minors, though. Once you turn 18 you are entitled to a higher base wage which is about $15 an hour. A normal week at work in Norway is 7.5 hours, 5 days a week. This means about $560 per week before taxes. From what I have gathered, the tax system in Norway is similar to that of the US. If you do not earn more than about $3000 you do not have to pay income taxes. This is to protect younger people and students that need to keep the little bit of money they make. For those that earn more, the tax ranges from about 15-30%, depending on how much you earn.

There is quite a wide range of salaries in Norway. Social service providers and teachers are usually paid less than many other vocations. Doctors might earn a lot more, depending on if they have a private practice or if they are hired by the government. There is no doubt that people earn more if they have their own practice. All people in Norway, however, are guaranteed a living wage. Regardless of your occupation, you are entitled to a salary that will provide for you and your family.

All people in Norway are guaranteed a living wage. Regardless of your occupation, you are entitled to a salary that will provide for you and your family.

Carol Langness
Kathy Richardson
Laura Buystedt
Crystal Hansen
Carole Kampf
Kathy Larson
Cindie Olson
Mary Yerks
Ann Paulson
Roberta Shaw
Audrey Zech

Brenda Grussing
Duane Rygg
Gary Anderson
Terry Boehlke
Scott Hample
Keith Harvgeo
David Ottoson
Jana Ratkovich
Don Sandrovich
Paul Snider
Mark Solhjem

Laura Anderson
Melissa Johnson
Deborah Kuehl
Amy Nelson
Carol Hansen
Sara Hilmoe
Kathy Schulz
Judy Anderson
Blanche Jensen
Susana Lagarejo
Edith Mirembe

Chong Vang
Marie Vega
Terry Erickson
Jason Misselt
Deb Paulus
Barbara Gaiser
Sally Peters
Jo Quanbeck
Sanna Reinholtzen
Sandy Hammerling
Barbara McAuley

CONCORD • 8
Anna Works Here
She can help you find your shoes

Interview by Andrew Plocher, MDiv Senior

Who are you and where are you from?
Anna. From, originally? Puebla Mexico

What do you do here?
I’ve been here, in US, for 1 year. I’ve been at the seminary for 6months as a housekeeper.

What, if anything, is surprising about working here?
At first, everything! Now is normal... The students are mess, they leave clothes, shoes (many- 40 pairs?) and possessions all over floor. I hold things, two weeks? If they don’t call or ask about it, it gets thrown out or given away.

Do you feel appreciated?
Everyone is very nice: more nice than my country.

What did you expect about this place? What do you think of it now?
I didn’t know of seminary at first. I had met Lutherans in my country, but not seminaries.

Are you religious?
Sometimes (smile)!... I’m Catholic. I go maybe once a month.

What would you like the people that go to school here and work here to know about you?
It’s nice, I like it. It’s nice to like my job! It’s nice to get “Thank You’s”!

Judy Hedman
Krista Lind
Debra Wells
Pamela Wielde Craeger
Bill Silva-Breen
Marie Hayes
Karen Treat
Lynne Moratzka
Sheri Booms Holm
Jim Dudley
Kate Sterner

Maria Thompson
Robert Boyum
Joan Christensen
Louise Evenson
Krista Gallagher
Karen Johnson
Laurie Mandery
Sharon Schuler
Mary Steeber
Kristin Rongstad
Karen Schneewind

Heidi Albers
Diane Doncits
Sarah Lutter
Pat Swenson
Kristin Payne
Laurie Schwartz
Alice Loddigs
Victoria Smith
Karen Alexander
Jennifer Bartholomew

Bruce Eldevik
Mariani Forde
Judy Stone
Mary Ann Teske
Paula Vestermark
Suzanna Hequet
Kathy Johnson
Sara Trumm

Thank You.
Justice and Vocation
Both need Christ

By Mark Salo, PhD student, Year 1

"Everything essentially Christian must have in its presentation a resemblance to the way a physician speaks at the sickbed...it must never be forgotten that the situation is the bedside of a sick person."

Søren Kierkegaard, The Sickness unto Death

Being alive in this specific time and place of history, where triumphant enthusiasm and self-righteous emotivism simultaneously rule the day for Christianity, Søren Kierkegaard, in all his complexity, offers a refuge of fresh air, as we find ourselves in the midst of a historical irony that has traveled through centuries to reach us. For the sometimes subtle—sometimes blatant—obsession with the privatization of victory, that makes one outside both religious camps mentioned above sick, is precisely that which gives a person inside either one healing. The converse is just as true; what Kierkegaard calls the Sickness unto Death, that is, the sickening condition that God uses to heal us with unmerited faith (whether it is called the preparatio evangelica or something else). It is precisely this condition that is avoided, ignored and disdained (but certainly not escaped) by those caught up in this two-fold contemporary movement of self-centered Christianity that has either a fully operational third use of the law at every turn or a naive chant for peace at every protest.

The condition Kierkegaard speaks of seems to cross-out both of these self-centered positions. The condition Kierkegaard speaks of seems to point directly to the essential victory of Christ over death which has healed, and continues to heal, the accidental obsession the self has with itself. Christ visited the various sickbeds of “the other” in his time and place, and performed exorcisms, resurrections, healings, miracles, rebukes, and greatest of all the forgiveness of sins, all to the undeserving sickly ones who had the condition of sickness unto death. What is not always realized is that all human-beings have this sickness. Those who ambitiously carry on with their lives in an accidental position never seem to leave the first form of this sickness, namely: in despair not to be conscious of having a self. This historical irony never relents, and its inculcation has best been recognized by those in the past who were conscious of having inescapable selves, people like Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Luther, who were driven to bring their sick selves to daily repentance.

The sickness unto death is the condition for which we are brought to baptism, since baptism brings faith, and faith brings Christ.

Perhaps in this specific time and place of history, where essential terms are being used accidentally, the “justice” of one’s “vocation”, in one’s “context”, might be most “relevant” in the “technique” of sitting the “self” down at the bedside of the sick “other”. 
Vocations of Justice
Because workers deserve to be paid

By Andrew Plocher, MDiv Senior

What comes to mind when you hear “labor”? Pregnancies? Federal holiday? Physical or mental exertion? Labrador Retrievers? A political party?

A year ago I would have said any of the above. However, this past summer I had the privilege to participate in an internship where I interacted with the labor community, workers, and religious leaders on a daily basis. The context was a labor union. I saw the struggle of workers, the working poor, to keep the limited benefits that they have. I watched them struggle for affordable health insurance and for respect in the workplace. These are human rights. It is not the desire for wealth, but for adequate living. It is a call in which the church has a long history of participation.

The largest organizations standing up for workers rights are labor unions. With a troubled past, it is hard to understand why the church and the union should work together. The reality is that no matter our belief union workers statistically make 30 percent more than non-union workers. Thirty percent of minimum wage can mean the difference between food on the table or hunger, shelter or homelessness. Part of the work of the church is to stand with the poor, the oppressed, and fight for dignity and respect. As leaders and people of faith we have the opportunity to call to question the actions of companies, leadership and organizations. By working within the labor movement that supports workers rights, faith communities can help fight poverty and injustice. Within our own community there are many opportunities for activism and education regarding labor.

The Twin Cities Religion and Labor Network (TCRLN) is an organization of labor and religious leaders (and constituents) that address labor issues in our area. Check them out at www.tcrln.org. Sign up for their mailing list for regular information!

- Participate in “Labor in the Pulpit” this year! An annual chance to preach on labor and our theology. Check out the IWJ and TCRLN websites for more details
- Be a summer intern! Paid internships are offered by Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ) (www.iwj.org) and the labor movement. “Seminary Summer” is an opportunity for seminary, rabbinical and Muslim theological students to come together and learn about worker justice. Internships can be done locally or throughout the country (housing and transportation are provided for relocation).
- Get involved with labor issues locally! Check out www.workdayminnesota.org
- Shop justly! For hotels and restaurants: www.here17.org; For grocery stores: Rainbow Foods, Cub Foods, or Lunds; Try a cooperative: www.thegreenguide.org/article/goods/coops; For general merchandise: Kmart, Costco or shop at a locally owned store (Target and Walmart both have poor labor policies).
- Support the workers on campus! Be respectful of their work, and acknowledge them as peers. They are part of our family here at Luther!
- Senior? Sign a graduation pledge before you graduate and stand-up for supporting justice in your future congregations! Look for them in OCC as the term ends!

To learn more about labor issues and how to get involved, contact Andrew Plocher at (651) 226-2055 or aplocher@luthersem.edu

---

Go in **Peace**

Serve the **Lord**