Letter From the Editor

Having grown up in a non-denominational, evangelical church, I have been quite familiar with the term "fellowship" for many years. In some churches, mine being one of them, online videos and memes have caused the term to be reduced to an overused, mockable cliche, but I think there is something we mainline Protestants can gain: a deeper understanding of having fellowship with one another. Merriam-Webster defines fellowship as "a friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests." While this is a fine definition, I find myself wanting to tweak it. As I think back over my own experiences of fellowship with the Concord, VOCA, various classes, and more, I am realizing that some of the most fulfilling and joyous experiences have been the ones in which immediate similarity or common interest were not readily visible. Rather, our differences enhanced the friendly association as we were able to teach and learn from one another. With this issue of the Concord, we hope to enhance this type of fellowship here at Luther. We invite you to enjoy and celebrate the similarities and differences you see in these articles and throughout our community here at Luther. "For just as the body is one and has many members... so it is with Christ."

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Concord 2
Scavenger Hunt Winners: Aaron and Abbe Holmgren

Interview by Michael Buller
MDiv Senior, Content Editor

Aaron Holmgren is a MDiv Middler at Luther Seminary. He and his wife Abbe found the hidden Rose Medallion. The “Hidden Rose” as it became to be known was a Scavenger hunt organized and put on by the Senior "Fun Committee" who are organizing different events for the 2014 spring semester.

C: Aaron, tell us a little about yourself, where did you grow up? Where did you go to college? Where did you and Abbe meet?

I grew up in Sidney, Ohio, but moved to Minnesota for college and I have been here ever since. I have two older sisters, one lives in France with her husband while the other lives in Lawrence, Kansas. My parents moved to Willmar, MN when they became empty nesters. Both Abbe and I went to St. Olaf College in Northfield where we met swing dancing.

C: I heard that you and Abbe spent Valentine’s Day searching for the Hidden Rose. Tell us a little about your team process, how did you go about looking for the Hidden Rose?

We did spend Valentine’s Day looking for the Hidden Rose and it was quite fun. I had read the first clue on Thursday and I thought I had a good idea of where it might be so Abbe and I went looking when I got off work on Friday. Our team process was mainly bouncing ideas off each other’s heads. Because she doesn’t come up on Campus that often her ideas were fresh and made me think of places I wouldn’t have thought of otherwise.

C: Where did you look on campus?

I think you could safely say everywhere. After the first clue I thought it might have been taped behind the Jacob’s Ladder mural in Gullixon (It mentioned Slumber), but once that proved wrong we searched all over. A few other highlights were Sheol (the basement of the library), the baptismal font, and up around the Rare Book Room.

C: Where did you find the Hidden Rose?

We finally found it (on Tuesday) in a crayon box, in the Bockman Chapel. Bockman was not high on our list because a clue made it sound like no one had lived in the medallion’s location before. However, after picking through every place we thought it could be we decided to reconsider Bockman. The clue on Tuesday discussed a small room that is oddly shaped so we pulled out the big guns and looked through building floor plans. They didn’t really help however because the Bockman Chapel is depicted as a nice square. Nevertheless, I remember looking in the room once and noticing the odd angles at the corners. Luckily, we were diligent in the search.

C: Do you think this Scavenger Hunt contributed to Fellowship on Luther Seminary campus?

I think it did. There were many opportunities to talk to others in their search, bounce ideas off each other, and wish them luck. The second clues to each day also got staff and faculty involved making the hunt not just a way to explore campus but also to get to know some of the people working at Luther.

Thank you, Aaron and Abbe, for participating and making this Scavenger Hunt such an outstanding success. Congratulations, and spend that gift certificate boldly!
Edifying Fellowship

by Thomas Jacobson
PhD Student

This month’s focus on the theme of fellowship coincides with the commemoration of a remarkable Christian man whose work in the nineteenth century Norway changed not only the face of the country, but also influenced Norwegian-American Lutherans of various church organizations, including some who helped found Luther Seminary through its predecessor institutions. This Norwegian lay preacher and social reformer, whose bust is on display in Gullixson Hall, is still teaching the contemporary church about fellowship.

On March 29, 1824, Hans Nielsen Hauge died after years of work on behalf of his fellow Norwegians. Born in 1771, south of Oslo, Hauge learned the trade of a farmer and the various skills that accompany that vocation. Raised in a deeply religious home influenced by Lutheran Pietism, Hauge harbored doubts about his salvation. However, a moment of clarity in 1796 filled him with confidence concerning his salvation and a call to minister to his countrymen and women. Hauge wanted to share the message of salvation that he had experienced and invite others into prayer fellowship meetings so they too could experience this “living faith.” In his day, Hauge knew people were physically and spiritually starving. So, Hauge travelled far and wide, reaching as far north as Tromsø, Norway and as far south as Denmark to print his religious and practical books. Wherever Hauge went, he led edifying gatherings among the working class, empowering lay people, including women, to take responsibility for religious leadership. In spite of a less than enthusiastic response from church officials, he encouraged people to attend worship in the local Lutheran churches and receive the sacraments.

Hauge’s work was not simply religious in nature. Using his natural intellect and business acumen, he taught communities in the impoverished environment of Norway to become self-sufficient, helping them build fishing operations, lumber mills, tanneries, paper mills, and other enterprises. At a time when people suffered under the yoke of excessive drink, Hauge urged moderation. Wherever he stayed he helped with farm chores, and because he viewed idleness as sinful, he knitted as he walked across Norway. At one point he was even brought out of prison to oversee a project to extract salt from the ocean.

Hauge was arrested and imprisoned for ten years for violating the Convict Act of 1741, which forbade lay people from leading religious meetings. Although the civil and religious officials succeeded in ruining Hauge’s health during his imprisonment, they could not contain the impact his work had on Norway. Laity, deeply impressed by Hauge’s preaching, began to exert influence in religious and political affairs. His passion was contagious. By the end of his life, Norway was transforming into a democratic society.

There was a tradition at Luther Seminary where theological students, on the anniversary of his death, would steal Hauge’s bust from the library and mock his memory while consuming large amounts of alcohol. Such activity has thankfully stopped. Hauge is frequently ridiculed by theological students for his alleged “legalism” and “works righteousness,” accusations that are overly simplistic. Hauge was no theologian, and some of his theological views deserve critique. Yet Hauge’s life stands as a testimony to Christian conviction and concern for the spiritual welfare of those we encounter, something often overlooked in our day. Following Hauge’s example, theological students would do well to seek out opportunities for edifying fellowship both during and after their education, recognizing the importance of prayerful support for effectiveness in ministry. Church leaders of today might find their passion to be contagious as well.
Fellowship Across Time and Space

by Bill Miller
MDiv Student, Cohort 3

Fellowship necessitates two common elements: time and space. Obviously this presents a challenge to Distributive Learning students scattered across the nation. It is a criticism that candidacy committees raise when a student proposes to apply for the DL program. In 2010, Cohort Three gathered for the first time and we had the benefit cohorts before us who had plowed through previously. The lesson learned and embraced by Luther Seminary is that we cannot replace the necessities of common time and space...but, there are alternatives.

During that first J-term our course load was light (though it didn't feel like it at the time). The real work of that first session was to form community. Two weeks might not seem like enough time, but we were away from our jobs, families, friends. Without these other demands to juggle, we simply focused on studying and praying; just being together. Fellowship was made and our journey together began.

Two weeks of intensive fellowship (same time, same space), make the rest of it work. Facebook and precept groups (and recently Hangout) keep us connected. They help preserve our community and providing opportunities to continue fellowship. But technology cannot replace the experience of intensives, rather it merely sustains us through the drought of being scattered across the mission field. When we gather twice each year, we do so with enthusiasm similar to six months prior. And this enthusiasm is infectious. When DL students return to campus, we bring with us a joy of Jubilee not limited to merely the members of our cohort or even other DL students, but to the whole community of Luther Seminary. Intensives are not just a time to learn, they also are an opportunity to celebrate fellowship.

Luther Seminary 5
Our Time Together

by Robert Shell
MDiv Middler, Head Resident.

"Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts" - Acts 2:42

The role of the Household and Temple were essential elements in the practice of the Early Church. Today, we spend a lot of time in our modern day Temple, but what attention is paid to the Household? As the passage from Acts reflects, the Household was key to the Worship experience and in empowering the community as a whole. In our individualistic society, the role of the Household has been depleted, but still is as needed as ever. In uplifting the importance of the Household, our Residential community has the opportunity to bring Fellowship to our Sisters and Brothers.

It is easy to talk about the hope and ideal of Fellowship. But how does this Fellowship actually play out? I have seen and heard Fellowship blossom through Prayers, Meals, Sharing Resources, Fun, and a Shared Mission. These are all categories that are provided and/or we have the opportunity to provide to and for each other.

The life of Prayer is central to the Household. In general, we have the privilege to uplift our community in prayer on a daily basis. Also, we have ability to reach out to the Luther Seminary Care Team with our prayer needs. Through this initiative, our wider community will be in prayer for one another. Prayer has an amazing ability to bring joy and peace to our Fellowship. The sharing of a Meal is an amazing way to take part and breed Fellowship within our community. This is not a programmatic event, but simply taking the time to reach out to our neighbors. The breaking of bread was at the core of the Early Church. It would probably be wise for us to learn from that practice. I promise the snow will one day be gone from the grills and patio.

As we live and learn together, we share our resources together. Our Food Shelf provides the opportunity to meet a need for some and share abundance for others. Connecting through our Community Life Facebook page allows us to inform and respond to the needs present. Sharing our resource provides a beautiful picture of Fellowship. What would Fellowship be without Fun? In our fast paced society, the role of Fun does not seem productive, but it is! It allows the opportunity to take a break and just be in the moment. Whether this is dancing the night away while reliving Prom or enjoying a movie together. Without fun, burnout will come and desire to Fellowship will evaporate.

All of these forms of Fellowship lead to a wider vision of Mission. We all come from different backgrounds, but all have been called in one way or another. Instead of working from our many differences, I would challenge us to begin with our common calling. From this common identity, we are able to uplift and empower one another and our Seminary.

Throughout this week, I encourage you to take seriously what role the Household has in your life. What opportunities has God provided for us to be in Fellowship as a community? Along with that, how is God calling us to take part in Fellowship? The impact of the Household is not dependent on where we live or even who owns our housing. The impact is dependent on us living out our identity as Sisters and Brothers in Christ.
Fellowship After Luther

by Greg Van Dunk
Luther Seminary Alumni Rep

The Luther Seminary Alumni Council looks for ways to engage with current students as future alums and colleagues in ministry. One recent opportunity was a celebration dinner with senior students in early February. Ten Alumni Council members currently serving from Seattle to Orlando, Fort Worth to Phoenix and many points in between gathered with a few dozen graduates. How fun! While current students were quick to mention, “we haven’t graduated yet”, it was clear the finish line was in sight. There was a warm sense of camaraderie as students became colleagues and traded stories with those who serve in very diverse congregational and non-congregational ministry settings.

Alumni were eager to learn:
- How had seminary training served you on internship or other practice settings?
- What are you most curious about as you enter your first calls?
- How have the changes in the past year at the seminary affected your training?
- What do you think about the trend toward Distance Learning formation of leaders for Christian mission?

Students spoke of realizing more fully their need to not just perform pastoral acts but to lead in ministry settings as well. While they were honest about anxiety in being in the church in this changing world, they were confident that they were well equipped. Changes in the seminary such as the evolution toward Distance Learning seems to be a natural progression where technology shapes all aspects of life and the best learning center is the field where one serves.

Soon to be grads were curious about:
- The many and varied settings the alumni council has served in 150+ years of combined ministry.
- Stories of our most humorous and challenging moments in ministry.
- What we have learned that has been most useful since we graduated from seminary.

Students were reassured that God will be present in the midst of all of the future unknowns. The seminaries goal to educate leaders for Christian mission is embodied in this graduating class. The talent and dedication evident in these soon-to-be graduates really impressed the Alumni Council. What an inspiration! The church will be well served.

It was just one evening, but this kind of experience is exactly what the Alumni Council strives to achieve. We were instant teammates for Christ, bonded by the privilege and honor of our gospel calling.

Luther Seminary 7
Food Brings Us Together

by Jenna Anderson
Catering Coordinator

Although I frequently remind people that I do not identify as Lutheran, I definitely identify with the idea of food being a key part of fellowship, which is firmly adhered to around here. If the church you end up working in does not have a coffee and/or cookie (or whatever) hour, fix that. Immediately. You will find your church to be growing as a community because of the fellowship this hour inherently lends. You want to be concerned about this informal, organic, enriching sort of fellowship, because this is one way in which the beauty of the church is expressed. This is where church friends become family, where the members of a church can learn of other people's struggles and triumphs - and can walk through them together. That “walking together” is a necessary part of the body of Christ, and all the other ministries and unreached people should not strip a church of that portion of its function.

This seminary is an extension of the local church; it is, in some ways, its own expression of the church. There is worship, there is service, there is teaching, and there is fellowship. The fellowship is certainly found in and outside of chapel; around some coffee; in dorm rooms; and in classes. These are basic and obvious fellowship opportunities. There are many, too, which are not so basic, not so obvious. One might not think of all the events that we cater as occasions for fellowship. There’s even a part of me that struggles against the fact that there is always a purpose for these events, thereby (somehow) negating the informal spontaneous thing that is fellowship. Let me prove us all wrong in just a couple examples.

Consider when we host all the donors in the fall, thanking them in a small way for the sustaining role they have in your education. These steadfast believers stand around tables tasting an assortment of Chef Aaron’s delightful appetizers, listening to each other’s stories of life: of challenge and of triumph. The catering staff mingle around them as we watch friendships develop and hear little stories of what God is doing with them and going to do with this place.

Additionally, the Blessings dinner event in the spring facilitates that delightful fellowship that crosses the boundaries of age, economic status, national identity, and even the understanding of what does (or does not) happen in church. Generous supporters come in contact with the ones receiving these blessings, and all anyone cares is that God’s work is being done. Talk about walking together. This is a tangible manifestation of what the body of Christ can do when we partner, rather than striving on our own to do the things to which God has called us.

I would be the last to say that the unity that Christ alone brings to a relationship is somehow insufficient to formulate fellowship; indeed, that is often the only reason why the Church works. We are a group of people that mostly would probably not get along. Humans, in general, do not do well with the “different” (however in vogue it may be presently to oppose that tendency). Only Christ can overcome that and drive us to embrace the “different”. I do think, however, that food helps us as we practice this discipline. When you’re in line for a buffet, you’re excited about eating, no matter who is next to you. That makes it a unique opportunity to move outside of where you are comfortable and extend welcome to another.

Concord 8
The Vanguard of Liberty and Knowledge: The Luther Library

by Elise Tweten
MDiv Junior

When I was a little kid, I was a holy terror, which I'm sure is a complete surprise to you. I grew up with two rowdy brothers and was constantly defending what was mine; bottles of chocolate milk when I was a toddler, my Barbies (my brothers were constantly beheading them and hanging them with dental floss at eye-level in my closet), my beloved Zelda games, etc. Life was a constant competition. I found my passion for reading and learning at a very early age. Reading was the only thing I could sit still for. The public library, and later my elementary school library, became my sanctuary. It was a place where gentleness, safety, and quiet reflection reigned. Libraries mellowed me out and let me explore new worlds. I grew up outside of the ELCA in a church that did not allow girls and women to participate in services and my Sunday school teachers would remind me of the behaviors and characteristics that were required of girls. Of course, I pushed back. And was a crafty and frightening child. However, at the library, I could be myself.

When I started at Luther, it was really stressful. I loved my professors and the content of my classes, but I felt out-of-place and unsure of myself. Some important relationships back home were falling apart. The library allowed me to connect to compassionate and hilarious people. I started to learn about the projects and passions of my fellow students while working at the front desk. I was treated with gentleness and encouragement by the professional staff when classes got overwhelming or I started to wonder about my call. My co-workers surrounded me with love and cracked jokes when I got homesick. Community life is obviously not as straight-forward or loud in the library compared to other parts of campus, but it's there. And it better not be loud or I'll come over there and destroy you or frighten you into silence.

But in all seriousness, there is a rhythm to the library. Certain patrons enjoy coming in at specific times every day and they've become part of my support system. Community members will come in and read the paper and give me the highlights. Groups can be found hunkered in the group study room together, enjoying a time to lament collectively while getting things done. People enjoy working in the reference room, and while they don't talk to one another, there's an immense comfort in being alone together in a big room, all working toward goals and dreams. The library, full of the knowledge and wisdom of the past, reminds us that there were many before us working for the good of God's wild kingdom and now is our opportunity to join in the story and work to find and understand how the Spirit is working in the world and in our restless souls. The is the place on-campus where people will fall all over themselves to make your academic life much easier. Librarians are magical people that help you find what you need and will never rest until they do. It's a place that fosters selflessness, reflection, and passion. Jesus loves you and Jesus loves libraries. #freedom.

Luther Seminary 9
Ubi caritas, et amor, Deus ibi est
Where charity and love are, God is there

by Judy Hedman
Office Manager for Student Affairs

N
ine years ago a small, pioneering band of faculty, students, and staff decided to do something different, something fun, something to help a neighbor and help build connections among faculty, staff and students. They decided to have a talent show and raise money for a local charity at the same time. Thus was born the Luther Seminary Variety Show and Mission Auction.

This year, the show and auction will be Thursday, March 20 in OCC. Auction starts at 5:00 pm; the show at 6:30 pm.

That first year, we didn’t know if anyone would donate, volunteer to perform or even show up. What a surprise! Over 300 people attended the show in the Chapel and over $5,000 was raised for scholarship funds and a local youth center. Each year the decision of beneficiary is a joint decision among students, staff and faculty.

This year, all the money raised will go to benefit the (Justin) Brook Seaford family, a member of our community. Brook is an MDIV-DL middler. He and his wife Kristan have 5 children. For those of you who don’t know their story, they have given us permission to share it with you. Last fall Kristan developed pneumonia and had a catastrophic allergic reaction to an antibiotic. She almost died. Against the odds, she survived. But as a result of the reaction, both her hands and parts of both feet needed to be amputated. Kristan is now in a rehab facility learning to cope with the changes in her physical abilities. She will eventually be fitted with prosthetic hands.

The goal of the Auction is raise enough money to help with some more immediate needs: like a ramp into their home, modify doors or counter top, clothes & school supplies for their children.

You can help. Here’s how:

Donate something to the auction. The best donation is always something you enjoy doing, making or participating in. Do you knit, make pie or soup, or bake cookies? Donate to make something for someone else whether that’s a meal or a knit scarf. An outing to a movies, concerts, a play or sporting event? Donate an outing with yourself as host. A weekend to your family cabin? Teach someone to ski or knit or whistle a tune? Visit the zoo? Babysitting? Yard or house work?

Propose an act for the variety show. No ideas? Blasts from the past include juggling with fire, a beer bottle band rendition of “A Mighty Fortress”, an original song, a group skit on the worst children’s sermons, singing, dancing. We’re always looking for acts that take a light-hearted look at ourselves and find a way to include the audience in on the fun.

Attend in support of a member of our community. The auction portion of the evening begins at 5:00 pm and ends at 6:15 pm in OCC Narthex. The show begins at 6:30 pm in the Chapel of the Incarnation. Rolf Jacobson our OT professor, currently on sabbatical, will be hosting the evening.

The Hairless Chin Award. Jeff Olsen Krengel (Director of Community & Residential Life), Andy Keck (Director of Library Services) and Rob Shell (MDIV Middler and Head Resident) have agree to put their facial hair on the line. Vote who will lose their beard during the Variety Show by donating your spare change (or checks) at the OCC Info Desk.

STUDENT GROUPS!
The Concord can be a mouthpiece for you, too! Let us know what’s going on, or what’s new and exciting about your group, or even write an article about your group and how it’s serving the Luther community.

Concord 10
Time Together
by Stefanie Fauth
MDiv Middler, President of Student Council

When I hear the word fellowship, I’m immediately inclined to think of the hall just outside the chapel in my church – loud, always clanking cups, and of course sugary treats! Fellowship is more than just the sugary treats I loved so much when I was young. Rather, it is about the time spend together – not just in learning and working, but in enjoyment and relaxation.

This has been a great year for Student Council. We’ve been blessed with highly intelligent, diverse leaders who care a great deal for the students of Luther. It has been amazing to see fellowship blossom within our group. We had a bumpy start, yet we have come alongs ways.

We realize that it is not within our power to fix every problem on campus – if it was, the elevator in Sandgren wouldn’t be like the Tower of Terror, and the cafeteria would never close. What we can do, however, is create opportunities to gather as students, express our concerns and be advocates for positive change.

In January we hosted a concert and it was very well received. We believed it was important to help raise the moods of people bogged down by work, disheartened by darkness and below average temperatures. Seeing the success of that night and hearing positive feedback since, Student Council is preparing to host similar community activities this Spring.

These event will be occurring throughout upcoming months. We hope to boost spirits and build relationships. After all, this community is the future leaders of the faith community – and we must learn to work together, have fun together and relax together, so we can foster community not only among ourselves, but among the people we serve.

Campus Watch
by Scott Smith
MDiv Senior

When I think of how Campus Watch makes an impact on the fellow- ship at Luther Seminary, my mind first goes to our phones. In recent years, of course, phones have almost become the symbol of anti-fellowship, or at least a changing paradigm of fellowship (i.e. your phone is something you go to when you don’t want to be bothered in a public space). However, the Campus Watch phones we pick up at the beginning of every shift, for me, represent a very strong link to our community here at Luther. You had to run out to your car at 2am and saw something suspicious? Give us a call. You’re leaving the library after an evening of studying and are absent a friend to walk back down the hill with you? Give us a call. We’ll show up.

Next, I think of what our shifts generally consist of; how, for some of you, we might be the (hopefully friendly) faces that conclude for you a long day up the hill. For me, one of the best parts about being a member of Campus Watch is stopping to chat with folks as we close up another day at Luther Seminary. There are so many people in this community whose lives my own may never have intersected with were it not for being a part of this team.

Lastly, I think of how Campus Watch, as a team, is a group of students whose primary concern (in many respects) is to maintain an awareness of what’s happening on campus and where we can be of service to it. To that end, we not only thrive on our connections to this community, but members of the community are provided the opportunity to earn money working, but none, the best possible job on campus.

Luther Seminary 11
Community Across the Country

by Cara Jensen
MDiv Middler, DL Cohort 5

Fellowship as a Distributed Learner is a lot different than when I was an undergraduate living on campus. It has been an interesting road to learn new and different ways to be in community with those at Luther, yet not to be on campus. I wonder if those who are commuter students experience a different sense of community?

There have been a number of amazing things about being a part of a cohort. The first time I was on campus for a J-Term we took Greek together. I met a few of the people in my cohort and we conversed about the difficulties of learning Greek, especially taking it online. Once we arrived on campus for J-Term, we finally had an opportunity to actually get to know one another. For those two weeks, those in your cohort are the only people you know and do things with. There is a certain amount of energy that goes along with hanging out with the same people for two weeks. I was excited to get to know them and to hear about their families.

The even better part of being a part of a DL student cohort is the fact that I had to learn how to be in community with my peers given I see them twice a year. We have a community group on Facebook, we connect through Email and phone calls, but they also have become friends I feel comfortable sharing concerns with about my personal life. Even though they may have not met my family, I feel comfortable letting them know what is going on in my life, either on Facebook or by word of mouth.

The best way I can explain this community and the ways we have become a connected unit is that the second time we were all supposed to get together on campus to take summer courses, I was pregnant with my first child. My cohort surprised me with a gift. They communicated with my husband and on one of the nights while they were all at school, they Skyped me in and we opened their gift to me together.

Experiencing community as a DL Student is not perfect and I feel disconnected with many of the students who live on campus, especially those who do not take J-Term or Summer Term classes. Yet, I have been finding ways to connect with people. There are many times we cannot all come to campus, yet we still find ways in which to connect with each other so that we know what is going on and can offer support. I know that without my connections to the people I go to school with, I would not be an effective preacher or student. My hope is that because I am now learning ways in which to stay connected, I will take these skills to my first call as a pastor or as I move to where God is calling me. I will be better prepared because I know that there will always be people who I can call upon that will help me to hash through the joys and/or concerns that I am going through.

While I do not know exactly what campus life is like, I hope that others able to experience the same amazing joy of finding people with whom they will always be able to be in communication and fellowship with; which is what I have found with those in mine and other DL cohorts!

Concord 12
Manna, Mercy, and Fellowship in VOCA

by Mike Gold
MDiv Junior

VOCA is a student group which is committed to Justice and the gospel. In theory, that sounds simple enough but just think about what might happen if you were to get five people together, even people who had similar theologies, and ask them to come up with a brief but specific definition of justice. "Justice" is a difficult thing to pin down. For that reason, we choose to think of justice in terms of community, or more intimately, as fellowship. Taking a page from generations of theologians and pastors before him, Daniel Erlander's "Manna and Mercy" claims that throughout the bible, God is attempting to bring humans to a state of "shalom." If you've been to an anti-war protest in the last ten years, you probably know the chant "No justice, No Peace" pretty well, so we can understand that these two ideas are carefully linked. If there is to be justice, there must be peace. If there is to be peace, there must be justice.

God bestows on us gifts of Manna and Mercy, not because of our righteousness, but despite our most earnest attempts to ruin everything. Manna is what we need to live, and we are told it's wrong to hoard it, so we pass it along to others who need it. Mercy is the grace God gives us each day in spite of our (many) trespasses, and God trusts us to treat everyone we meet with the Mercy we are given (in other words, as beautiful Children of God). It might sound flowery in some ways, or a little unrealistic, but I feel that it is an important part of Christian identity. The fact that it doesn't gel well with an often cruel and greedy world is, to me, the surest sign that it's the right way to go.

So what does VOCA do to promote justice through fellowship? We've done some of the usual stuff, service projects and things like that, which are good things to do, and we hope to continue them. However, this past month, VOCA used its funds to pay for many copies of "Towards a True Kinship of Faiths" by the Dalai Lama, in order to host a book discussion in preparation for the Dalai Lama's visit on March 1st. Thus, VOCA used its funds to help create a fellowship between Luther students who could dwell together in a common text and discuss a common passion. That fellowship was then poured out onto the assembly which gathered to see the Dalai Lama speak. A people who normally gathered together in private fellowship engaged the public in fellowship and shared their insights about love with us.

Maybe it doesn't sound like much, but it sounds like the gospel to us. Justice is not something that is done in big and exciting ways. Real justice has a hard time being legislated, won through pitched legal battles, or enacted by big marches, although these things can help. Justice begins with a decision to come together in love and in mutual care. Justice may one day roll down like waters, but before it does that, the little drops have to first fall. VOCA is always in a state of renewal and we're always trying to figure out what we're doing on campus. What we try to do is create spaces so to keep the conversation going. Our mission is to remind people to think about justice in their daily lives.

Luther Seminary 13
Sanctuary Fellowship

by F. Philip L. Nushann, Jr.

Fellowship is certainly an integral aspect of Christianity. In my opinion, there are many reasons why this assembly, which creates the platform for believers to connect, is so essential to our Christian faith. I consider the supreme reason why fellowship is important to Christianity to be the recognition of the fact that "God has called us into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ." Jesus also had memorable fellowships with his disciples. This "call" from God is an invitation that should give every Christian a motivation to celebrate the gathering of believers "at all times and in all places" because as we congregate it enables us to experience God’s love through the joy of our "connectedness." This joy helps us to appreciate the unity of the body of Christ.

It sometimes stimulates within us the compassion that drives us to developing the spirit of "accompaniment."

Throughout my Christian journey, I have come to the realization that fellowship is demonstrated and experienced in two unique places in our daily lives: 1) inside the sanctuary, and 2) outside of the sanctuary. In my context, Liberia, this is how I have personally demonstrated and experienced fellowship. This is an indication that each believer also has a distinct contribution which gives meaning to fellowship.

Interestingly, my seven and a half months experience at Luther Seminary HAS NOT in any way given new meaning to my understanding of fellowship. Fellowship inside the Sanctuary is actually one area where I like to be during week days, especially on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays, I have the opportunity to teach Liberian songs during chapel. What amazes me most about this aspect of the service is the motivation, and warm reception from the congregation, characterized by their determination to sing and dance to the songs that I teach. Realistically, some of those members only sing from the hymnals. But, we still "connect," and celebrate God through different styles of singing. Chapel fellowship actually gives me strength for the rest of my day. I am inspired when the blessing is pronounced, and we are told to "share the sign of peace." Honestly, I love shaking the hands of my friends and I particularly like to shake hands with others I haven’t met before who can’t stop smiling when they greet me. Wonderful fellowship!

Fellowship outside of the Sanctuary is an essential medium through which our "light shines in the darkness." God is not limited to the sanctuary. Hence, our "Christian vocation" is not also static. It needs to be demonstrated and experienced in every aspect of our daily lives.

Fellowship within the community at Luther is very profound and welcoming. Join me to reflect on some of our activities within this community in relation of fellowship. Imagine:

• walking to the door of OCC and someone is standing there holding it for you;
• helping a friend get his/her car from the snow, and you return home only to meet a huge surprise awaiting you at your door;
• community meal;
• plowing snow, and everyone who passes by says: "thank you for helping me not to fall."
• being overwhelmed by Christmas invitations from professors and friends;
• asking for assistance and everybody is willing to accompany you;
• singing in the choir with somebody who reads the notes and you only sing the tone;
• Luther is indeed a "home away from home" where "love flows, and fellowship reigns supreme."

Concord 14
Lunch, Learning, and Living Together

by Kinna Nordstrom and Alison Hartke

Emmaus may be pretty young as far as student groups are concerned, but we’re now in our third year, and we’ve even more committed than ever to fostering fellowship and dialogue between Luther Seminary and the LGBTQQIAA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Allies) community. In fact, if there’s one thing we’ve found out in the last few years of conversation and connection, it’s that in the Venn diagram of life at Luther Seminary, Christian identity and LGBT* identities often overlap! Most people no longer see being Christian and being gay, or being Christian and being an LGBT* ally, as mutually exclusive, but we never would have known this if we didn’t come together as a community to discuss these sometimes difficult issues.

Emmaus holds meetings twice a month for everyone, whether they identify as LGBT*, an LGBT* ally, or even a person with lots of questions, to break bread together and discuss where we are in the process of learning to love our neighbor. We share our struggles with feeling invisible or unwanted in the church, we share our joy and thankfulness when our families are recognized by state institutions, we create a safe space to ask questions and learn more about ourselves and others, and, above all, we practice being in community.

This past semester Emmaus hosted a dialogue with Rev. Dr. Ed Treat and Pastor Stephanie Coltvet Erdmann from Transfiguration Lutheran Church that focused on how to hold congregational conversations about the recent same-sex marriage amendment, which helped us learn how to talk about these issues in our churches. We also hosted a lecture from Pastor Mark Kiyimba from Uganda, who taught us more about our Christian LGBT* siblings in countries experiencing extreme persecution. Prof. Terry Fretheim and Prof. David Fredrickson taught us more about biblical texts that have been associated with LGBT* issues, and they facilitated conversations that continued in classes and in the coffee shop long after their lectures had ended. This spring, Emmaus will continue building bridges to support our Christian LGBT* family by holding an Ally Training session that will provide knowledge and resources for those who would like to be active supporters of the LGBT* community here at Luther, in our churches, and in the wider world.

Being in fellowship with one another means being more than just lunchtime listeners, but we hope that by sharing our time every couple of weeks, and by providing educational opportunities for the Luther Seminary community, we may be enriched by our differences and strengthened by the faith we have in common.

Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we seek to walk and talk together on a journey toward a greater understanding of God, of ourselves, and of others.
Community Providing for Community

by Katie Jorgensen
MDiv Junior

C: How do you define fellowship?
I words of Acts 2:42-47 assist me when I ponder fellowship. Though this text does separate fellowship from the breaking of bread and prayers, I would consider both of these as manifestations of fellowship. I think we need to recognize that we are one body and if a member needs help it is our responsibility to assist. Not only assist but spend time together, eating together at the community meals, sharing our lives together, acting out in our lives what we believe. Each of us participates and contributes to the body, and we are all in and of this community at Luther.

C: How does the CFS contribute to building fellowship in our community?
The Community Food Shelf builds fellowship in the Luther community through quality time and conversation. When people come by they usually take time to check-in with others who are there, seeing how families and children are doing, asking about coursework—sharing the day-to-day things. In recent weeks as supplies have been low the families and students still come and spend time talking with me and each other, even if they do not end up taking anything they spend time in fellowship. Rarely am I lonely or bored while at the Food Shelf, and I love it. The Food Shelf is for anyone in our community that needs it, whether they are international or domestic students. Unfortunately, in the United States there is a lot of shame around food shelves and needing assistance.

C: How is donating to the CFS part of fellowship in our community?
A few weeks ago when I posted a picture of the empty shelves to our Luther Community Facebook page, I felt discouraged. The Community Food Shelf is vital in fellowship building for our families and students who use it. After this post there has been an awesome reaction on the part of our community. There were several bags of donations after the Concord movie night, a big thank you to everyone who donated!

I hope this trend continues. I would like to put out a challenge to all of the Luther Community, let’s work together to stock the shelves of the Food Shelf and try keep them stocked. I would really love to see donating to the Food Shelf become a stronger part of fellowship in our community.

Donating to the Food Shelf is easy and does not have to be very costly. At the grocery store, grab an extra bottle of cooking oil, a bag of rice or some beans. An extra dollar or two a month by each student would go a long way. Who doesn’t love the community meal? I know I love it – can’t beat the free food and fellowship – and part of this time spent sharing a meal together is to collect donations for the Food Shelf. Think of the community meal as a great opportunity to come together in fellowship and a nice little reminder to contribute to the Food Shelf. We will accept anything: soup, vegetables, fruit, cereal, pasta, rice, cereal, and if you cannot think of what to buy you can donate in dollars to make it easy. Bring your donations to the community meal each month, or drop them off in NW 100 or in OCC outside of Dining Services.

C: What would you like the Luther Community to know?
My message is simple: If you can help, please help. If you need help, be helped. We are all one body, in the One Lord.
Morning with Grounds Crew

by Ben Jacobson
MDiv Middler

There is something distinct about the snow-laden Luther Seminary campus in the early hours of the morning. Perhaps, it is the way the snow seems to give light in what should be complete darkness. Or the stillness where there should be the flow of seminarians scurrying to classes. Maybe it is a hallucination brought on by lack of sleep, but to those who tend the grounds here at Luther there is something that keeps bringing us out, roasting us from our beds while the rest of the community sleeps.

It could be the email we got the night before, the one that made us want to smash our heads against the keyboard. It was either that or the early morning phone call that made us wish that modern convenience and the cell phone were things of a far and distant future. Either way, we breathe our collective sigh of contempt for snow and ice, and we begin a migration across of snow-covered roads or unplowed pathways.

Up the hill, the lights are on in the shop. By the time that we have gathered there, we have shed our gogginess and a few people even smile. Someone, probably Greg Filer, usually has been wise enough to get there earlier than the rest to brew some coffee. A few minutes of chugging and the obligatory exchange of weather commentary, we are off. Three miles of sidewalk, parking lots, and countless steps. It is a production, but we seem to have it down.

By the time the sun rises, we have scraped down a large portion of campus. Most of the main pathways are clear. The entryways to buildings are shoveled and salted. The parking lots are drivable. Then, the second migration begins.

From up the hill, down the hill, and across campus the crew walks or drives tractors and trucks back to the shop. On an ideal day, we rest for awhile and Tyler Gubsch makes pancakes. He does this, I think, because he is the only one who can handle the critiques hurled by people who have probably never made pancakes but have somehow developed a keen eye for the process.

There will be more work throughout the day. The lucky ones have class at eight. The unfortunate don't have class at all, but we will all be back. The snow comes in waves, throwing wrenches into our weekly cycles. And it never seems to stop. We don't have to do this job, and we don't do it because we love to shovel. Yet there we are.

The word "snow" appears a handful of times in the Bible, fewer still if one leaves out its coordination in the simile "white as snow." The 55th chapter of the book of Isaiah talks of the snow and rain coming from heaven, not returning "there until they have watered the earth." God's word, the passage goes on, is the same, coming down and giving life, accomplishing God's purpose for it.

Maybe the something that brings us back is a mix of word and snow, the combination that gathers people from the likes of Liberia, Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, and Gonvick, Minnesota together for a common purpose. Gathering in that shop up the hill, there are people who have never seen snow, and people who have seen way too much snow. I feel privileged to work with such a group of people, and to labor with them through all of the changing seasons. Even winter.

Luther Seminary 17
The Space In Between

by Michelle Walka
MA Senior, Barista

In between classes and what seems like the endless to-do list of being a student, I work at the Lutheran Seminary coffee shop. The other day I came across the dedication plaque for this space. What caught my attention was that it was "given in response to foster community among leaders called and sent." This touched on what I love about working in the coffee shop. In my daily work, I get to be witness to the Spirit disrupting our individual and often consumed lives with the space of presence and belonging. As beautiful as this space is, it is also messy and complicated; often challenging our assumptions and expectations of what it means to actually be a community of faith.

With this, here is what I notice:

- Our communal space matters. It sets the tone for our interactions with one another. The lighting, the colors, the arrangement of the furniture may seem like passive and unimportant details, but in fact these decisions actually play a very active role in how we navigate the day in mind, body, and spirit. Just think of the last time you tried to study in a room that was too hot or have an important conversation in a crowded restaurant that was too loud.

- Communal space can also be the space we create within relationships with God and one another. By engaging in a posture of listening and vulnerability, there is room for our whole selves to be known and to grow. This is not just some pie in the sky ideal, but it is rooted in our very identity in Christ. Through Christ, God continues to name and call us beloved. This word is not a title, but it is a promise that in all you do and in all you are, you are first and foremost to be loved by God. What's the difference? A space.

- This space changes the word from a noun to an action that we continually receive and live into. As I reflect on this, I realize that the physical, spiritual, and relational spaces we find ourselves in are not independent from one another, but are in fact interdependent on one another.

- We need to create and be intentional with our communal spaces for this very reason. It is here that our lives are given in response to foster community, not for our own sake, but for the sake of the Gospel in and for this world.

- We live into the space of be and loved, so that others might also be loved. God continues to disrupt our space, urging us to live more deeply and more faithfully with one another. Yes, it is difficult and at times even risky. Yet, I am reminded of God that "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." I lift my cup to you, my fellow beings. May we live into the gift of the space between knowing that God meets us here.

Some questions to ask of our communal spaces:
- What are our communal spaces and what do we notice about them and the people who are present?
- What does our physical space say about who we are and what we value?
- How does the physical space impact (both positively and negatively) interactions with one another?
- What kind of relationships are we trying to build, support, and encourage in this space? And, how can the physical space help and/or hinder these relationships?
POSITIVE CHANGE DRIVE!

The "Senior Fun Committee" is calling upon all Students, Staff & Faculty to a Penny War during the week of April 7-11. There will be two jars, one for Students, one for Staff & Faculty, both located in OCC Info Desk. The value of all pennies collected count positively to each group's total, while the value of any other coins or even dollar bills are subtracted from each group's total. (Hint: This means the more pennies we put in our jar, the better. Yet, the more dollar bills placed in others jar is even better!) At the end of the week, the winner will be announced and that group will decide where the proceeds go, either to the Luther Seminary Food Shelf or the Student Scholarship Fund. Start saving up your change so we can make a positive change!

Luther Seminary 19
Fellowship In Store

by Grace Altworth
Luther Seminary Bookstore Interim Director

“Wait! Calvin Roetzel is coming in? He’s a customer here?” a bookstore student worker exclaims gleefully, her face flushing with excitement. Dr. Roetzel is a regular fixture here at the Lutheran Seminary Bookstore, both authoring a book regularly used as a course book in New Testament classes and shopping at the store. Roetzel stops down to pick up the books he ordered and adoring students swarm, professing their appreciation for his scholarship. He grins widely, signs books, and chats with his admiring fans.

This is what happens at the Lutheran Seminary Bookstore, located in the lower level of the Olson Campus Center. Students meet their theological heroes, either through books or in person. And often they gain new ones. In fact, the store recently assembled a section dedicated to popular theological authors. In addition, the store has spirituality books, commentaries, and bible helps.

Fandom is not the only thing the Lutheran Seminary Bookstore offers the community. Elizabeth, aged 93, drives over in her boat of a Buick to buy meaningful sympathy cards to send to her grieving friends. Carol, a nun, picks up a stack of books her sisters will be reading together for their Lenten study. Meredith, a community member, buys locally made communion wares as an ordination gift for her pastor friend. Many pastors rush over on Shrove Tuesday because their administrative assistants reminded them that tomorrow is Ash Wednesday and they need ashes.

The Lutheran Seminary Bookstore is a service to the Lutheran community, fostering connections and fellowship within its doors. The bulk of its customers have been coming to the store for years, once Seminary students themselves. They remind new student workers of their stories, sharing about the good old days when they used to search for books by flashlight, squeezing between narrow aisles in the old store. Old friends run into each other, new friendships are formed over a common love of Nadia Bolz-Weber.

Many changes have happened to the Lutheran Seminary Bookstore over the past year, and more changes are coming. Gone is the need to use a flashlight to search for books, now the store is brighter and has an open layout. Once the store was run by 10 full-time staff people and an assortment of student workers, now it is run by one full-time staff person, and a handful of student workers. By supporting the Lutheran Seminary Bookstore, customers are both financially supporting and investing in the Seminary and the students.

The core mission of the store remains the same: a commitment to providing theological books, course books, and ethically produced gifts to Lutheran Seminary students and the wider Christian community.

In addition to books, the store offers gift items: Fair Trade coffee, tea, and chocolate, locally made crafts and art pieces like pottery, mittens, stole, and jewelry; and official Lutheran Seminary apparel.

Come and sample the toffee waffles made by local business woman, Janell Draper of Proper People, who delivers by bike and uses all locally sourced and organic ingredients.

Come and see the unique communion wares made by local soda-fountain potter, Jim Alworth. Chalices, patens, and pitchers are all available.

Come and touch the exquisite fabrics used by Mary Schultz, Minnesota native, who makes gorgeous stoles in liturgical appropriate colors.

Come and try on the authentic Norwegian Serbu Rose style mittens made by Lutheran Seminary MDiv Senior, Erika Benson Buller.

Come and meet Philip Formo on April 12th. He will be signing copies of his new book, Papa.

This store is special. Come and see for yourself. And maybe, one day, you might come across your own theological hero.
Dismantling Racism: Living into Beloved Community

Why are you involved with the DRBC student group?

Edwin Schenk
MA Senior
I am a Master of Arts in Old Testament student here at Luther. Currently, I am in my final semester writing my thesis. This project deals with characterizations of Canaanites in the Old Testament. The impetus for the research is my experience as an American Indian and the history of United States expansion and conquest of Native peoples, especially the devastating impact it has on Native life today. This history is a huge hermeneutical presence for American Indians and it is a part of why I think the conversations we have at DRBC are so important. People experience the church in different ways depending on their context. Getting these diverse perspectives together in one place is crucial if the church is interested in creating a truly multi-national community. My hope is that this important work continues to influence life at Luther Seminary and subsequently in the world.

Ruth Williamson
MDiv Student
I think that Mother Teresa said it best when she said that, "If we have no peace it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." My name is Ruth. I am a bumbling, stumbling, beautiful human being and child of God just like everyone else and I have much to change and grow and share from deep within—always. I cannot help but be a part of the ongoing conversation of DRBC, and I am absolutely blessed to be a part of the group that has formed here on Luther's campus, because beyond all else, I believe in a better way. With that said, I am certain that every moment we have the opportunity to come together in community and relationship as human beings and as a group to take part in mutual dialogue, active listening, and transcending barriers of all sorts, we are ultimately and imperfectly opening into that better way. Every time we have the opportunity to come together to share space and hurts and vulnerabilities about the world and about ourselves, I know that my amnesia for humanity and hope is broken wide open. Together, we are changing and being changed from the inside out. And together, with a healthy dose of humility, dignity, and courage, we are compelling one another, through the undeniable barrier-breaking powers of relationship and love, to actually live it—with and for; messy and free, inside and out.

Tom Liddle
MDiv Middler
The conversations DRBC is hosting around race, theology and justice are critical because unfortunately we still live in a world where systemic racism creates oppression and injustice for many. But the reality is, as a white man I can ignore it if I want to. I'm not oppressed and I'm not the victim of systemic racism. In fact I'm the beneficiary of white privilege. That's the reality of our world. But somewhere along the line I heard it was important to "call a thing what it is." So that's what DRBC is doing. We are having difficult but honest conversations about race, theology and justice that -- from my experience - are much needed in our context. These conversations can be uncomfortable, but confronting difficult truths is also liberating. In Christ we're freed to look at something as painful as the structural sin of racism and white privilege. We're freed to confess reality and participate in the reconciliation that Christ brings — in us and among us. I invite you to join us!
Top Ten Reasons to go to Chapel

Lisa Janke
MDiv Middler, Sacristan
Taylor Skoglund
MA Junior, Sacristan

10. We’re seminarians... we live, work, and spend our days at a seminary... this is kind of our thing. - Taylor Skoglund

9. The Liberian leadership team moves the spirit within me in a way that I don’t experience in traditional worship. - David Hendrickson

8. I consider worship to be a personal obligation to the amazing relationship which God has called me to. - Philip Nushann

7. God meets me there: in word; in sacrament; and in the weird, wonderful array of fellow worshippers. - Rick Foss

6. I go to chapel to practice my faith with the community of believers, people with whom I work and associate and for daily spiritual growth. - Marie Hayes

5. Depending on the day and the worship style, I can leave with a clearer state of mind. It sometimes allows me to take a mental break and be “filled” again - that might be because of the music, worship, sermon, or even just the people I get to interact with while in chapel. - Jody Wendt

4. I appreciate experiencing many different styles of worship and preaching from different people. It’s a chance we as church leaders may not have as often in the future. - Will Johnson

3. The sacrament. - Kelly France

And the top reason to go to chapel:

2. Because my mom told me to. - Lisa Janke

You may be thinking that your sacristans did really poorly in elementary school since there are only nine reasons listed, but we want you to figure out what your own reason to come to chapel is.

We think Marie Hayes says it best, “My invitation to all is come to chapel; join me and let’s make the rest of our day fulfilling; come let us reach out to one another and share the peace of God; and come let us fellowship and share the Lord’s supper with bread and wine with this family of believers in this place.”

Concord 22
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Fellowship with the Noncord, watching Birdemic in the Sandgren Commons