

Yehiel Curry receives
Distinguished Service Award

Telling storyteller
Jan Boden's LSTC story

At home with Erv Uecker
and Ross Walker



epistle

SUMMER 2022

The magazine of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

A joyous return

In-person commencement: Hallelujah!

School in motion

After a two-year hiatus, our journey resumed. From the chapel we went outside, turned north on University to 54th Place, walked one block east, then south on Woodlawn and due east again to the doors of St. Thomas the Apostle. Commencement returned to our Hyde Park home with a parade both festive and absurd. Those from all walks walked with us, traffic stopped for the antique regalia and outlandish hats, and folks gawked at this strange spectacle. With less-than-martial precision, we willingly entered, of all things, a church building on a lazy Sunday afternoon, with supportive crowds waiting.

Our first in-person graduation since 2019 was packed with details that seem typical until you look closer. From ritualized decrees (thereunto appertaining?), to diplomas offered as rare treasure, from robust cheers and swirling streamers befitting a stadium, to familiar students now transformed and ready, all these mark the journey of commencement. And the parade with which it begins compresses a multiyear formative process into a walking parable. To learn is to be on the move, staying ever in motion. Our graduates are surely still who they've always been, but now we see them ready for the road ahead.

You've likely heard by now. We are moving. After three years of board review, two years of strategic planning, and one year of negotiations, a sale of our main facility will close later this year. We will cede ownership of our home for fifty-six years, leasing back part of it through mid-2023, then relocating to other fitting space in Hyde Park. Despite the penchant of some to foster the worst possible story, this is actually good news and a helpful change. Like many other nonprofits, we know our building is not our mission, and so concluded we can bear our mission better and more sustainably by other means.

Even so, this change will be difficult. The places where we live are freighted with feelings, memories, and significance, so moving brings a sense of loss. Aside from this, such change generates anxiety, fear of the unknown, and exhaustion over the thousand details needed to relocate well. We surely need your prayers and support more than ever. We also need to trust that we can do this, since we've done it before. Every one of LSTC's six predecessor schools and all other ELCA seminaries have relocated in the past, often several times. Adaptation is part of our institutional heritage. Standing still is not.

Sale and relocation do not signal failure. Instead, they represent an opportunity with benefits we are otherwise unable to realize while holding onto a facility that has always been too large for us. Focused on our mission, we will better form contextually attuned leaders through deep partnerships with other local institutions and neighbors. Relocating is thus part of our planful recommitment to the school's founding vision. And such a strong local commitment will still call for the wider reach that new technologies and pedagogies now afford. We will develop fresh approaches to theological education within a truly global horizon.

In the next year, we will rapidly learn to be a new kind of seminary. The pandemic already led us to rethink where we work, how we connect, and what we teach as better stewards of our resources. Such insights are preparing us to form students who can engage nimbly the demands of ministry and adapt flexibly to opportunities yet unknown. True to our heritage as a learning community, we are still on the move, committed to and curious about God's future for us and our whole church. We are surely still the seminary we have always been, but now see ourselves ready – ready for the road ahead. 🌱



James Nieman

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LSTC graduates celebrate commencement with heads, hats and hands held high.

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Lutheran School of
Theology at Chicago

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Bishop Yehiel Curry receives Distinguished Service Award

Yehiel Curry (2009, TEEM; 2013, MDiv) received LSTC's 2022 Distinguished Service Award May 16 during the annual leadership dinner that traditionally follows commencement and is part of the spring LSTC board of directors meeting.

The award, conferred by the board, recognizes exemplary service and mission and ministry of the seminary.

Curry, bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, is not only an LSTC graduate but serves on the board as the Region 5 bishop representative. He also received the 2017 LSTC Emerging Voice Distinguished Alumni Award.

In introducing Curry's award, Wyvetta Bullock (1996, MDiv; 2003, DMin), board member and a member of his synod staff, traced the history of Curry's connection to the ELCA and LSTC. She recalled the birth of Shekinah Chapel at her kitchen table, and Safe in My Brothers Arms (SIMBA) Circle to the Outdoor Ministries desk of the churchwide organization when she served there.

SIMBA Circle began as a youth development and mentoring program for African American youth. It continues now as Rescue, Release, Restore and includes youth from other communities. Curry served as pastor of Shekinah Chapel Lutheran Church from 2013–2019 before being elected bishop. He was also a mission developer there from 2007–2012. It was through his involvement with SIMBA Circle and Shekinah Chapel that he became more familiar, and involved with the wider ELCA.

In accepting the award, Curry thanked his wife, LaShonda, and



Yehiel Curry received LSTC's 2022 Distinguished Service Award May 16.

all ministry spouses/partners; his mother, "the first person to believe in me"; mother-in-law—"when I had nothing, you believed in me"; and daughters, Shemiah (an LSTC MDiv student), Ashirah and Shekinah.

Curry said his place on the LSTC board is one of the only things he specifically chose in the Conference of Bishops. "When I learned that Bishop [Paul] Erickson's time was concluding it's the only time I spoke up at a Region 5 meeting: 'I want to serve on that board,'" he said.

When Curry finished the TEEM program (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) at LSTC in 2009, he said the school didn't know what to do with him when he completed the process, and that there was no acknowledgement nor invitation to graduation.

As a result, the first thing he did as bishop was to begin revitalizing

the TEEM program, crafting a vision of a cohort for the program. "First thing as bishop I wanted to do something around the TEEM process and LSTC said yes. They said yes to me and I wanted to say yes to them."

"I need you to know I had a defining moment yesterday [commencement day] ... I got emotional when we were in the chapel preparing to walk over to St. Thomas the Apostle... At the front of the line, the person who led the delegation is a leader by the name of Mike Willis, one of the four candidates for TEEM program... My first commencement with the board I got to see Mike leading the group from the chapel. And it got better. He had a robe on. His name was called and a certificate was given. My first initiative as bishop... I witnessed come true yesterday... Thank you. I'm so grateful for this recognition." ❁

Schools reach agreement on sale of LSTC, McCormick property

In early May, the University of Chicago, LSTC and McCormick Theological Seminary signed a non-binding letter of intent (LOI) for the university to purchase the buildings and underlying real estate of the two seminaries.

Although a specific use has not been finalized, the University of Chicago has said it is committed to preserving the educational use of the buildings on the property.

The non-binding letter of intent provides that LSTC and McCormick would have a right to lease space in their existing buildings for a limited period. LSTC intends to remain within its main facility while reexamining and reducing the space needed for its operations. It is also exploring future spaces within Hyde Park, likely co-locating with another religious or educational nonprofit. Updates will emerge later in the summer.

The transaction was unanimously approved by LSTC's Board of Directors and McCormick's Board of Trustees and is expected to close later this year.

"LSTC has called this site home since 1966, and it is filled with extraordinary memories for multiple generations of students, staff and faculty," said James Nieman, president. "This agreement supports LSTC's strategic plan to ensure long-term sustainability and engagement with our community. It also helps us maintain a dynamic learning environment in a changing world. As we reimagine our future, we intend to remain on the South Side of Chicago, which we consider home." ❁

Four to receive distinguished alumni awards in October

Four LSTC graduates will be honored when alumni return to campus Oct. 11-12 for Homecoming/Alumni Week. They are:

Jason Chesnut (2010, MDiv)

Witness to the World, given to a clergy or lay person engaged in the work of public church in any setting.

Chesnut is a pastor of Anam Cara, a new digital-first mission start of the ELCA. He is founder of Ankos Films, Slate Project, is a biblical storyteller, and has served as digital liturgist at high profile conference worship events.

Former Bishop Phil Ruge-Jones nominated him and wrote this: "Jason has forged a path into digital ministry that is public, politically aware, and centered on the biblical narrative. His work with Slate Project has been amazing, gathering people around the world to reflect on Jesus and his commitment to justice for all. Jason has established a lively social media presence, but often uses his platform to lift up the voices of others, especially BIPOC people."

Francisco Javier Goitía Padilla (2014, PhD)

Called to Lead, awarded to someone who has visibly answered the call to prophetic leadership in the wider church.

Padilla is director for theological formation, seminaries and schools at the ELCA. He served as pastor to congregations in Puerto Rico and the U.S. and is a former youth leader in the Caribbean Synod.

Bishop Idalia Negrón Caamano nominated him, praising his relationship with all ELCA seminaries and other seminaries in support of the call process, and as an advocate for seminary education in Spanish. In congregations he served he introduced the Lectio Divina method of Bible study, which is still in use in those congregations. "He is a creative writer, comparing the

stories that are told in 'salsa' music to biblical stories," Caamano said.

Louise Britts (2002, MDiv)

Excellence in Parish Ministry, awarded for preaching, teaching, pastoral care, evangelism or stewardship with at least a decade in ministry experience. Britts is a pastor, hospice chaplain, skilled community organizer, mentor, gifted preacher, Bible teacher and administrator.

Tom Gustafson, pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn., said she helped take the congregation's ministry "out the door and into our richly diverse neighborhood and mentored countless youth and adults."

Although Britts "retired" from Messiah in 2020 to concentrate on hospice chaplaincy, as "pastor emerita" she continues to preach, lead and even serves as the congregation's bookkeeper.

Herbert Anderson (1963, MDiv; Augustana Theological Seminary)

Lifetime Service, given to an alumnus/a who exemplifies servant leadership throughout their lifetime.

Anderson has served as parish pastor, hospital chaplain, author, retired professor and Lutheran pastoral theologian.

Kathleen "Kadi" Billman, who nominated him, said Anderson has brought honor to the ELCA and LSTC: "His love of congregational ministry, first forged as a Lutheran congregant and then parish pastor, infuses the over 100 articles and 13 books he has written."

Anderson taught at Princeton Seminary, Wartburg Theological Seminary and retired in 2000 from Catholic Theological Union after an illustrious 15 years as professor of pastoral theology. He has continued to write and teach. "He is arguably the most widely known Lutheran pastoral theologian," Billman said. ❁



A joyous

After the global pandemic prevented in-person commencement for two years, LSTC's Class of 2022 gathered at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church on May 15 for the seminary's 162nd commencement ceremony.



return

Graduates had many opportunities on commencement day to applaud themselves, one another and their accomplishments.

The weather cooperated and being together in person to mark the accomplishments that led to this day provided an air of satisfaction and joy. Eleven alumni from the Classes of 2021 and 2020,

who had been invited back to walk, were among the honored graduates.

Paul C. Pribbenow, president of Augsburg University, Minneapolis, Minn., was commencement speaker. Pribbenow began and ended by

quoting “the late, great icon of this institution,” Joseph Sittler, who once suggested that the whole of the Christian faith can be summed up in this liturgical phrase, “from you no secrets are hid.”

“So, now freed, with no secrets hid, what does the call to public discipleship mean for you as you commence your vocational journeys for leadership and service in this church and in the world?” he asked the graduates. Pribbenow reiterated the tie between Augsburg and LSTC due to a new accelerated public scholars program, built his address around three claims that propel our public discipleship: why place matters, radical hospitality, and practicing abundance.

Pribbenow returned to the wisdom of Sittler (and Martin Luther King, Jr.’s arc of the moral universe) as he concluded: “We are called to lean into an arc



Paul C. Pribbenow, president of Augsburg University in Minneapolis, was the commencement speaker.



Wendy Heilman (2021, PhD) was thrilled to come back for the in-person ceremony she missed last year, and she brought some classmates with her.



Graduates walk past LSTC's beloved Refectory on the way to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church.

already making its way in the world, a plan already unfolding, justice demanded, love breaking in, and there we find glimpses of salvation and grace in our midst as we pursue our calls to public discipleship.”

He encouraged the graduates to face their daunting, frightening, awesome and remarkable calls by “making peace in your lives, in your families, faith communities, neighborhoods and in the world, to be reconciled with our God and neighbors far and wide.”

Turning to the lines first written by Polish Rabbi Nachman (Kaddish), he recited:

*Nothing is as whole
as a heart that has been broken.
All time is made up
of healing of the world.
Return to your ships,
which are your broken bodies.
Return to your ships,
which have been rebuilt.*

“We’re in good and gracious company—called by our gracious God, from whom no secrets are hid, who has rebuilt our ships, who has redeemed our lives so that we might heal the world, so that we might join in God’s loving and reconciling and justice-filled work for the world,” he said.

Prizes, degrees

Prizes for scholarship and preaching were awarded: Nathan Houstin, the Edgar Krentz Award for Biblical Interpretation; Cecilia (Cecie) Suknaic Saulnier, the James Kenneth Echols Prize for Excellence in Preaching. Both just completed their middler year.

MDiv graduates Sarah Krolak and Maeve Schurz presented the class gift of more than \$8,000 to be used as stipends for students participating in Clinical Pastor Education (CPE), a requirement that is unpaid and not covered by scholarship support.

Degrees were presented to 13 MDiv students, two MAM students,





It was a perfect day for congratulations and photo opportunities following the ceremony.



Ben Stewart (at right) presiding and Marvin Wickware Jr. assisting at baccalaureate.

one TEEM student, one Studies student, four DMin students and five PhD students.

“A New Heaven and a New Earth” was this year’s theme, based on the Fifth Sunday in Easter Revelation 21 text (1a).

Baccalaureate

Benjamin Stewart preached and presided at Saturday’s

baccalaureate service, saying the day’s texts, which also included Acts 11:1-18 and John 13:31-35, call us to remember our ancestors in the faith.

“We retell these ancient stories with wonder, even as we too, now at this moment, turn and wonder at what God has been revealing to us in our time together at LSTC... in the library, over Zoom, on the



2022 MDiv graduates Sarah Krolak (left) and Maeve Schurz presenting the class gift for CPE stipends.



On the steps of St. Thomas church ready to process in.



Katrina Endres-Steingraeber and Makayla Marinack Dahleen, back to walk from 2021 and 2020.

2022 graduates

Master of Arts in Ministry

Erie Sara

Allison Elizabeth Mikyska

Master of Divinity

Katherine E. Anderson

Ismael J. Calderón Funez (H)

Brooke DeJong

Katherine Ehlert

Jason Fugate

Rajeev Manohar Geddam

Melissa L. Hrdlicka

Zachary Krampien

Sarah Krolak

Cassandra Nagle (E)

Jason Schultz

Maeve Schurz

Troy Andrew Spencer (E)

(E) Completed requirements for Environmental Ministry Emphasis

(H) Completed requirements for Hispanic Ministry Emphasis

Certificate of Studies

Apou Makuac Anyoun

Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM)

Michael Willis

Doctor of Ministry

Leila Mänttari

Leif Nordenstorm

Hanna Pettersson

Ida Wäreborn

Doctor of Philosophy

Cami L. Brubaker

Hery Andrianotahina Naivoson

Adama Isa

Montira Junnawatt

Emmanuel Joshua Peter Penumaka



President James Nieman offers his applause on this festive day.



It was wonderful to have graduates from 2021 and 2020 back to walk, including: Vickie Johnson, Makayla Marinack Dahleen, Julie Grafe and Morgan Gates.



EL, in this chapel, through these windows, at the lake, at ministry sites, in courtyards and colloquies and even in classrooms—even here, we’ve been met with a new heaven and a new earth.”

Referencing a previous poem in a chapel sermon, he quipped, “if you also had Billy Collins’ poem “Passengers” on your Bstew homiletical bingo card, today’s your lucky day.”

The poet, noting passengers’ vulnerabilities, fragilities, precarities, and “beholding them in a kind of love” describes our human need for someone to stand up and say a few words, Stewart said.

“The poet in this poem steps back. But you, at this commencement, step forward: to where God and God’s strange love has called you, even given you a new commandment.”

Noting the bookends of the seminary years—pandemic, wars and insurrections, climate disasters and lives cut down by police violence—Stewart said, “It is an understatement to hear the world calling out, “I think it would be good if one of us maybe stood up and said a few words.”

“Jesus extends that call to you too, in a new commandment, and you’ve answered: knowledge, action, towel and basin, a word

of life, bread for sharing, and a love that – even with Judas, Peter, Pontius Pilate, and the police – opens a door to the new heaven and new earth.

“God’s love brings about another world, within this one. We’ve tasted this love, we’ve been washed in it, we’ve seen it leap off the page in the classroom and the library. You have seen this new heaven and new earth here at LSTC, but I tell you, ‘you will see greater things than these.’ And now we send you off, beloved graduates, to embody that love – even book-ended in this season – to open the door for others as the risen body of Christ.” ❁



Led by the streamers, graduates make their way to St. Thomas church.



Anne Wickland (2021, MDiv), back to walk!



Bishop Yehiel Curry congratulates Christina Montgomery (2021, MDiv).

A farewell for Jan

After years of storytelling, we get to tell her LSTC story

By Julie B. Sevig

Jan Boden has worn a lot of hats at LSTC, but she will tell you her primary hat has been storyteller: “My favorite part of the job was to listen to and tell the stories.”

A steady staff presence for nearly 25 years, she retired May 1. She told stories of students and alumni, faculty and staff, supporters and friends, using a number of platforms. Perhaps most recognizable were her stories in 50 issues of this magazine and its little online sister, the e.pistle. But she also told stories with her camera. She attended chapel faithfully, rarely without the camera slung over her shoulder.

Boden also told LSTC’s stories by producing material for both admissions (prospective students) and advancement (donors), and on the website she led the effort to redesign in 2016, on social media, and in the eight catalogs she produced.

How it began

Boden joined the LSTC community in 1997 as assistant to the president, a job she held for seven years. Coming to LSTC, a place she said she could never have imagined working, is “evidence of the Holy Spirit,” she said.

She was working at Ridge Lutheran Church in Chicago when her friend Dorothy Dominiak, then

administrative assistant in admissions, told her about the opening.

“First she tried to recruit me as a student,” Boden said, laughing and recalling that at the time she’d had hopes of a career in Chicago’s environmental community. She has a BA in English from North Central College in Naperville, Ill., and worked at Chicago Recycling Coalition and Ridge Lutheran Church while earning a master’s in general studies from Roosevelt University in Chicago. She also worked in book publishing, including Loyola University Press.

Turns out Boden was familiar with LSTC, having attended a leadership conference here and audited a Monday evening Epic of Creation course. Ministry in Context students had also served at her congregation.

Life at LSTC

Though she didn’t pursue a career in it, Boden’s passion for the environment didn’t fade. She was pleased to discover the LSTC community is steeped in

environmental awareness.

In July 2004 Boden was appointed director of communications and marketing, and through the years had a number of people join her on that small staff. In January 2020 she stepped back from that role and became the public relations manager.

She’s worked with five admissions directors since 2004 (seven since 1997) and three vice presidents for advancement (five since 1997).

“My approach was collaborative, assuming that colleagues in charge of admissions and fundraising knew what messages would attract

students or donors and it was our job to help deliver the message in a compelling way,” she said.

Accomplishments & joys

Boden considers LSTC’s mission statement one of her biggest accomplishments. With a colleague, they guided the process for a statement that has stood the test of time.

“That’s why I can recite it in my sleep,” she quipped. She also attended more than 40 board of directors meetings, helped plan 24 commencement ceremonies, and was part of more strategic planning committees than she can count. She spearheaded the rebranding prior to the website redesign.

One of Boden’s greatest joys was being part of a small group

My favorite part
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Jan Boden

Boden

that worked with the stained-glass artists on the iconic Augustana Chapel and photographing the Manz Organ installation.

Even this proud introvert identifies her true joy as the people, of course. “I’m grateful to have had the privilege of knowing and working with so many devoted and faithful people.

“...I’ll miss what I’ve been missing over the two years of pandemic restrictions and working from home: casual, crucial, impromptu conversations on campus. For me, that was heart work and ear-to-the-ground community building. That’s how I got to know students and colleagues and felt connected to them.

“I’ve also missed the music we make together in worship—choral, instrumental, congregational—the harmonies and beauty of breathing together as we listen and sing.”

Ironically, one of Boden’s favorite tasks was taking colleagues who were retiring out for a final interview over lunch. They’d recount their path to and reminisce about their own years at LSTC.

Always working for inclusion

Certainly, significant changes have occurred over 25 years. For Boden, two of the most significant were welcoming LGBTQIA students and partners (since 2009) and the efforts to transform LSTC into an antiracist institution. She has served on the Antiracism Transformation Team, and intends to continue doing so until she’s fulfilled that commitment.

“The school needs to be able to deal with its own discomfort in becoming an antiracist institution,” she said. “It’s not going to happen



overnight. But we need to own the process. Everyone in the school needs to be part of it... The ELCA has stated its own commitment and LSTC could be a leader in this area. It takes dedication, time, humility and being able to say ‘I was wrong about that.’”

As she moves into retirement—with time for family, friends, gardening and wherever else the spirit calls her—Boden marvels at the front row seat she’s had to watch how the seminary experience transforms students. Those who are attracted to and formed by LSTC are “students with a heart for social justice, equity and inclusion who are reshaped in this place, which starts out so unfamiliar to them. They take

risks to get out of a comfortable place so they can be better leaders in the church they are aware is changing. They want to be part of that.”

Between the international students—many of them pastors, teachers and bishops in their own countries—and the master’s students who return from internships as improved preachers and leaders who are “excited and ready to go” she’s grateful for them all.

“It was a profound joy to be part of the formation of such fine pastors and scholars. I’ve seen so many wonderful students come through these doors. That’s what made the work important and gratifying.” ❁

Sevig is content and social media manager.





At home with Erv and Ross

Together for 65 years, Erv Uecker and Ross Walker share a lifetime and legacy of love and service

By Julie B. Sevig

Erv Uecker and Ross Walker are proud to be (as far as they know) the only same-sex couple in Wisconsin who have been together 65 years. A tour of their cozy apartment in Alexian Village in Milwaukee—walls covered with photos and awards—leaves no doubt about their loving legacy.

Decades before the U.S. Supreme Court and the ELCA legalized and recognized same-sex marriage, Uecker, 90, and Walker, 84, found one another and made a life together without apology or secrecy.

“We’ve never worn a sign,” said Uecker, pointing to his chest, “but we’ve never been dishonest either. If asked, we told the truth.”

“Surprisingly, not many asked,” Walker added.

They met through a mutual friend in 1957 and have been together since, separated only during Ross’s service in the Army (Uecker had previously served in the Navy during the Korean conflict).

Uecker is a 1969 graduate of LSTC who began seminary at Maywood. He’s not sure who knew about them in seminary but says no one really asked. His first call was to Wilmette (Ill.) Lutheran Church (now closed), and his second to St. Luke’s Lutheran Church of Logan Square.

He followed William “Bill” Leshner, who became president of LSTC; Erik Christensen, LSTC’s pastor to the community and director of strategic initiatives, followed years later. “Erik brought [St. Luke’s] back to life,” Uecker said.

“Erv and Ross reached out to me very shortly after I arrived in Chicago to share their support and encouragement for my ministry with St. Luke’s,” said Christensen. “Knowing that I was part of a history of ministry by gay clergy, not just in the church at large but in that very congregation, was a source of pride and strength as we did the tough work of redevelopment together.”

A nod to the 70s

During that decade at St. Luke’s—and all 65 of their years together, really—their service to the church and organizations as a clergy and spouse couple always focused outward, shaped and sustained by

strong progressive faith. As they reminisce, it's clear their years in the Logan Square neighborhood of Chicago were most memorable.

"They were the most hectic, rewarding, stimulating period of our 65 years," Uecker said.

When Uecker was interviewed for that call and shown the parsonage, he told the call committee, "I want Ross to look at it first." They don't recall anyone questioning that.

The only incident against full acceptance they recall was

every day, they recalled, marveling at the activity. In collaboration with the city of Chicago, they served 200 meals a day to seniors.

Walker served on the church council and had his own remarkable teaching career in special education. He produced the first environmental education program for Chicago Public Schools with an emphasis on "people, pets and kindness." He was named Illinois teacher of the year.

In the 70s, they witnessed a changing neighborhood and congregation, from primarily older Northern Europeans to a Hispanic influence. The community was half Roman Catholic and half mainline Protestant. A plan to build a six-story senior subsidized housing project funded by the Illinois Commission failed after owners of eight properties needed for the project wouldn't agree due to changing neighborhood fears.

On to Wisconsin

In 1979 Uecker resigned and the couple moved to Wisconsin, where their life focused on a horse farm near Oxford, a lifestyle they loved but for which they weren't prepared. Walker joked, "We didn't even know which end [of the horse] to feed." They figured that out, and eventually had 60 horses, including six stallions.

A pivotal request in 1983 caused them to leave the Lutheran Church in America (predecessor body to the ELCA) in protest to a mandate for clergy in same-sex relationships to sign a document promising celibacy. Uecker and Walker had been a committed couple for 26 years, and they met that request with a firm no (and possibly some choice words). That year they formed Samaritan Pastoral Ministry, with the sole purpose of offering credentials to clergy who were not able to function in their church bodies (i.e. Lutherans without call, married Roman Catholic priests). It was affiliated with the International

Council of Community Churches.

In the 1980s and beyond they served a variety of churches (including St. John's Community Church in Milwaukee), led a bank, and volunteered at organizations—often commuting to and from Oxford, Milwaukee and Chicago.

Country to city

They moved from their "retirement" horse-breeding farm to Milwaukee in 1982 and volunteered full-time at the Brady East STD Clinic. In 1992 they founded and provided seed money for the LGBT Community Center in Milwaukee. Much of this volunteer work was at the height of the AIDS epidemic. Their activism didn't wane, and Walker is proud to have marched in Milwaukee's first pride parade.

Uecker and Walker were legally married at Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Grafton, Wis., seven years ago. They had considered a private ceremony of six people, but their pastor said, "No, this is not how this is going to work. This is a big deal." Some 300 attended, most of them staying for a meal prepared by members and served by the youth in the space they decorated. Even though his husband jokes that "Ross has been actively gay since he came out of the womb," and Uecker came out decades ago in the Navy, it was a day they hadn't dared imagine.

In a home filled with photos, art, framed letters and awards, the most recent additions are the Lifetime Community Service Award by the Milwaukee LGBTQ+ Community Center, and the Shepherd Express "Progress Award" underwritten by Northwestern Mutual and sponsored by Planned Parenthood.

These days, health concerns slow both of them down some, but those who know them wouldn't be surprised if more awards for their service and dedication land on their walls. 🌸



Erv Uecker and Ross Walker.

a progressive dinner held by the young married club to which Walker was not invited. Later, an intentional invitation to both of them to a Christmas party changed that oversight and Walker was always included.

The congregation was vibrant, the outreach astounding. Uecker headed a staff with four associates; seven congregations used the space for worship and there was a full-time counseling center. There were 1,000 people coming through the doors between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.



The Pillar Society member list presented below celebrates all living donors who have expressed intent to include LSTC in their estate plans. Where one spouse is living and one is deceased, the spouse who has died is marked with a cross.

If you believe there has been an omission or inclusion in error, please contact advancement@lstc.edu. To learn how to include LSTC in your estate contact Sandra Nelson, vice president for advancement, at sandra.nelson@lstc.edu or 773.256.0676.

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A bold missionary vision, a continued partnership

Back in the 1980s, LSTC incorporated Islamic studies into the heart of its curriculum. Led by visionaries such as Harold S. Vogelaar and Roland Miller, the seminary took the lead in facilitating productive and empathic dialogue with people of Islamic faith.

Vogelaar and Miller engaged in conversation with both those of Christian faith and other faiths. They built empathy into the infrastructure of their theology and used that empathy to generate knowledge and peace. Theirs was a vital and timely theological vision, and LSTC was the perfect place to let it incubate.

Fast forward 20 years, and the

state of affairs for kind-hearted Muslims across the world was in peril. After Sept. 11, 2001, acts of hate proliferated, compounded by ignorance.

When Vogelaar spoke at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Downers Grove, Ill., his ideas captured the imagination of Jerry and Karen Kolschowsky, who saw in Vogelaar and his Muslim colleague Ghulam-Haider Aasi a theological vision they knew was needed to enable people of all faiths to thrive.

The Kolschowskys eventually partnered with LSTC to make Vogelaar's theological vision possible, making two transformational gifts which would endow both A Center for Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and

Justice (CCME) and the Harold S. Vogelaar Chair in Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations. Both were formed in 2006 to prepare students for a lifetime of ministry, through which bridges could be built between Christians and Muslims, as well as cooperation and respect among people of all faiths.

The work of CCME and the chair, held by Mark Swanson, continue, and the Kolschowskys are still supporting the center and the school. They provided a lead gift to our 2022 Giving Day, and we are grateful. 🌸

Visit our website story portal for a longer story about the Kolschowskys:
lstc.edu/story/a-bold-missionary-vision



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We give thanks for the lives and vision of those Pillar Society Members who died during the last year, or whose bequest was realized in the last year. Their generosity lives on in support of our mission.

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An overflow of abundance: Barbara Rossing and Lauren Johnson

If you talk to LSTC Professor Barbara Rossing about her call to theological education, you'll hear a word often repeated: abundance.

Rossing studied geology as an undergraduate and comes from a family of pastors and scientists. The symbiosis of a rich religious identity and a deep scientific passion is a thread that runs through her career. When she served as pastor at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in the Cascade Mountains of Washington state, she was surrounded by both snow-capped biodiversity and devoted people of faith.

She eventually pursued further study at Harvard Divinity School, then came to LSTC

to teach in 1994, drawn to its theological commitment to biblical studies and scientific approach to environmentalism.

She wasn't too deep into her teaching career when she met her future husband, Lauren Johnson, and they began to split their time between Chicago and their home in Leavenworth, Wash.

Rossing and Johnson were lead donors for this year's Giving Day. When asked why she gives to LSTC, Rossing said, "We [want to] help future preachers proclaim Jesus's abundance as a transformative vision of healing for congregations and for our world." 🌱

Visit our website story portal for a longer story about Rossing and Johnson: lstc.edu/story/donor-story

Giving Day reached \$200,000 goal

LSTC's annual Giving Day held in early April met its goal of \$200,000.

Sandra Nelson, vice president for advancement, called the day "inspiring" and "our most successful day of giving yet."

Giving Day activities took place on campus for the first time since 2020, when Giving Day concluded just as pandemic lockdowns were put into place.



Mark your calendar for the Scherer Lecture

The annual Scherer Lecture is Oct. 4, 4-5:30 p.m., in person in the Augustana Chapel and livestreamed. Michael J. Gorman, the Raymond E. Brown Chair in Biblical Studies and Theology at St. Mary's Seminary and the University in Baltimore, Md., is the speaker.

The lecture will explore the concept of “resurrectional cruciformity” — cross-shaped



Michael J. Gorman

ministry infused with the power and presence of the risen Lord—as the shape of Paul’s own sense of mission.

In addition to examining Pauline texts in which Paul narrates how he seeks both to embody this spirituality and to see it embodied in the communities to which he writes, the lecture will address how that same spirituality is relevant for the contemporary

mission of the church locally and globally.

Gorman, who has taught at St. Mary’s since 1991, also taught or lectured throughout the U.S. and in Canada, New Zealand and Africa. The author or editor of nearly 20 books and countless articles, Gorman has devoted special attention to theological and missional readings of the New Testament, especially the letters of Paul.

Check the events page on lstc.edu to register. 🌿

Fall Seminary Sampler to host prospective students in person

If someone you know is considering seminary, let them know that LSTC’s Fall Seminary Sampler is back to being held in person on Oct. 24-25. For the first time, an evening sampler session will also be held (Oct. 26) for those in the city and area who are unable to attend during the day.

The sampler gives prospective students a chance to meet faculty and students, join in discussions about discernment, listen in on a fall class, worship with the community, and explore options for living on or near campus.

Perhaps most importantly, participants will learn about the admissions process, student services and financial aid. 🌿



LSTC’s Gospel Choir was back in person for their annual concert after being on hiatus due to the pandemic. The theme was, “It Is Well.”

Homecoming is Oct. 10-14

Save Oct. 10-14 for LSTC’s fourth annual Homecoming/alumni week.

It’s a great chance to reminisce and reconnect with former classmates, learn what’s new at LSTC, participate in worship and special programming, and

celebrate distinguished alumni (see page 3). A mini-conference, sponsored by the LSTC centers and the office of Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Justice, entitled “The Neuroscience of Implicit Bias:

Society, Systems and Synapses” is also scheduled for Homecoming Week,

tentatively Oct. 13.

A registration link will soon be available on the Homecoming page at lstc.edu (under news). 🌿

LSTC
2022
HOMECOMING

Save the date

The annual Vine Deloria Jr. Symposium will be Nov. 15-16 at LSTC. As details become available, they will be on the drop-down events page at lstc.edu. 🌿

1969

Erv Uecker (MDiv) and his husband Ross Walker received two awards in Milwaukee: Lifetime Service Award by the MKE LGBTQ+ Community Center and the Lifetime Achievement Award by Planned Parenthood, Northwestern Mutual and The Shepherd Express. Each award was given at a banquet, one attended by the mayor of Milwaukee (now ambassador to Luxembourg) and the other attended by the governor and senior senator of Wisconsin. (See page 16)

1989

Paul D. Erickson (MDiv) was reelected to another six-year term as bishop of the Greater Milwaukee Synod.

1999

Janet Volk (MDiv) was featured on several Chicago radio shows and TV news segments as well as in newspapers and online media outlets during Women's History Month to talk about The Women's L Project. The Women's L Project (WomensLProject.com), which she started as a personal project during the pandemic, symbolically renames all of the CTAL stops after women of Chicago's past and present. As she says, "Some are well known. Most are not. All should be."

2002

Paul Bischoff (ThM; 2005, PhD) led "Enriching Our Reading of the Elder Testament through the Lens of Hebrew Thought" at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Glen Ellyn, Ill., and wrote *Evangelicalism Is Dead* (Wipf and Stock).

2003

William E. Flippin Jr. (MDiv; 2005, ThM) wrote a reflection entitled "A Repast message" in the April *Living Lutheran*.

2006

Meghan Johnston Aelabouni (MDiv) wrote "Contemplating the New Year: Lutherans explore meditation, mindfulness and contemplative practice" in the January/February *Living Lutheran*.



Christie Manisto (2008, MDiv, light jacket), with her husband Steve behind her, Carrie Ballenger (2009, MDiv, to the right of the pope) and Gabi Aelabouni (2005, MDiv, far right) met Pope Francis in Rome as part of a group of 40 Methodist, Lutheran and Reformed clergy and clergy spouses from the Association of International Churches in Europe and the Middle East.



2012

Vance Blackfox (MATS) was this year's commencement speaker at Finlandia University, Hancock, Mich.

2013

Edward Baseman (MDiv) has accepted a new call to Trinity Lutheran Church, Washington Island, Wis.

2016

Chris Michaelis (MDiv) wrote "A Time to Pay Attention" in the January/February *Living Lutheran*.

Drew Yoos (MDiv) and **Sara Yoos** (MDiv, 2015) are now program directors at Lutheridge Bible Camp in North Carolina.

2019

Amy Asendorf Berger (MDiv) and **Mathew Berger** (MDiv) have moved to Parkville, Md., to serve St. John's Lutheran Church.

Elise Anderson Brock (MDiv) married Adam Brock at Lutheridge Camp and Conference Center in Arden, N.C.

S. Helen Chukka (ThM) was a panelist for "Hermeneutics and Constructive Theology" during a Dalit Theology seminar in India.

Sarah Derrick (MDiv) is serving as a chaplain for a retirement community in Williamsburg, Va., and **Josh Menke** (MDiv) is pastor of St. Luke Lutheran Church in Richmond Va. They are getting married in September.

2009

Carrie Ballenger (MDiv), after eight years serving in Jerusalem, has accepted a call to University Lutheran Church in Cambridge, Ma., as pastor and as chaplain at Harvard.

Tim Brown (MDiv) wrote "Easter is a season, not a day" as a *Living Lutheran* reflection in April.

Angela Khabeb (MDiv) continued to write the Grounded In Grace column in the *Living Lutheran*, January to present.

2010

Julie Boleyn (MDiv) was named director of the Kaleidoscope Institute, an organization founded by Eric Law to create a gracious space for diverse and sustainable communities.

Rachel Wind (MDiv), ELCA executive for philanthropy, was quoted in "A Win-win-win" article in the May *Living Lutheran*.





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Hesron Hanshen Sihombing (MA), presented “Digital Capitalism: Network and the Ethics of the Commons” at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte conference on Religion and Futurity; presented on “Oikos–Orientalism and the Formation of Homo Economicus” at the Association for Asian American Studies Conference; presented papers at the AAR/SBL Rocky Mountain–Great Plains

Regional: “The Economy of the Effects of Grace,” and “Performative Hopelessness and Public Space; Ecojustice Praxis in Indonesia,” and had his proposal “Class Futures: Against the Capitalocene, For Liberation” accepted for the 2022 annual meeting of AAR.

2020

David Rebey (MDiv), pastor of Breaking the Chains Church, Milwaukee, Wis., was quoted and pictured in the January/February *Living Lutheran* article “A Harvest for Sharing.”

Ole Schenk (MDiv) published “Truth–Telling and Other Ecclesial Practices of Resistance” in the March *Currents in Theology and Mission*.

2021

František Janák (MDiv) was ordained April 23 at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Trenton, N.J., and has been called to St. Stephen’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Plainfield, N.J. Kadi



František Janák

Billman, Jennie English–Dumont, Terry Baeder and Matt James attended and participated.

Stephani Shumaker (MDiv) was ordained May 13 at First Presbyterian Church in Kerrville, Texas, and now serves Atonement Lutheran Church in Boulder, Colo., and as chaplain in

the Air Force Reserves. Shumaker was also involved in grief counseling and support in Uvalde, Texas, following the mass shooting there.

Bethany Ulrich (MDiv) was ordained May 7 at First Lutheran Church in Blue Island, Ill., where she now serves as pastor.

Kamio Arigbabuwo, director of admissions, resigned in March to accept a position in the tech industry. In announcing the resignation, Scott Chalmers wrote, “While she was here for a little more than a year, Kamio brought a professional admissions background that highlighted policies and procedures as well as a commitment to bring the best possible to students to LSTC. Kamio’s commitment to excellence this past year will have a long–lasting impact on LSTC’s recruitment work, not the least being her work bringing a new admissions technology to LSTC.”

Jan Boden retired May 1 from her most recent LSTC position, public relations manager. Boden told LSTC’s story for nearly 25 years. She joined the seminary in 1997 as assistant to the president. In 2004 she was appointed director of communications and marketing, a position she stepped back from in 2020. Said President James Nieman, “Jan always had the best interests of our school at heart in whatever she wrote or said. Her ready smile, coupled with her instincts for a good story, made her the best advocate we could ever have hoped [for]. I will miss her bright, inquisitive spirit among us.” Aaron Copley–Spivey, director of HR, noted Boden’s inspiring spiritual grounding and servant leader’s heart. “Jan’s contributions to the crafting and

measuring of our most recent strategic plans, her unparalleled ability to capture the LSTC spirit in print and picture, and her leadership in our visual rebranding will leave a lasting legacy at LSTC,” Copley–Spivey said. (See story on page 14.)

Brenda Cantu in March resigned from her position as digital instruction librarian of the JKM Library.

Chris Huang, director of institutional effectiveness and registrar, resigned in April. Huang, who joined the staff in August 2020, accepted a position at Purdue–Fort Wayne (Ind.) as associate vice chancellor and registrar, which he began May 2. “I have enjoyed serving this community and appreciate the grace and kindness shown to me as we navigated a global pandemic and implemented new systems,” he wrote in announcing his resignation.

Eunyoung Lim finished her position as assistant professor of New Testament at the end of the academic year. She accepted a position at Middlebury College in Vermont, where she will begin teaching in the fall. In the letter she wrote to the community she said the decision was because of family circumstance, including a more suitable school system for her children. “Thank you all for

giving me the opportunity to serve this esteemed institution that is committed to translating God’s love and justice into action.”

Mark Lowry, philanthropic engagement associate, resigned to accept a position as director of digital programs with Camp One Step by Children’s Oncology Services. Lowry wrote this to the community, “Camp One Step has been an important and meaningful part of my life for the past 30 years, and the opportunity to focus full–time on bringing camp experiences to children and families impacted by cancer is one I just can’t pass up.”

Bill Myatt, director of philanthropic engagement, left LSTC in April and will work with his daughter on the consulting firm he formed to help small nonprofits grow sustainable philanthropic revenue.

Gloria Vicente in May resigned from her position as advanced studies program coordinator and international student administrator. She accepted a new role in development and fundraising with Fourth Presbyterian Church. Mark Swanson, advanced studies director, said, “All those who’ve worked with Gloria know of her meticulous attention to detail and proper procedure, but also of her care for students and joy in their success. I’m grateful for all the ways in which she

transitions

has kept the advanced studies office running smoothly, and visa matters attended to with the highest degree of professionalism.” In her resignation letter, she mentioned her authentic friendships and indispensable experiences at LSTC. She’ll continue part–time as LSTC’s Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) until a new PDSO is named.

Kimberly Wagner, assistant professor of homiletics and Axel Jacob and Gerda Maria (Swanson) Carlson Chair in Homiletics, resigned in June to accept a position as assistant professor of preaching at Princeton (Mass.) Theological Seminary. In a letter to colleagues she wrote that she found the unexpected invitation from Princeton “to be a rich and compelling opportunity.” She continued, “I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served among you here at LSTC and for all that I have learned in my four years with this community. Thank you for your care, collegiality and for the many ways you contribute to the life and work of LSTC... I am eager to witness where God will lead LSTC as the institution lives even more fully into its call.”

Robert Walter Breitreutz
1934–2022 | *Central Lutheran Theological Seminary*
Bob Breitreutz, 87, died March 5 in Coos Bay, Ore. In 1961, he established Faith Lutheran Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, through the mission program of the Lutheran Church in America. In 1965, he moved to Oregon where he taught science at Myrtle Point High School for 34 years, receiving the teacher of the year award multiple times. Breitreutz is survived by his wife Donna, four children, nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Rodger Nelson Foltz
1936–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary ThM Class of 1973*
Rodger Foltz, 86, died Feb. 3 in Plymouth, Minn. Following his MDiv from Suomi Lutheran Theological Seminary, he received degrees at Pittsburgh University, LSTC (STM), and Concordia Theological University in Ft. Wayne, Ind. He also studied at the University of Helsinki on Fulbright and Church of Finland scholarships. He served congregations in Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota. He is survived by his wife Aila, two children and five grandchildren.

Marshall H. Gante
1929–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1958*
Marshall H. Gante, 92, died Feb. 9 in his home in York, Pa. He served for more than 60 years in congregations in Minnesota, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. He was a member of the retired Lutheran ministers group and a member of St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran Church in York New Salem. Gante served in the United States Army during the Korean War. He is survived by his wife, four children, 10 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. He was preceded in death by a daughter and granddaughter.

William A. Good
1929–2022 | *Central Lutheran Theological Seminary 1955*
William A. Good, 92, died March 12 in Fredonia, Pa. After serving in the Army, he served parishes in Denver, Colo., Farmington N.M., and New Haven, Conn. He earned MA and PhD degrees at Yale University and then began a 29-year teaching career at Thiel College, from which he retired in 1994. He was also a chaplain in the Reserve for 12 years. Good is survived by five children, two step-children, 18 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

William Alan Graf
1943–2022 | *Class of 1970*
William Graf, 78, died March 10 in Folsom, Calif. He served parishes in Michigan and California. He is survived by his wife Annelise, two children and four grandchildren.

Ronald K. Hasley
1935–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1961*
Ronald K. "Ronnie" Hasley, 86, bishop emeritus, of Polson, Mont., died March 17. He also earned a doctor of divinity from Carthage College and a doctor of humane letters from Augustana College. He served as pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, did chaplain's research at Emanuel Hospital in Portland, Ore., and was director of pastoral care at Lutheran Hospital, Moline, Ill. He then served as bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod from 1987 to 1998. He was preceded in death by his wife Eleanore and his daughter, and is survived by his son, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Roger David Helgren
1953–2022 | *Class of 1992, DMin*
Roger Helgren, 68, of Ottawa, Ill., died May 5 from pancreatic cancer. His DMin was in pastoral care and counseling. His pastoral ministry grew to include interim ministry in the Illinois Valley region, and involvement with the Choices Outpatient Clinic. Helgren is survived by his wife Carol Wahlstrom, three children and two grandchildren.

Michael Hagenow
1980–2022 | *Class of 2006*
Michael Hagenow, 41, died May 20, in Minneapolis, Minn. He served Clairmont Lutheran Church in San Diego, Calif., and Resurrection Lutheran, also in San Diego. He is survived by his mother Joyce, a sister and nephew.

Paul Herman Konig
1931–2022 | *Central Lutheran Theological Seminary 1955*
Paul Konig, 90, died March 17 in Lincoln Neb. Following seminary, he studied a year at the School of Divinity, New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He served congregations in Nebraska until his retirement in 1990. Konig was preceded in death by his wife Marcella.

Michael Kuchinsky
1956–2021 | *Class of 1984*
Michael Thomas Kuchinsky died May 22, 2021, in Derwood, Md., from prostate cancer. Kuchinsky felt called to the ministry after working as a teacher at a Lutheran grade school. He served as a pastor in Virginia and as a chaplain and

We remember...

Wilbert "Bill" A. Thiel, 84, died April 15. He served on the LSTC Board of Trustees and was a generous supporter of the seminary. Thiel was born in Chicago on August 11, 1937, and graduated from Austin High School in Chicago and Northwestern University with a B.S. in accounting. He began his financial career as a CPA for Arthur Young then moved to The Chicago Corporation, starting



as comptroller, and after 35 years retiring as the CEO. He served on other boards, too, including the Options Clearing Corporation and the Securities Industry Association and Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. He was also active in his congregation, Epiphany Lutheran Church in Elmhurst, and gave his time and money to other charitable organizations. Thiel was preceded in death by his wife Marjorie (nee Erickson), and is survived by three children and four grandchildren. The Thiels were LSTC Distinguished Service Award recipients in 2010.

religion professor at Newberry [S.C.] College. He earned his MA in political science from the University of Richmond [Va.] and a PhD in government and international studies from the University of South Carolina. He was a project coordinator with Bread for the World Institute and vice president of the Luther Institute before transitioning to a college professor at Goucher College [Md.] and Gardner-Webb University [N.C.] before retiring in 2016. He is survived by his wife Catherine, two children and two grandchildren.

Richard Lind
1937–2022 | *Class of 1992, DMin (pastoral care)*
Dick Linn, 84, died March 24. Linn served parishes in North Dakota and Wisconsin and Desert Hills Lutheran in Green Valley, Ariz., part time in retirement. He is survived by his wife Dottie and their three children and four grandchildren.

James Harold Milligan
1939–2022 | *DMin 1999*
Jim Milligan, 83 of Sevierville, Tenn., formerly of Chesnee, S.C., died March 9. He worked for the IRS for 23 years before pursuing the ministry. He served two congregations for 33 years. Milligan was preceded in death by his son, Russ. He is survived by his wife Margaret (Peggy), three children, eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Rodney Bruce Mruk
1954–2022 | *Class of 2000*
Rodney Mruk, 67, died March 17 in Hermiston, Ore. Mruk felt the call to ministry after 25 years as a general contractor in the Chicago area. He served Messiah Lutheran Church in Havre, Mont., and Trinity Lutheran in Hermiston, Ore., until last July. He is survived by his wife Linda, five children and two granddaughters.

Glenn Pearson
1931–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1965*
Glen Pearson, 90, died Feb. 16 in Omaha, Neb. He served five congregations in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York and Nebraska. Pearson traveled as a missionary teacher to 13 countries. His final years of ministry included training teams to visit the sick and elderly in Omaha. He also wrote the book, *Prepare to Meet Your God: Scriptural Meditations for the Terminally Ill & Their Caregivers*. He is survived by his wife Esther, four daughters and 13 grandchildren.

Robert D. Peterson
1935–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1961*
Bob Peterson, 87, of Shorewood, Ill., died March 14. He served congregations in Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin before moving to Joliet, Ill., where he served Bethlehem Lutheran Church from 1972 until his retirement in 1998. Peterson was also past president of Old Timers Baseball Association and founder of Spanish Ministries at Bethlehem. He is survived by his wife Sandra (nee Ricketts), three children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

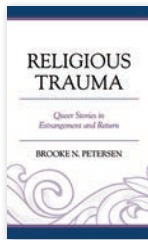
Arthur A. Weitschat
1940–2022 | *Class of 1986*
Arthur Weitschat, 82, died April 18 in Pierre, S.D. Weitschat taught geography in the Detroit public schools from 1971 to 1982 until the call to ministry. He attended Christ Seminary-Seminex, LSTC and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. He served parishes in Utah and Pennsylvania before settling in South Dakota, where he served for 20 years. Weitschat was preceded in death by his wife Doris. He is survived by a son and two grandchildren.

Brooke Petersen, director of MDiv and MA programs, coordinator for candidacy, lecturer; published *Religious*

Trauma: Queer Stories in Estrangement and Return (Lexington Books, 2022), due to release in July. Petersen also reviewed *Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America* by Eyal Press for *Christian Century*, and presented a workshop, "Leadership in the Midst of Grief and Trauma," for the East/Northeast Conference of the Northern Illinois Synod.

José David Rodríguez, Augustana Heritage Professor Emeritus of Global Mission and World Christianity, professor emeritus of systematic theology, taught the intensive course "Caribbean Theology" at Interamerican University and preached at Puerto Rico churches while there.

Barbara Rossing, professor of New Testament and environmental ministry coordinator, wrote "Waters Cry Out: Water Protectors, Watershed Justice, and the Voice of the Waters" in *S. Lily Mendoza & George Zachariah*,



eds., Decolonizing Eco-theology: Indigenous and Subaltern Perspectives (Wipf and Stock). "Preaching Helps: Fifth Sunday of Easter and Sixth Sunday of Easter" in the March *Currents in Theology and Mission*. Presented "Faithfulness as Hope Unveiled: Biblical Apocalyptic Literature's Vision." She spoke at Northwest Wisconsin Synod Lay School of Ministry; presented "The New Heaven and the New Earth. Creation Care and the Apocalypse" at a conference on "Creation Concepts and Creation Care in Early Judaism, Early Christianity, and Beyond" in Mainz, Germany; four sessions on Journeys Through Revelation for LSTC Learning Communities, Houston and St. Louis via Zoom.

Michael Shelley, director emeritus, A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice (CCME), taught a five-session course, "Church History—the First 400 Years," for the diakonia program of the Northwest Ohio Synod's Eastern and North Central Conference.

Linda Thomas, professor of theology and anthropology and director of the Pero Center, wrote "A Trinitarian Account of Theological Intersectionality" for the ELCA Metro Chicago Synod's Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DIB) Initiative.



Professors Klaus-Peter Adam and Barbara Rossing led a trip to the Middle East in May. Here, they pause for a photo under Herod's aqueduct in Caesarea. Students, alumni, other leaders and friends went on the trip.



Participants on the Hyde Park Trolley Tour, which received widespread media coverage. A second trolley was added and cars followed to visit sacred spaces and learn about all the holy days that converged in April.

Sara Trumm, director of CCME (and colleague Hind Makki), wrote an op-ed piece in the April 4 *Chicago Sun-Times* about the rare opportunity in April 2022 for interfaith cooperation. Many media wrote or picked up coverage about Hyde Park trolley tour LSTC helped sponsor.

Kimberly Wagner, assistant professor of homiletics, presented "When Kyrie Eclipses Gloria: Preaching in the Midst of Trauma" at the Valparaiso (Ind.) Institute of Liturgical Studies and presented about trauma-informed and trauma-responsive preaching at the Festival of Homiletics in Denver.



Kimberly Wagner speaks about trauma-informed and trauma-responsive preaching at the Festival of Homiletics in Denver.



Festive gathering for worship during the Authentic Diversity Summit.



Melissa Hrdlicka celebrates graduation with a stroll down the stacks of the JKM Library.



Expressing solidarity with Sri Lanka.



Helen Chukka lights a candle as part of the Dalit History Month worship service.



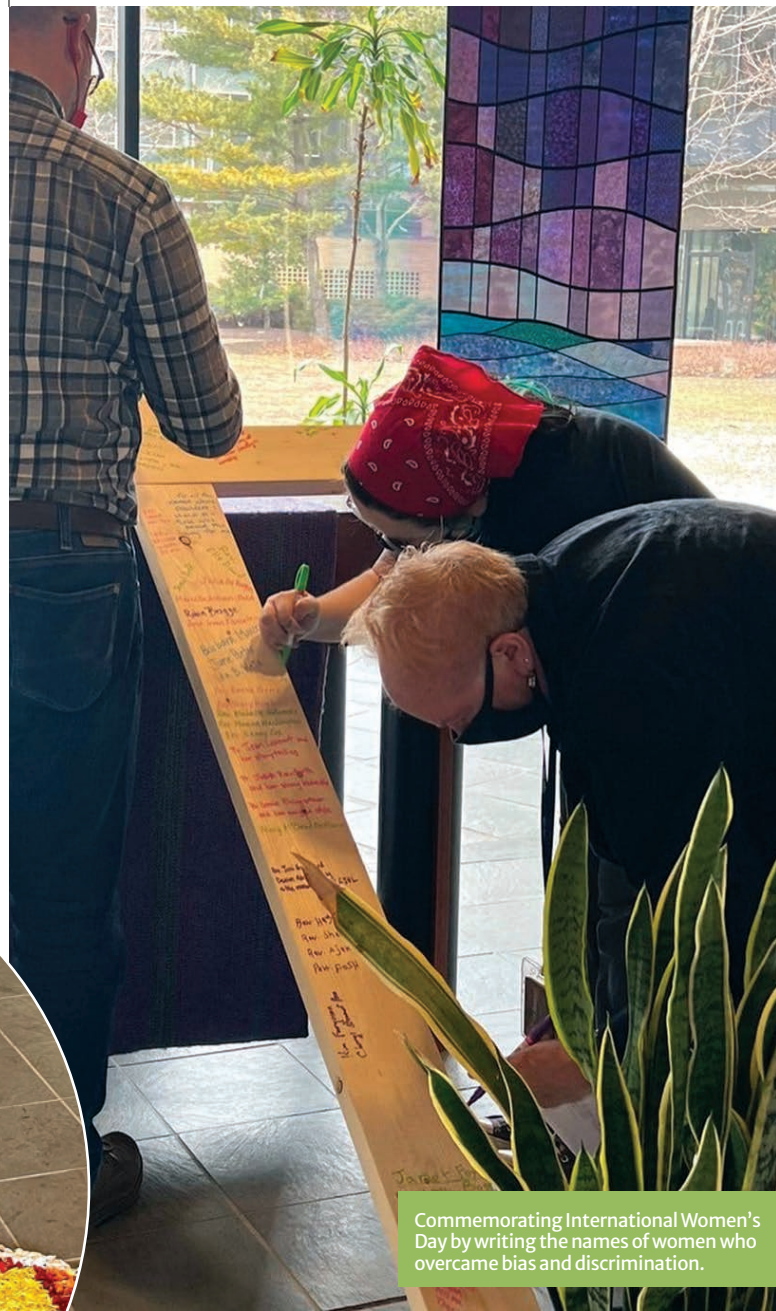
Keeping vigil with victims of gun violence in Texas, and so many other places.



Cheryl Hoth and Abimbola Brown playing Four Square on Giving Day.



Sarah Krolak, Katie Anderson and Maeve Schurz take the traditional walk through the front prior to commencement.



Commemorating International Women's Day by writing the names of women who overcame bias and discrimination.



Stoles, albs and clericals, oh my! Students take advantage of the 2022 Great Sacristy Giveaway.



Mark Swanson leads the faculty procession into the Service of Holy Communion and Closing Convocation.



Compline in the quad to close out the academic year. Since the beginning of 2022, the group that went to Holden Village for J-term has led worship in the quad.



Walking the labyrinth while gathered to bless those on the edge of transition: internships, CPE, MIC and first calls.



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Gathering for commencement.



SUMMER 2022