

LSTC honors
distinguished alumni



epistle

FALL 2022

The magazine of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

HOMEcoming 2022

LSTC welcomes alumni
back to campus after
two pandemic years



Of houses and foundations

By this Epistle, I was sure we would know where we will relocate. So much for certitude. There's nothing amiss. The sales agreement for our main facility is completed, we are now in a due diligence period, and closing will likely occur in January. Since May, we have also explored many relocation options and are now actively engaged in negotiations to establish a long-term lease. But all this has taken far longer than expected. I had hoped to share good news about our new home. Instead, I can tell you something better.

Much of our sale and relocation work has required private deliberations. I know this was frustrating to some, as if secrets were being kept. We were, however, legally obligated to hold proprietary information in confidence, or have no negotiations at all. As news could become public and our partners allowed it, we spoke. Toward that end, we also established a special space on the LSTC website called "Our New Home" to share news releases, timelines, videos, upcoming events, and answers to frequently asked questions. This site is updated regularly and remains the best place to stay fully informed about what is unfolding.

Though talks about our new home are still underway, I want to focus on the process we used, which matters just as much as the final result. From earlier community meetings, we heard a strong desire to stay in Hyde Park, a rich place to learn alongside academic and other partners. Given this, our brokers launched an exhaustive process of exploring every leasable facility here that met our criteria. Step by step, that pool was narrowed through conversation with landlords, proposal reviews, and direct inspection. During summer and early fall, a list of 61 sites was reduced to two. Now it was time for all of us to talk.

In the last half of October, we held stakeholder sessions with faculty, staff, and students. After sharing our broker's work, we reviewed both final places closely. Each is a nonprofit much like our own, so we compared details of site features (facility and surroundings), institutional ethos (mission and culture), and financial terms (lease and improvements). Everything was on the table. What followed was an earnest, probing, robust conversation about all these factors, the sort of respectful give and take hardly found in public discourse anymore. At heart in this conversation was something striking, something characteristically LSTC.

Usually, times of change and anxiety provoke our stark self-interest. But just the opposite happened in these sessions. Instead came concerns for the vulnerable among us, their access or safety in each place. Instead came questions of how we might welcome Black or Brown bodies, LGBTQIA+ persons, or other faiths. Instead came hopes for new partnerships and opportunities to move beyond old paths and practices. Do you catch the common theme here? Just when you would expect these meetings to be all about us, our needs and doubts, they turned out to focus on others. How would this choice affect our companions, our neighbors?

When I shared this striking insight with a staff member, she said, "I'm not surprised at all. That's just who we are." Just who we are – a matter of character, of the power of formation, and that such formation comes from a God who shows us how to live for others. I wish I could have told you the result of our search for a new home. What I can say now, though, is more important. We have the basis for a good home, wherever that will be. It's not about the house we finally choose. It's about the foundation that supports it. 🌱



James Nieman

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epistle

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EDITOR
Julie B. Sevig

DESIGNER
Lorel K. Brown

CONTRIBUTORS
Sarah Burdick
Gail Kenny
Rhannon Koehler
James Nieman
Julie B. Sevig

ON THE COVER
Distinguished alum Jason Chesnut preaches at chapel during homecoming week. (Lindsay Monsen, photographer)

PHOTO CREDITS
Nikki Daley
František Janák Jr.
Gail Kenny
Tricia Koning
Lyndsay Monsen
Christopher Rajkumar

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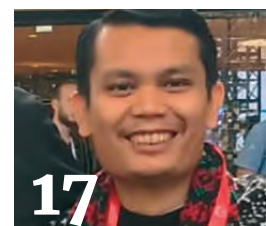
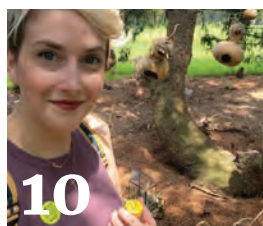
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Lutheran School of
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Michael Fick: LSTC memories aren't tied to a building

When Michael Fick (2004, MDiv) first heard about the impending sale of LSTC's property he felt "a kind of sadness." But

as he reflected on the reality of the situation, different thoughts and feelings emerged.

"I began to think about what I loved most about my time at LSTC," he says. "It was the

excellent teaching. It was being in an environment where you were free to ask hard questions, where students and faculty intermingled frequently, and where I had opportunities to learn about people whose experiences were very different than mine ... It dawned on me that none of those memories were particularly tied to a building."

The challenges of the relationship between faith and place have become ubiquitous this side of the pandemic and mirror those of congregational challenges, says the leader of the LSTC alumni board.

"The impending move of LSTC's physical space is akin to the reimagining that is going on in many church spaces right now," he says. "Things may not happen the way they did in the past, but the need for theological education and formation remains. It's my belief that LSTC will occupy a new kind of space that will allow us to continue our core mission, which remains the same." ❁

Visit LSTC's story portal (lstc.edu/stories) for the entire story on Michael Fick, as well as other alumni, students and faculty.



Visit our new web page devoted to sale, relocation

In September, LSTC created a new web page designed to keep people up to date with the seminary's property sale and relocation of the school.

The page (lstc.edu/relocation) will be updated, when appropriate, as new public information regarding the sale and relocation becomes available. Questions can be directed to marcomm@lstc.edu.

The page will increasingly be used to share stories and reflections of being part of the community at 55th and University. Use the same email address to

send your ideas, reflections and stories as together we look back on the seminary's rich history and forward to a future filled with possibilities.

"We look forward to hearing from those for whom LSTC has meant so much," said Keisha Dyson, executive director of strategic marketing and communications. "Part of going through the transition from old to new is to 'remember.' Our memories and stories can serve as a bridge to a new location and a bright future." ❁

Fund for Leaders



Five first-year MDiv students were among those awarded Fund for Leaders full-tuition scholarships at a banquet in late September. From left are Sarah Freyermuth, Lyndsay Monsen, Megan Mong, Jacqueline Miller and Nicholas Breining. This was also the 25th anniversary celebration of the Fund for Leaders.

Note from the editor

The *Epistle* magazine isn't usually known for breaking news. But as it turns out, some surfaced in early November that couldn't be squeezed onto the Transitions page (though our talented designer Lorel Brown often works miracles). After six years at LSTC, in early January I'll begin serving as director of communications for the Metropolitan Chicago Synod.

I'm especially grateful for this favorite part of my job—writing for and editing the *Epistle*, and for your readership and support. As we traditionally end our copy in the world of journalism, which shaped me:

–30– ❁



Julie B. Sevig, editor
julie.sevig@lstc.edu

Scherer Lecture

Michael J. Gordon, the Raymond E. Brown Chair in Biblical studies and Theology at St. Mary's Seminary and the University in Baltimore, Md., was this year's lecturer. He explored the concept of "resurrectional cruciformity."



Nieman, Rossing attend archbishop retirement

Professor Barbara Rossing and President James Nieman traveled to Uppsala, Sweden, in late October to attend the retirement celebration and high mass for Archbishop Antje Jackelén, who formally laid down her shepherd's staff after serving eight years.

Jackelén (pictured with Rossing and Nieman) is among the seminary's distinguished affiliate faculty and both taught at LSTC and served as director of the Zygon Center. Nieman shared remarks



and brought LSTC greetings at the reception. Rossing was panelist at a symposium honoring the archbishop and served communion. ❁

LSTC's return of Codex 1424 in the news again

At least three news sources, including *The New York Times*, in August published stories about a stolen ancient text returned to its rightful owner by the Museum of the Bible.

These stories all referenced the LSTC story from 2016 when our seminary returned a 1,000-year-old codex to the Greek Orthodox Church, hoping to motivate others to return

similar once-stolen property.

The LSTC manuscript, taken from the Kosinitza Monastery near Drama, Greece, found its way to a European book dealer, and eventually into LSTC's Gruber Book Collection. The Greek Orthodox Church contacted the seminary seeking a voluntary return of the manuscript, which LSTC ceremoniously turned over. ❁

Coming home

LSTC welcomes alumni and friends back to campus for fourth annual Homecoming after two years of online celebrations due to pandemic

By Julie B. Sevig

Some 200 alumni and others participated either in person or online Tuesday through Thursday during the Oct. 10–13 Alumni Week. Members of the alumni board hosted a hybrid town hall with President James Nieman on Tuesday afternoon to

continued on page 6





learn more about LSTC's sale of the building and relocation plans.

Wednesday was filled with class reunions (organized gatherings for classes of 1972, 1982, 1977 and 1997) and an all-alumni reception, as well as worship during which two Distinguished Alumni Award recipients preached (Jason Chesnut) and presided (Louise Britts).

Leaders of LSTC's centers joined efforts on Thursday to present what has become a learning centerpiece for Homecoming. This year it was a full-day conference on the Neuroscience of Implicit Bias attended by about 80 people.

Leadership takes many forms

The annual Distinguished Alumni Award ceremony and dinner was the

continued on page 8

At right, student Erik Boss asks a question during the Implicit Bias conference.



Witness to the World Distinguished Alumni Award

Jason Chesnut (2010, MDiv)

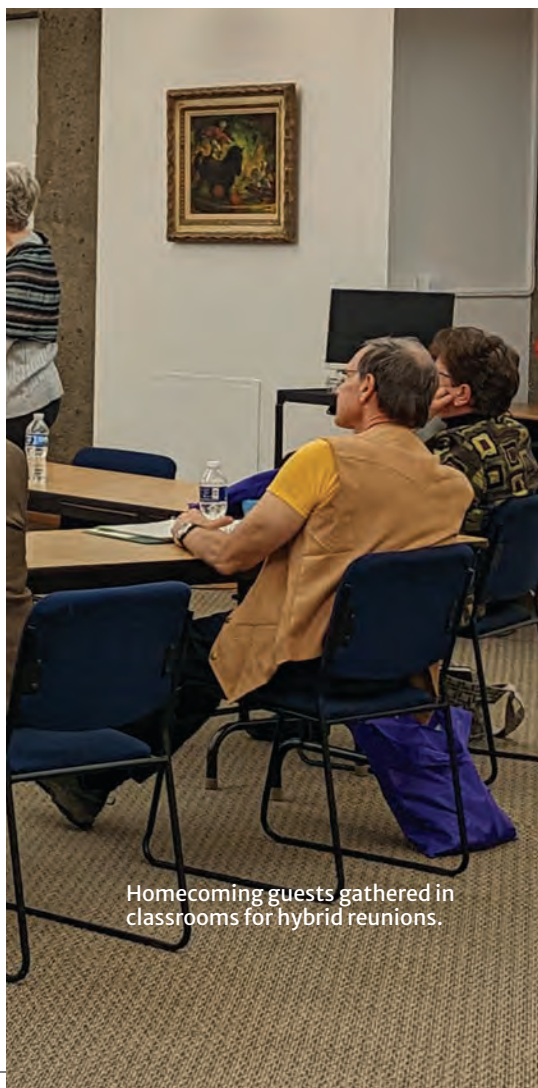
Chesnut is a pastor of Anam Cara, a new digital-first mission start of the North Carolina Synod of the ELCA. He founded both Ankos Films and the Slate Project, is a biblical storyteller, and has served as digital liturgist at high-profile worship events.

"I thank LSTC for forming me," said Chesnut after receiving his award, "for making me so uncomfortable, for pushing me, for transforming me, and for teaching me how to walk in this world." ❁





There were plenty of opportunities to visit over food and drink during Homecoming, including lunchtime for alumni and the community.



Homecoming guests gathered in classrooms for hybrid reunions.

Excellence in Parish Ministry Distinguished Alumni Award

Louise Britts (2002, MDiv)

Britts was recognized for her teaching, preaching, pastoral care, chaplaincy, community organizing and mentoring. Although she “retired” from Messiah Lutheran Church in Minneapolis to concentrate on hospice chaplaincy, she continues to preach and teach at Messiah under “emerita” status and is even the congregation’s bookkeeper.

“LSTC gave me wings because I had been in another seminary and it didn’t quite work out,” she said. “Since I was a little girl, I had told my mom, God’s calling me to be a pastor and to lead God’s people and to tell God’s people they are loved, deeply loved. So LSTC helped me realize



that dream and become a pastor.”

Seeking bi-vocational ministry was financially necessary, she said, and it also introduced her to hospice chaplaincy. She thanked her hospice and congregational colleagues and supervisors, and then said, “I’m thankful to my parents for teaching me social justice and how to love.” Cancer at age 21 made her believe she wouldn’t be able to fulfill her dream of motherhood, but on a trip to Zimbabwe, the gift of a daughter (and eventually grandchildren) made that dream come true. 🌸



Louise Britts presides at Wednesday Eucharist during Homecoming week.

culmination of the week, honoring Chesnut (2010, MDiv), who received the Witness to the World award; Britts (2002, MDiv), who received the Excellence in Parish Ministry award; Francisco Javier Goitia Padilla (2014, PhD), who received the Called to Lead award; and Herbert Anderson (1962, MDiv), who received the Lifetime Service Award.

In his opening remarks, President James Nieman noted that the seminary has been gathering every year since 1974 to recognize, honor and celebrate outstanding accomplishments of select alumni.

“While the specific vocations of each are varied and diverse the constancy that has endured over nearly five decades is that each recipient has in profound ways proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ in the world,” Nieman said.

He noted the unusual nature of LSTC’s awards—that while some schools recognize one outstanding alumni, LSTC recognizes and honors a wide range of ministries because “leadership takes many forms and is a community enterprise.”

Nieman also recognized those who have supported the gifts of each leader. “In a world that is ever more fractured, the importance of community has never been more apparent and valuable,” he said. ☼

Sevig is communications manager.



Mike Huckelberry and Jami Galindo do their part to welcome alumni back to LSTC.



Alumni Carrie Lewis La Plante, Michael Fick, Chrisida Anandan and President James Nieman discuss the sale of LSTC’s building and relocation possibilities during an alumni town hall.



Francisco Javier Goitia Padilla (2014, PhD)

Padilla is director of formation for leadership at the ELCA, and served as a pastor to congregations in Puerto Rico and the U.S.

He was in his early 20s when he realized the important connection

Called to Lead Distinguished Alumni Award

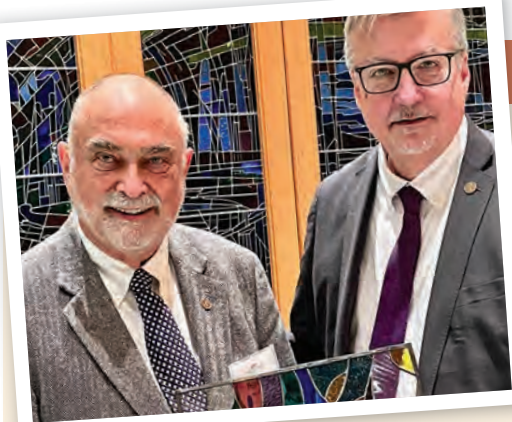
between LSTC and Puerto Rico, serving as a youth pastor with the father of LSTC emeritus faculty José David Rodríguez. He was introduced to the relationship LSTC had with Puerto Rico to develop leadership and send professors.

“When I came to the states, I discovered that in all the ELCA there was this place where Latino Lutherans come to do studies. Almost every ELCA Lutheran Latinx PhD came to this particular place in the Midwest of the United States, and I discovered LSTC for the second time,” he said, adding that he also was introduced to Rodríguez and Latinx ministries.

“That impacted Central America,

the Caribbean and South America in such a way that we have a lot of leadership in all these places,” he said. “I want to thank the seminary for providing me with the capabilities to do leadership. Leadership in my community is a communal gift, not an individual gift. And I have learned that leadership is done in community for the community and I have learned from José David Rodríguez how to do these things.”

“LSTC is in the midst of a very strong second wind,” Padilla told the crowd. “There is a lot of future and a lot of possibilities for this seminary. I believe that the decisions that are being made are the correct decisions, and in the future we will still know LSTC at the edge of theological education in the ELCA.” ❁



Herbert Anderson (1962, MDiv)

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

He expressed his gratitude for the Augustana tradition that impacted both him and the

Lifetime Service Distinguished Alumni Award

Lutheran Church. With a deep brogue, he quoted theologian Eric Wahlstrom, who told his students, “It could be this way and then again it could be that way and it really doesn’t make any difference. Both are true, both are true.”

“It’s those three words—both are true—that I’ve tried to live into all my life. They are window to theology. They are window to life. And they are, at this time, absolutely essential if we are going to live through the kind of impasse we currently have in ideological conflicts.”

Anderson noted the privilege of adventures he experienced since growing up in small, Swedish, Scandia, Minn., with its two-room schoolhouse with a wood stove and

outdoor toilets. “When I think about where I have been in the years since Scandia ... the adventures that I have been privileged to be a part of. To be professor emeritus at Catholic Theological Union down the street. To have been canon for congregational care in an Episcopal cathedral...”

With a nod to both Chesnut’s Wednesday sermon and the Augustana tradition as the “school of the prophets,” Anderson called for boldness to preach dangerously: “We need more dangerous preaching.”

He said he has been a teacher more than a pastor, and offered his gratitude “for 60 years of service in teaching.” Sharing his favorite Chronicles of Narnia quote, “Take the adventure that is sent us,” he said, “I hope I have done that.” ❁

Stories about all four recipients can be found in our story portal at lstc.edu/stories.



Making it all fit

Carly Chamberlain stays busy with Public Church Fellowship, work, classes via distance learning

By Gail Kenny

For Carly Chamberlain, her calling to the Ministry of Word and Service wasn't some bolt out of the blue, but a "gentle calling" over many years.

Chamberlain, a first-year MAM student, sees her vocation, as well as her choice of LSTC, as the nudging of so many people at different points in her life.

After graduating from high school in her hometown of Kalamazoo, Mich., Chamberlain studied French in Boston. It only made sense, she said, to exercise that knowledge by immersion, so after graduation, she moved to France, where she taught English. It was there that the Spirit gave her another nudge—providing her with a Christian roommate who encouraged her in her faith.

"I've always had this gentle calling in the back of my head," Chamberlain said. However, France was a turning point for her. "It was this beautiful, kismet kind of situation that put me with this woman as a roommate."

After returning to the U.S., Chamberlain took a corporate job. But the pandemic ended that, and she ended up working as an administrator at Faith Lutheran Church in Phoenix. Feeling called during that work cinched it for her. She entered candidacy in the Grand Canyon Synod.

Originally, Chamberlain expected to attend another

seminary. As she started telling seminary graduates of her intention, they all pointed her another place: LSTC. Chamberlain said two close friends, Stoney Bowen-Weiszmann (2006, MDiv) and Lara Forbes (2010, MDiv), the former pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, her congregation in Phoenix, both graduated from LSTC. Then she discovered there were three LSTC grads in her home congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalamazoo. Chamberlain said the message was overwhelming: she needed to look closely at LSTC.

It was the Public Church curriculum that made Chamberlain decide to attend LSTC. A full-tuition scholarship and Public Church Fellowship sealed it for her.

"[The scholarship and fellowship] has made it possible for me to continue to work full time to support myself without worrying about funds," she said. "It's been such a gift for which I'm incredibly grateful."

Chamberlain works four to seven hours per week at Native American Urban Ministry for her Public Church Fellowship placement. She is helping the traditionally word-of-mouth

organization establish an online and social-media presence. Along with that, she works a full-time scheduling job from home and takes three online classes. It is a busy schedule that requires her to be organized.

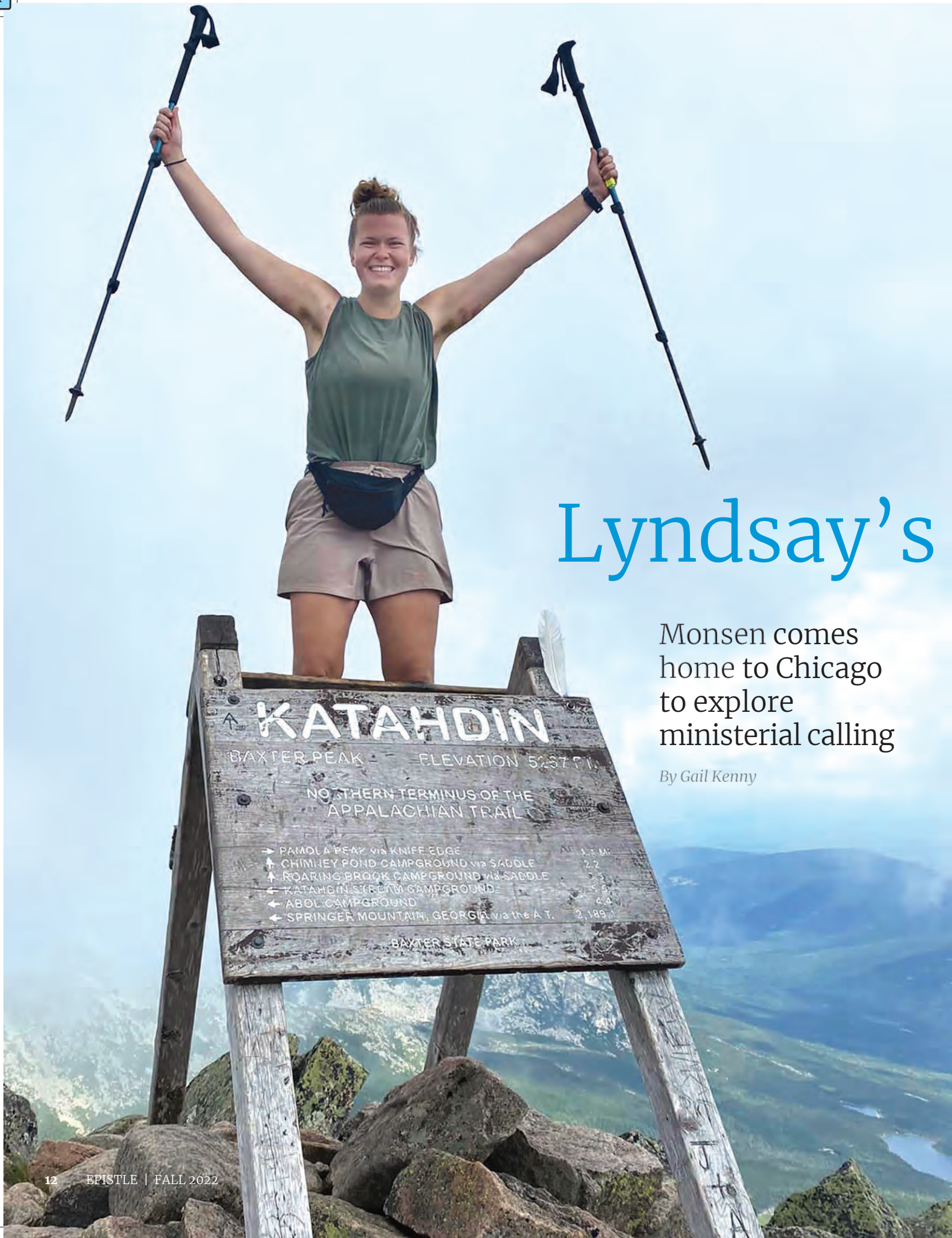
She said there are times she feels overwhelmed, especially with the amount of reading. "There's so much reading I feel like my eyeballs are going to fall out of my head, but it's really interesting reading," she said. "I do sometimes feel like I'm back in undergrad studying a foreign language!" The energy of starting seminary balances the workload: "It is all enlightening and invigorating."

Her stress-reduction methods involve knitting and other needlework, like embroidery and cross-stitch. Like many other LSTC students, her pets are another relief valve: she loves just watching them exist. "It's the simplest pleasure," she said.

She expects to graduate in May 2024. While she loves her work with Native American Urban Ministry, she anticipates her eventual calling will be intersectional and feminist, "however that looks."

If her past experience is any indication, Chamberlain won't have to look hard for that place. She will just continue to see where the Spirit is nudging her. ✿

Kenny is a third year MDiv student and a student worker on the Marketing and Communications team.



Lyndsay's

Monsen comes home to Chicago to explore ministerial calling

By Gail Kenny

Lyndsay Monsen's decision to attend LSTC seems obvious: the seminary is an hour's drive from her hometown of Highland Park, a northern suburb of Chicago.

However, the first-year LSTC student took the long route to seminary, doing her undergraduate studies in Boston, Mass., and Decorah, Iowa, serving in Palestine, returning to advocate for social justice in Washington, D.C., and eventually hiking the Appalachian Trail before her calling brought her home to Chicago.

Monsen, 25, said her circuitous journey began early, even if she didn't realize it then. After her high school graduation in 2015,

in the Holy Land in 2019–20, working in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Midway through her year, the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a pandemic, and she, along with her entire YAGM cohort worldwide, concluded their service year early. After a few months at home, she spent 2020–21 in Washington D.C. on a Sojourners Fellowship, living in intentional community and serving with the faith-based organization's advocacy staff as a communications assistant.

Working alongside progressive faith leaders like Sojourners founder Jim Wallis and Adam Taylor, its current president, Monsen felt

Appalachian Trail. Each day was a new adventure as she decided how many miles to cover and where to sleep.

"I finished the trail a totally different person than I was," Monsen said.

At first, returning to Chicago from the trail was "a major culture shock": noise, traffic and the lack of outdoor spaces were unsettling. Four classes, community activities and a job on the Marketing and Communications team meant she no longer could set her own pace for the day.

Monsen is embracing the tradeoffs. She joins colleagues on sunrise hikes to Promontory Point. She brings the unparalleled hospitality she enjoyed

next great adventure

she studied journalism at Emerson College in Boston. During her ethics class, she realized she couldn't become involved in the news stories she covered. "Maybe this is not the profession for me," she said.

After two years at Emerson, she transferred to Luther College in Decorah. She became active in campus ministry and completed her bachelors degree in communications studies in 2019.

Monsen worked the summers of 2016–2019 at Lutherdale, a church camp in Elkhorn, Wis. She had various responsibilities; however, her favorite was worship coordinator her final summer. She began to imagine herself in a pastoral role, perhaps in outdoor ministry. "There is no way I experience God as much as I do [in the] outdoors," she said. However, another part of her heart was restless. She also saw herself doing social justice work. "I have a lot of passions," Monsen said.

So, after being accepted to the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program, she found herself

her stirrings toward ministry making more sense. Social justice advocacy and pastoral ministry are not irreconcilable.

"You can be both," she said. "You can be involved in both social justice leadership and have a pastoral calling."

Monsen stayed over with Sojourners an additional six months, working remotely. She started her candidacy with the Metro Chicago Synod and decided on the MDiv program at LSTC. After traveling the world, she could have attended seminary anywhere, but decided the Public Church curriculum at LSTC matched her social justice passion. But before she settled into seminary housing, she planned one more trek. She left Sojourners in January 2022 and hiked the

in the Holy Land to her apartment, inviting her classmates to connect over food and conversation. She is

both building and becoming part of her new community. "It is surprising how fast it is happening," she said.

Monsen is also grateful to have received the ELCA's Fund for Leaders full-tuition scholarship, making it possible for her to attend LSTC completely debt-free.

She still doesn't know how social justice advocacy, outdoor ministry and more traditional

congregational leadership blend into her future calling. For the meantime, she is allowing that adventure to reveal itself a day at a time. ✿

Kenny, a third year MDiv student, is a student worker for the Marketing and Communications team.

Working
alongside
progressive
faith leaders,
Monsen felt
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Candace Kohli brings her Luther passion to LSTC

By Julie B. Sevig

Perhaps it's fitting that in seminary Candace Kohli was so obsessed with Martin Luther that in the middle of the night she'd wake up thinking about Luther and his ideas.

"I would lay in bed racking my brain trying to figure out how Luther was saying the things [he was saying]. I don't know why of all the weird things to just grab you..." she said, her voice trailing.

Fast forward: Kohli became a Luther scholar and in July joined LSTC's faculty as assistant professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism.

Kohli background

As a kid she thought she'd be an attorney. "In retrospect, I would have been a very good lawyer," she says; but no one pushed her toward that vocation or a school that would have fostered it. Instead, she attended a small Christian liberal arts college [Montreat, in N.C.] and found herself in the religion department because it was what interested her. Her initial aspirations didn't include a PhD and becoming a professor, but by time she finished college, that's where she was headed. She went to seminary to figure out what she wanted to get her PhD in. "And that's how I got myself

into the academic arena," she says.

Her experience at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts was challenging. She was the only woman in her theology program and was told that, as a woman, her chances for PhD admittance were not good. Opportunities presented themselves when she cross registered for a class at Harvard Divinity School, which connected her to a professor who introduced her to Luther. That professor later became her academic advisor at Northwestern University, where she received an additional MA and achieved her goal of a PhD.

But PhD work resulted in burnout, just as she saw friends who were miserable in their teaching jobs. Prospects in academia were slim and usually involved uprooting oneself for temporary positions or taking adjunct positions with no benefits and small salaries, she recalls. She took a detour through medical education as an education consultant for an accrediting body, which became a plus for LSTC.

She heads up the LSTC distance learning committee made up of faculty, staff, and students. The committee is in the process of launching distance learning programs to make LSTC degrees accessible for new audiences. What is exciting, she says, is the possibility for hyper-

contextual education, internships, etc., where distance learners get to engage the very communities where they live and plan to minister.

But her first love is teaching. And she brings to LSTC all that has shaped her along the way. Kohli grew up in Ohio's Amish country, where she witnessed how theology shapes culture and vice versa.

First impressions, teaching methods

LSTC's community emphasis and ethos remind her of a small liberal arts college. She appreciates the close relationship between faculty and students, compared to research universities, for instance, "where faculty were in their offices with the door closed and you had to make an appointment."

As if to prove the point, a group of spirited students stops by our table in the Grand Hallway just to visit. She's clearly made the transition to this small seminary.

Teaching hybrid classes has put her usual teaching methods in flux: "Activities I used to do—that got people up and moving around, with lots of small groups—don't work as well when some students are remote and others are in the room ... I like to use technology like Google Jamboards so people have a collaboration tool that everyone can be working on and they can be working together."

Letting students see what gets you excited and why you think a topic is really cool is important for helping them buy in.

Candace Kohli, assistant professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism

Hybrid teaching/learning has challenges and rewards. In her current class are students calling in from Colombia, Nebraska, the north side of Chicago, and Kansas. One breakout group included a student from Colombia and another who was fluent in Spanish. She was delighted to overhear their discussion was in Spanish. “The beauty of modern society is that it’s heterogenous,” she says.

One way she motivates students is simple, she says: “Letting students see what gets you excited and why you think a topic is really cool is important for helping them buy in.” Not unlike how she got hooked on Luther as a graduate student. “Somebody showed me ‘this is fascinating!’”

Another way she motivates them is ensuring they wrestle with “why?” and “so what?” questions. “The same is true for the classes we’re asking them to take ...They’re asking questions like ‘Why should I care?’ and ‘Why am I spending time on this?’” Wrestling with those questions helps students with application, with how the content will matter for the congregations or communities they will go on to serve.

This semester she’s teaching “Luther and Modern Society,” similar to what she taught at Northwestern. At LSTC, she has added contemporary Lutheran theology to previous teaching of Luther’s ideas in modern philosophy and modern political thought. It has more religious connotations to it rather than cultural, she said.

Her Luther class has a modern society focus because she wants students, particularly as Lutherans, to see his relevance. “Understanding Luther and what drove him and his method ... is something they can imitate. Seeing how Lutheran theologians actively appropriate Luther to address issues that are contemporary to us.”

Luther a fit for public church
Kohli’s background in religion,



Kohli on why Luther is ‘cool’

Kohli admits there are challenges for an instructor to articulate why students should care about Luther, who died 500 years ago.

“He’s cool for multiple reasons,” she says. “Unlike other theologians he’s animated and you get a sense of his personality. He’s rude, he’s bawdy, he talks about excrement and there’s something amusing about him. You get a sense of him as a person.”

“His ideas are totally revolutionary and literally changed the world. I don’t know of another figure with that level of impact. The brilliance of some of his ideas like freedom also have this dangerous edge to them... They’ve done real harm to some communities historically.

But [this] complexity makes him interesting—how do you extract and leverage the brilliance while safeguarding against the potential harm? 🌱

global politics and service learning is a good fit for LSTC’s Public Church curriculum. Although her classes don’t teach community organizing, she hopes she teaches students to “think in a public church way.”

“How to think: ‘If I construct this idea in my sermon the implications for this community are going to be this. Helping them get that meta narrative in their minds that helps them be self-critical and look at their own impact. So, I hope [she knocks on wood] that

we can build in some protection and insulation from harms that Christian theology has done to certain populations in the past.” These harms, she says, were not necessarily done out of ill will, but because people didn’t possess critical ways of thinking about their own impact on those unlike themselves.

“I see myself as trying to help students get that critical way of looking at themselves as much as anything.” 🌱

Doctoral candidate Denise Rector awarded DSIR Fellowship

By Gail Kenny

LSTC doctoral candidate Denise Rector loves teaching and believes her new fellowship as the Doctoral Scholar in Residence (DSIR) at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, is a perfect fit.

Rector (2021, ThM) said the opportunity is a gift to her teaching and to her dissertation process.

The DSIR fellowship, a creative partnership between the ELCA Quality of Call Initiative for Women in Ministry and Trinity Lutheran Seminary, is awarded to ELCA women of color working to complete their dissertations in theology, biblical studies or religion. The fellowship is intended to support the practical and professional requirements doctoral candidates need to complete their dissertations in fields that serve the ongoing reformation of the church.

Rector will teach a reduced course load while doing her dissertation research and writing. This semester, Rector is teaching Trinity's course Special Topics: Reframing History for Justice. In this course, students re-examine U.S. history especially through the lens of minoritized groups, lifting up narratives that otherwise might not be heard in church and wider society. In the spring, she'll teach Ethics. Her classes are both in-person and online.

"Teaching has been an amazing learning experience for me," Rector said. "I am learning so much from my students as well as my colleagues."

Rector moved to Columbus in June to prepare to begin teaching Aug. 25. DSIR fellows receive salary and benefits for the two-year period, as well as additional funds for mentoring and professional development.



MDiv provided ministry clarity

Rector, who earned an MDiv from Wartburg Theological Seminary in 2018, realized during that time that becoming a pastor was not her calling. However, the idea of instructing theology courses inspired her. She gained experience as a teaching assistant for Linda E. Thomas, LSTC professor of theology and anthropology, while earning her ThM degree.

"I am so thankful to her for her mentorship and her guidance while I was her teaching assistant," Rector said.

Womanist theology, race and history is Rector's area of specialization. U.S. writer and social activist Alice Walker first coined the term "womanist" in her 1983 collection, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*.

Within the next decade, other theologians would flesh out the principles of womanist theology, a branch of Christian theological discourse that builds on the work of Black theologians such as James Cone. It specifically focuses on the lives and experiences of Black women, and how they experience God and the world.

It contrasts with feminist theology, which doesn't consider the impact of living as Black women and especially as African-American women in its understanding.

"I became interested in the study of womanist theology when I realized that I wasn't seeing myself – a Black woman – or the history of Black women represented in the teachings of some of the theology classes I was taking," Rector said. "For a long time, there has been an Americanist religion that doesn't always reflect the racial and ethical variety of creation."

Rector's dissertation will explore the feedback loop between historiography (the writing of history) and epistemology (the area of philosophy concerned with the nature of knowledge and belief) concerning the construction of African-American racial identities throughout U.S. history and in the church.

A vast amount of research exists in her topic area. Her first goal is honing her focus, she said.

"Narrowing my dissertation ideas is probably the most challenging aspect so far," she said. "Several scholars told me that teaching would help my writing, and that is proving to be the case."

Rector plans to complete her dissertation in 2024.

Thomas, Rector's advisor, is delighted that she was named to this position. Rector will provide a different perspective as an instructor, theologian and future professor, she said.

"I am extremely proud [of] Denise [for this award]," Thomas said. "She may be the first ELCA woman of color with a PhD in theology, which is very significant. I am certain that her voice will make a difference in the 21st century." ❁

By Gail Kenny

LSTC second-year MA student Jepenri Tambunan experienced the global church in an extraordinary way when he served as a delegate to the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Karlsruhe, Germany, Aug. 31–Sept. 8.

The WCC Assembly gathers only once every eight years, so it is often a once-in-a-lifetime experience for those elected as delegates from their respective denominations. The WCC is a fellowship of 352 Christian churches from more than 120 countries, representing over 580 million Christians worldwide.

More than 4,000 participants from 322 denominations attended this assembly, with the theme “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.” Tambunan, 31, didn’t expect that as a young pastor in the Indonesian Christian Church (HKI), a Lutheran church denomination, he’d have this opportunity.

“Our bishop was not able to attend,” Tambunan explained. “He asked me and urged me to participate. He said, ‘It would be a great opportunity for you to increase your participation in a large assembly.’”

His was an unusual voice, a young person in a sea of mostly older church leaders.

“As a young pastor, it is very rare to participate at this level,” he said.

Tambunan said his church expected him to raise an issue that the Indonesian church is facing today. He quickly realized that in the main plenary sessions, his voice would have little impact. When the group broke into smaller discussion groups, that’s where he was able to speak about his passion: the ecological crisis in Indonesia. His masters thesis looks at ecological theology and environmental justice.

Indonesia has been largely deforested for industrial purposes. As a country comprised of more than 17,000 islands, the effects of climate change, like rising ocean levels, are devastating. He also was able to



Jepenri Tambunan (right) poses with Ioan Sauca, the acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches, at the WCC Assembly in Germany. Tambunan attended the assembly as a delegate from the Indonesian Christian Church (HKI). Other LSTC attendees included Christopher Rajkumar (see page 19) and Vima Couvertier-Cruz, director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice.

‘We need to wake up’

Jepenri Tambunan shares wisdom from ‘rare’ WCC experience

speak about involving young people in the church, and the financial, social and emotional costs of the pandemic on the global church.

“One of the speakers said trees can survive without us, but we cannot survive without the trees,” he said. “That made me think. Someone said the earth can provide for the world’s needs, but not the world’s greed.”

The church needs to play a role in educating and working to counteract climate change. “The church should not be so focused on talking about heaven, getting to heaven” that it forgets its social responsibility, he said. “We can’t just think about our lives today, but the next generation and how they will be able to survive.”

Tambunan believes engaging young people is critical. One speaker referred to young people as “pioneers.” So often, he said, they are overlooked in the church.

During the assembly, a speaker talked about the founding of assembly host city Karlsruhe: A young person fell asleep under a tree and dreamed about founding a city. He woke up and built the city.

The metaphor for today’s world was not lost on Tambunan.

“We need to wake up, not to sleep,” he said. “The church now needs to wake up.”

Tambunan said he was persuaded to attend LSTC by an alumnus and mentor pastor in Indonesia, Hesron Sihombing (2019, MA(TS)). As a pastor assigned to teach in Indonesia, he didn’t need to pursue a seminary degree, but Sihombing convinced him to apply. Tambunan expects to finish his thesis and graduate in 2024.

Tambunan hopes to share what he was privileged to hear and experience: the need to keep countering racism, war and human rights issues with love in action. “Like the theme of the assembly says, ‘Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.’”

And the message he brought back is simply “start small.”

“Each of us has to do something,” he said. “Small actions add up. Don’t expect too much. But you should have a sense of belonging to this world.” ❁

1979

Chris Miller (MDiv) published his second book, *It Takes All Kinds to be in the Great Cloud of Witnesses*, a compilation of numerous pastors' funeral sermons, tributes and stories. It also includes contributions from lay people about their grief recovery. He gave the book away to students at four seminaries, including LSTC, in September. It is also available on Amazon.

1987

Twila Schock (MDiv) wrote "Accompaniment: A Model for Congregational Mission Alongside Individuals with Disabilities" for the July issue of *Currents in Theology and Mission*. The PATHWAYS Center for Spiritual Renewal in Christ Lutheran Church, Belvidere, Ill., where Schock serves as pastor, just celebrated its first anniversary and in the coming year will launch PATHWAYS on The Road as it takes its programming beyond the local community.

1995

Monica J. Melanchthon (PhD) received the 2022 Outstanding Mentor Award from the Committee



on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession (CUREMP). The award was established to honor scholars of color who provide exceptional mentorship to other scholars/students

of color. Melanchthon was one of two nominated because of their influence in the field through their scholarship, teaching and mentoring. Melanchthon is associate professor, Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, at Pilgrim Theological College in Melbourne, Australia. She also co-edited two volumes: *Bible Blindspots: Dispersion and Othering* (PICKWICK Publications, 2021); and *Terror in the Bible: Rhetoric, Gender, and Violence, International Voices in Biblical Studies* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2021).

Amy Wiegert (MDiv) is now lead pastor of Faith Lutheran Church Homewood, Ill.

Stacie R. Fidler (MDiv) was in June elected bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod. She was installed Oct. 9.

1996

Brenda Peconge (MDiv) received her doctorate in bioethics from Loyola-Chicago. She is serving as pastor of Grace Lutheran in Toledo, Ohio, and doing ethics consults for local health systems, as well as teaching ethics at a local college.

2006

Sara Olson-Smith (MDiv) wrote the fall Bible study, "Jesus and Nature: Teachers of the faith," for *Gather*, the magazine of the Women of the ELCA.

2009

Angela Khabeb (MDiv) was on *Celebrity Family Feud* in July with her family members, including sister Amber Ruffin, who is a comedian and TV host. Khabeb continues to author the "Grounded in Grace" column in *Living Lutheran* magazine.

Jen Kiefer (MDiv) is now assistant to the bishop for congregation and synod life in the Southeast Michigan Synod. For more than eight years she was pastor of St. John Lutheran in Dundee, Mich.

2012

Zach Johnson (MDiv) is now pastor of Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church in Pasadena, Calif.

2014

Emily E. Ewing (MDiv) is cohosting two podcasts, *Nerds at Church*, a lectionary-based podcast, and *Horror Nerds at Church*, a spinoff horror-based theology podcast. They also started a new call at Salem Lutheran Church and Episcopal Church of the Redemption in Baltimore.



Emily E. Ewing doing their podcast.

2015

Tina Crog (née Heise) (MDiv) and her husband Kevin on April 30 welcomed new daughter Gillian. Tina is pastor of Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Seville, Ohio, and is currently pursuing a DMin in the theology of the arts from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.



Stacie R. Fidler (MDiv) (at left) during her installation service.



Sarah Derrick Menke (2019, MDiv) and Josh Menke (2019, MDiv/affiliate) who met as contextual education classmates were married Sept. 3. They are pictured with seminary classmates.

2016

Analyse Triolo (MAM) is engaged to Sam Lewis. Their wedding is anticipated to be in the summer of 2024.

2019

Alex Aivars (MDiv) is now at Christ United Church in Dewitt, Mich., as solo pastor.



Tina Crog and daughter Gillian.

Paul Eldred (MDiv) in August became pastor of Central Lutheran Church in Seattle, Wash.

Curtis Johnson (PhD) in August published *Induction and Example: A Rhetorical Exegesis in the letter of Galatians* (Pickwick, an imprint of Wipf and Stock).

2020

Karen Katamay (MAM) was ordained at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Park Ridge, Ill., where she now serves.

Denis Betare Ndoe (PhD) was appointed dean of The Lutheran Institute of Theology at Meiganga in Cameroon, West Africa, where he has worked as a professor and administrator since he left LSTC (where he was a global mission scholar). This seminary is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon.

Ole Schenk (MDiv) wrote “Resting in God While Moving Forward amid Challenge: Matthew 11:25–30 in Historical Context and Ministry,” “Westhelle and Praxis: Remembering the Poor,” and reviewed “Turning to the Other: Martin Buber’s Call to Dialogue in I and Thou by Donovan Johnson,” all in the October issue of *Currents in Theology and Mission*.

2021

Kyle Johnson (MDiv) was ordained in July and now serves Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Lansing, Ill.

Christina Montgomery (MDiv) was ordained at First Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Chicago (Bridgeport neighborhood), where she now serves as pastor.

Mayuko Yasuda (PhD; auxiliary faculty) published “Reading the Death of Judas (Matthew 27:3–10) with Hauntology” in the October issue of *Currents in Theology and Mission*.

2022

Katie Anderson (MDiv) was ordained in June and serves Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Marshfield, Wis.

Katherine Ehlert (MDiv) was ordained at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Arlington Heights, Ill., where she now serves.

Melissa Hrdlicka (MDiv) was ordained Oct. 29 at Ascension Lutheran Church in Green Bay. She is serving Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ripon, Wis., on a term call.

Sarah Krolak (MDiv) was ordained in August and serves North Waseca and Faith Lutheran Churches in Waseca and Janesville, Minn.



Christopher Rajkumar (MA) attended the 11th World Council of Churches Assembly Aug. 31 to Sept. 8 in Karlsruhe, Germany. He was invited by the WCC Economic and Ecological Justice Program to offer expertise in a variety of areas and to represent the Oikotree Global Movement as its Oikotree Facilitating Group Member. He is also chair of WCC–Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance Strategy group and Part of WCC Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network. His presentations included these areas: land—the pilgrimage of justice and peace to the Philippines; tax justice; humanitarian approach to people with disabilities; an ecumenical and theological response to the 4th industrial revolution, artificial intelligence, food for life, and Churches’ Green Justice Interventions.

Michael Willis (TEEM) was ordained in July and now serves Rejoice Lutheran Church in Geneva, Ill.



Two LSTC alums were part of Valparaiso University’s Institute of Liturgical Studies last spring when the Elm Ensemble presented “In Deepest Night: A Festival of Psalms.” They are Christine Laughlin (on flute) and Paul Damico–Carper (electric mini bass). LSTC alum Marissa Sotos—who sang in the Institute’s schola cantorum—was also part of the psalm festival event.

Future alumni

Mark LaChonce (PhD) reviewed “Father Abraham’s Many Children” by Tyler D. Mayfield in October’s *Currents in Theology and Mission*.

Seng Tsin Nan (PhD) attended the Langham Scholars’ Consultation Aug. 29–Sept. 1 at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Ill.,

where she presented a draft of her dissertation proposal on the book of Revelation to other Langham scholars and faculty. She is in her third year as a recipient of the prestigious Langham Scholarship, one of the two women students from North America.

Denise Rector (PhD) (2021, ThM) was named by Trinity Seminary as their first joint Doctoral Scholar in Residence. The DSIR is awarded to ELCA women of color working on completing their dissertations in theology, biblical studies or religion. The fellowship supports the practical and professional requirements doctoral candidates need to complete their dissertations in fields that serve the ongoing reformation of the church. The fellowship will give Rector time for dissertation research and writing while teaching a reduced course load to Trinity Lutheran Seminary students. (See related story on page 16.)

Jepenri Tambunan (MA) served as a delegate to the General Assembly World Council of Churches (WCC), held in Germany Aug. 31–Sept. 9. (See related story on page 17.)

LSTC was well represented at the Churchwide Assembly in August, including these worship assistants: alumni Josh Evans, Sharayah Robinson, Allison Bengfort, Ian Coen–Frei and Marissa Becklin.



Gary S. Anderson

1940–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1966*
Gary Anderson, 82, died June 12 at his home in Minneapolis. He served congregations in Michigan and Minnesota and later became a financial planner and advisor before retiring. He was a talented singer, songwriter and poet, and recorded several folk music albums and published poetry anthologies. Anderson is survived by his wife Catherine, three children, three stepchildren, four grandchildren and seven step-grandchildren.

Robert N. Bacher

1934–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1961*
Robert N. Bacher, 87, Bluffton, S.C., died May 23 from leukemia. He also received his master of education degree and master and doctor of public administration degrees. Bacher was mission developer and pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo., then began serving as a church executive for the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) in parish services. He then led a large department and served on the president's cabinet of executives. When the ELCA was formed in 1988, Bacher was named executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop. He served as the organization's chief operating officer throughout the terms of the first two presiding bishops. The Bachers retired to North Carolina in 2001, then to Bluffton in 2011. Bacher was an LSTC Distinguished Alumni award recipient in 2002. He is survived by his wife Shirley, three daughters and five grandchildren.

David E. Baker

1934–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1960*
David Baker, 88, died July 15 in Spokane, Wash. He also earned degrees from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (ThM) in Berkeley, Calif., and San Francisco Theological Seminary (DMin) in San Anselmo, Calif. He served congregations in Edmonton, Canada; Washington, Oregon and California. In addition to providing leadership to the Pacific Northwest Synod, Emanuel Hospital and Augustana Heritage Association (executive director), he was on staff at Holden Village and Spirit in the Desert. He was preceded in death by his wife Gloria. He is survived by his four children, four grandchildren, his first wife Nancy Tolin, four step-daughters and 12 step-grandchildren.

Ronald Beltz, Jr.

1964–2022 | *Class of 1993*
Retired U.S. Army Major Ronald (Ron) Beltz Jr., 57, died Sept. 8 at his home in Enterprise, Ala. He also earned a masters degree in psychology counseling from Texas A&M. Prior to his commissioning in the U.S. Army, he served congregations in Columbia City and Michigan City, Ind. He served combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and retired from the chaplain corps of the U.S. Army in 2021 after 20 years. He is survived by his wife Rebecca Kammerer, two children and his parents.

Donovan Ray Benson

1966–2022 | *Central Lutheran Theological Seminary Class of 1966*
Donovan Benson, 84, died Sept. 12 in Waterloo, Iowa. He served congregations in Iowa. He joined the choir of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Waterloo, which performed at Carnegie Hall in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Joseph E. Bourret

1929–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1958*
Joseph E. Bourret, 93, died Aug. 28 in Glastonbury, Conn. Bourret funded his seminary education as a carpenter, sign painter and radio broadcaster at WOC, Davenport, Iowa. He served several congregations in New Hampshire and Connecticut. In addition to his church vocation he worked in solar construction and radio broadcasting (WTIC and WKSS, Hartford, Conn.). He is survived by his wife Patricia, four children and six grandchildren.

James Arthur Chell

1934–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1960*
James Chell, 88, died Sept. 3 in Jasper, Alberta, Canada. During seminary he completed his internship in Kenora, Ontario, and spent his career there after ordination. After serving mission parishes he was assistant to the bishop in the regional synod office in Edmonton. He was executive director of Canadian Mission in the ELCIC national church office in Winnipeg and served on the Mulhurst Camp board. His adventurous spirit took him to China in support of developing Chinese language missions in Canada. He was preceded in death by his wife Luella and one son. He is survived by six children, 15 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

We remember...

Paul Bauermeister, 92, died Sept. 11 in Ballwin, Mo. As a child, he spent his summers at Yosemite National Park while his father served as visiting pastor at Yosemite Chapel. Bauermeister was a hospital chaplain in Indianapolis and an inner-city mission pastor in



St. Louis. Following seven years of pastoral ministry, he earned a PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Minnesota. He then taught clergy and counselors and later joined the faculty of Christ Seminary–Seminex in St. Louis and LSTC. He was preceded in death by his wife Jannette, and is survived by three children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Delmar Gusdal

1934–2022 | *ThD, 1973*
Delmar Gusdal, 87, died May 30 in Palm Harbor, Fla. He served congregations in Minnesota, Illinois, Alabama and Florida. He was executive director of the Florida Lutheran Council on Social Ministry and then founding president of Lutheran Ministries of Florida, now Lutheran Services Florida. He was also director of ministries, Fair Havens Center, Miami Springs, Fla., and vice-president for Lutheran Services for the Elderly. He is survived by his wife Miriam, four children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandson.

John D. Erickson Sr.

1933–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1959*
John D. Erickson died Aug. 3 in Denver, Colo., from Guillain-Barré Syndrome. He was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of divinity by Virginia Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, in 1973. Early in his career he and his wife Nancy served as missionaries in, and later joined the staff of, the American Bible Society (ABS) as secretary for Asia in the overseas department. He spent most of his career at the ABS, holding roles at the United Bible Societies from 1976, leading it from 1991 to 1998. By the time he retired in 1998, he had played a pivotal role in Bibles printed in China being shipped to Russia, which was unimaginable decades prior. His wife Nancy preceded him in death by 10 days. They are survived by four children and three grandchildren.

Daniel Erlander

1938–2022 | *Class of 1966*
Daniel Erlander, 83, of Seattle, Wash., died Aug. 28. Drawings of professors and saints, church architecture and vestments and cars embellished his seminary class notes. Erlander is widely known and appreciated for

his books/resources, which he illustrated and wrote, including “Baptized, We Live” and “Manna and Mercy.” He served parishes in Illinois, California and New Mexico, and served Holden Village as pastor, teacher and resource center director. He served as a campus pastor at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash., and in later years parishes on Whidbey Island and in Seattle. Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, conferred upon him an honorary doctorate of divinity degree in 1998. In 2006, Erlander received the “Faithful Servant” Distinguished Alumni Award from LSTC. He is survived by his wife Karen, two brothers and nieces and nephews.

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 Church, also in San Diego. He is survived by his mother Joyce, a sister and nephew.

Roger David Helgren

1953–2022 | *DMin, Class of 1992*
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.

Lloyd R. Hanson

1930 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1960*
Lloyd R. Hanson, 91, died July 20 in Sacramento, Calif. Prior to seminary, he served in the Air Force in the Korean War. He served congregations in Kansas

and California, as well as Mt. Cross Bible Camp, Santa Cruz, Calif. He held several leadership positions in California, including chair of the Interfaith Service Bureau (now Interfaith Council of Greater Sacramento), which awarded him the "Power of One" crystal in 2013. His first wife Marion, second wife Donna and a stepson preceded him in death. He is survived by four children, one stepson and seven grandchildren.

Corliss Roland Holmes
1930–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1958*
Corliss Holmes, 92, died May 26 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He served his entire ministry in western Canada (Alberta and British Columbia), the last 27 years as pastor of Lutheran Church of the Cross, Calgary, until he retired in 1994. He was preceded in death by his wife Caroline and one son. He is survived by three sons and eight grandchildren.

Stephen Hluchy
1928–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1959*
Stephen Hluchy died May 29 in Skaneateles, N.Y., from cancer. He served a bilingual Slovak/English ministry to three sister parishes in Pennsylvania. Then he served Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Skaneateles 25 years until his retirement in 1992. Hluchy was also a fire department chaplain and as a member of the clergy association of Skaneateles and of the narcotics council. He was on the committee for the Caring Coalition, which became the Hospice of Central New York. He was preceded in death by his wife Olga (Nahlík) and is survived by three daughters, two grandsons and a great-granddaughter.

Carl Holland
1938–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1964*
Carl Holland, 83, of Tigard, Ore., and formerly of Weatherly, Pa., died May 11. He also earned a master of science degree from the University of Illinois School of Library Science. He served congregations in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. He worked with the public library systems in Washington and Indiana, establishing and leading a library program for nursing homes, jails and the McNeil Island Federal Prison in Puget Sound, Wash. He is survived by his wife Susan and two children.

C. Raymond Holmes
1929–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1961*
C. Raymond Holmes, 93, died June 16. He served parishes in Michigan until 1969, when he left the Lutheran church and enrolled in the Seventh-Day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich., where he earned a masters degree in theology and a doctorate in ministry. He served that denomination's seminary in the Philippines and returned to the U.S. to be dean of students and professor of homiletics at the Andrews seminary. He was preceded in death by his wife Shirley and is survived by two children and two grandchildren.

John Loren Johansen
1937–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1962*
John Johansen died June 20 in Dayton, Ohio. He served parishes in Nebraska, Michigan and Ohio. Johansen is survived by his wife Betty Lou, his son, three stepchildren, three grandchildren and six step grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Lauren A. Kirsh–Carr
1970–2022 | *Class of 1998*
Lauren Anne Kirsh–Carr died April 15. She served as assistant to the bishop for congregational and synod life for the Southeast Michigan Synod. She also served several parishes in the Southeast Michigan Synod and the Metropolitan New York Synod. She is survived by her husband Bill and three children.

Gerald "Jerry" Kissell
1933–2022 | *Chicago Lutheran Theology Seminary Class of 1959*
Jerry Kissell, 88, died Sept. 26 in Marion, Ill. He was a pastor in Appleton, Wis., and was pastor at Illinois State University in Normal, Ill., from 1968–1989 at the Campus Religious Center. He served Epiphany Lutheran Church in Carbondale, Ill., before his retirement in 1999. Kissell is survived by his wife Ruth and two children.

Charles Lindgren
1931–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary 1961*
Charles Lindgren, 91, died Sept. 23 at the Good Samaritan Center in Waconia, Minn. Although Lindgren entered seminary in 1953, his studies were interrupted by service in the U.S. Army as a medic (1954–56). He received the Army of Occupation Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. He served a congregation in Wisconsin for five years before

leaving for the mission field of the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, South America. He served parishes in Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota and Kansas before retiring in 1996. Lindgren is survived by his wife Marjorie, three children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Karl (David) Nordstrom
1938–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1963*
Karl (David) Nordstrom, 84, died May 25 in Fremont, Neb. He did graduate study at Maywood Seminary School of Missions and doctoral study at McCormick Seminary. He served parishes in Kansas, Nebraska and Texas, and was a U.S. Navy chaplain in Texas, South Carolina, Virginia, and in Vietnam. He is survived by his wife Joan, three children, 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Ora Nell Paige
Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary Class of 1952
Ora Nell Paige (nee Henniger), 93, died July 29 in Charlottesville, Va. She attended seminary after a year of teaching junior high math in Texas. At Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, she obtained a masters degree in religious education, and also met her husband who she married in 1951. She is survived by two children and a grandson. She was preceded in death by her husband Eugene.

Ralph Edward Peterson
1931–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary Class of 1960*
Ralph Peterson, 90, died June 7 in Pittsfield, Mass., after a brief illness. Prior to seminary, he received a masters degree in education from Harvard University. After graduate studies at Columbia University, he was executive director of the Department of Ministry at the National Council of Churches in New York City. Peterson made his mark as pastor of Saint Peter's Lutheran Church in New York City from 1966 to 1980, during which an agreement was reached with Citibank to sell the land to the bank with the condition that a new church building be constructed in its original location, next to the bank's new skyscraper. Peterson then developed a health-focused ministry and founded the Open Congregation, serving as president. He was named the Henry Sloan Coffin Chair of Religion at the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. He became a priest in the Episcopal Church and served as warden of the House of the Redeemer (mansion)

in New York City. Peterson was preceded in death by his wife Birgitta and is survived by his son and four grandchildren.

Melvin Theodore Peterson
1926–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary 1957*
Melvin Theodore Peterson, 96, died Aug. 20 in Liberty, Mo. Peterson served congregations in Iowa, Connecticut, Kansas, Missouri, Indiana and Kentucky. He also founded a ministry center in Kentucky which included a children's program of Christian education, food pantry and clothes closet. He is survived by his wife Lorena, four children and six grandchildren.

William "Bill" Joseph Sass
1949–2022 | *Class of 1979*
Bill Sass, 72, of Palisade, Minn., died June 2. He worked as the farm news director and announcer at rural radio stations before attending LSTC. He served rural congregations in Illinois and Minnesota, and Bethel Lutheran Church in Palisade at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife Susan and three sons. He was preceded in death by his parents and his daughter.

Dean "Bub" McAllister Stewart
Class of 1975
Dean "Bub" McAllister Stewart died Aug. 2 in Robbinsdale, Minn., of complications from Alzheimer's disease. Stewart served congregations in Ohio, Illinois and Idaho. He loved introducing newer theological scholarship to congregations, enlivening and diversifying participation in worship and the poetic wordplay of preaching. In 2010 he received LSTC's "Stewardship of Creation" Distinguished Alumni Award. He is survived by his wife Gretchen, three children and five grandchildren.

Lloyd E. Stivers, Jr.
1928–2022 | *Augustana Theological Seminary 1955*
Lloyd E. Stivers, Jr., 94, died Aug. 25 in Sioux Falls, S.D. He served in the U.S. Marine Corp. He received a masters in education degree from Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1974. Stivers served parishes in Indiana and South Dakota before working as a correctional counselor and principal of Calvin Coolidge High School at the South Dakota State Penitentiary. He also served as the chaplain at the South Dakota Air National Guard. He was preceded in death by his wife Dorothy Risley and is survived by his wife Beverly, three children and four grandchildren.

Abimbola Brown began serving as LSTC's registrar in August. She is also responsible for processing international student and exchange scholar visas.

Keisha Dyson joined the LSTC staff in August as executive director of strategic marketing and communications. Previously she was senior director of campus communications at Columbia College in Chicago. Prior to that, she was associate vice president for marketing and communications at Governors State University in University Park, Ill.



Peter Iversen joined the advancement team as a philanthropic engagement officer in October. He comes to LSTC with a decade of fundraising experience, most recently as associate director of development at the Indiana University School of Public Health and as the development director for The Salvation Army of Monroe County, Ind.



Godspeed

Ceciley Akins, philanthropic engagement associate, resigned from her position in July.

Benjamin Stewart, formerly Gordon A. Braatz Associate Professor of Worship and director of the Zygon Center for Religion and Science, ended his full-time employment at LSTC last summer. He is serving a congregation in Duluth, Minn., while his wife pursues her career as a nursing professor. In his letter to the community, he wrote: "Serving at LSTC is one of the great joys and honors of my life. I will deeply miss the wonder of working alongside you in Hyde Park on a daily basis. I give thanks to God for the opportunity to serve in a full time capacity for more than a decade in ministry within this beloved seedbed of the Gospel. My congregational call is structured to

allow time for ongoing academic work, allowing for collaboration with LSTC in bi-vocational models that LSTC and I are now exploring." This semester, he is teaching (from Minnesota) "Preaching the Gospel of John" with Barbara Rossing.

LSTC bid farewell to the **Refectory staff** in June when the Refectory closed. Several students and spouses of students were affected, as well as these professional staff: **Frank Perez, Akeem Haywood, Richard Moore, Gail Mitchell** and **Shakira Robinson**. Refectory colleagues were honored by the community on June 30 after the announcement of the Refectory's closure. 🌿

faculty & staff accomplishments

Klaus-Peter Adam, professor of Old Testament, presented "Are you ready for Seminary?" at the ELCA virtual discernment seminar sponsored by ELCA seminaries. He also published *Hate and Enmity in Biblical Law* (England: Bloomsbury Collections).

Philip Hefner, emeritus faculty, published *Human Becoming in an Age of Science, Technology, and Faith* (Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press/Lexington Books).

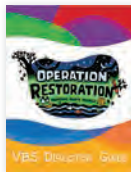
Candace Kohli, assistant professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism, gave a paper titled, "The Role of Luther's Theological Anthropology in his Anti-Islamic Polemics," at the 14th International Congress for Luther Research at California Lutheran University.

José David Rodríguez, emeritus faculty, wrote "Engaging the Future of Theological Education Challenge of Promise" for the October issue of *Currents in Theology and Mission*.

Barbara Rossing, professor of New Testament and environmental ministry coordinator, spoke about her book, *The Rapture Exposed*, to alum Paisley LeRoy's congregation, which had a seven-session Bible study on her book. Rossing also presented "Creation Care and the Apocalypse: New Heaven, New Earth and Indigenous Readings of 'Water is Life' at a creation

conference in Mainz, Germany. She gave two lectures on the Gospel of Matthew at the Metro Chicago Synod Rostered Leaders in October.

Julie Sevig, communications manager, contributed two Dan Erlander biographies to "Operation Restoration: Mending God's World," the new Augsburg Fortress vacation Bible school curriculum based on Erlander's work. One ("Meet Pastor Dan: Doodling Theologian") was written for leaders and the other ("Who is Pastor Dan?") was written for children.



Benjamin Stewart, auxiliary faculty, presented "What the Earth Knows: How the Bible's Wisdom Tradition ponders death to appreciate life" for the adult education series at Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Ill.

Mark Swanson, Harold S. Vogelaar Professor of Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations, associate director of CCME, taught "Egypt and the Coptic Tradition" and "Muslim-Christian Relations" at the Middle Eastern Christianity NEH Summer Institute. He also gave a public lecture at Bradley University; discussed (via Zoom) "Syriac and Christian Arabic apologetic writings in response to Islam..." at the plenary

Christian Century reviews Brooke Petersen's book

Brooke Petersen's book, *Religious Trauma: Queer Stories in Estrangement and Return*, published in August, was reviewed in September by *The Christian Century*.

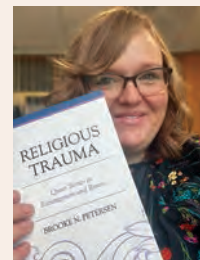
Clint Schneklath, an ELCA pastor, reviewed the book and Jon Mathieu, community engagement editor of the magazine, interviewed Schneklath about the book.

Schneklath said Petersen's book differs from many in that it features LGBTQIA+ voices who were rejected by conservative religious groups and found healing in other religious communities. He calls it "an important book, and one that will be shared with religious trauma support groups and queer ministries for years to come."

Petersen, director of LSTC's MDiv and MA programs, coordinator for candidacy, and lecturer, said she's most gratified when people who have experienced religious trauma read the book and can see themselves reflected in the stories of eight LGBTQIA+ individuals she has narrated. The book was transformative for her as she was able to hear and share the stories, she said.

"I'm receiving so much wonderful feedback ... that this book is inspiring people to want to make changes in the church and in the way they think about religious trauma," Petersen said. "It means a lot to see reviews in print, but really, my heart explodes when I hear from someone who had a traumatic or painful experience in the church and they tell me that this book helped them, or normalized their experience, or changed the way they tell their own story."

Petersen says there is much to research about trauma in a broader context: "I am also really captivated by continued work around ACES (adverse childhood experiences) and the impact of those complex continued traumas." 🌿



session of the XIII Symposium Syriacum/10th Congress of Arabic Christian Studies in Paris, France; and presented (via Teams) a plenary paper and a concluding paper to the 12th International Congress of Coptic Studies in Brussels. Swanson spoke to the 23rd St. Shenoute-UCLA Coptic Conference in California. He gave a brief address on the Declaration of the ELCA to the

Muslim Community at the Interfaith Banquet of the 59th Annual ISNA (Islamic Society of North America) Convention.

Mayuko Yasuda, auxiliary faculty (2021, PhD), wrote "Reading the Death of Judas (Matthew 27:3-10) with Hauntology" in the October *Currents in Theology and Mission*. 🌿

More Manz recitals on the horizon

Though three Manz organ recitals have already been held this academic year, here's a chance to mark the 2023 recitals on your calendar.

Recitals are held select Tuesdays throughout the academic year, 12:15 to 12:45 p.m., in the seminary's Augustana Chapel and on the Ruth and Paul Manz pipe organ.

Upcoming 2022-23 recitals

- Dec. 6—Don Mead
- Jan. 10—Sharon Peterson, organist, Village Presbyterian Church, Northbrook, and North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago
- Feb. 7—Arthur Griffin Jr., minister of music, First Baptist Congregational Church of Chicago
- Mar. 7—Patricia Spencer
- April 18—Christopher Urban, associate director of music and organist, First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights;
- May 2—Michael Rees.

The organ was built by the M. L. Bigelow Company of American Fork, Utah, as their opus 31. It was installed and dedicated in 2004 in honor of Ruth and Paul Manz, who was Christ Seminary-Seminex professor of church music and artist-in-residence. 🌿



Keith "Doc" Hampton, cantor to the seminary community, was the first recitalist for this academic year's Manz Organ Series.

'King and Chicago' theme for MLK Day

Showing his strong connection to the city, "King and Chicago" is the theme of LSTC's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Monday, Jan. 16. Reginald Sharpe, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Chicago, is guest speaker for worship that begins at 11 a.m.

Following worship a panel will discuss "Where Do We Go From Here?"—future actions for the fulfillment of the dream."

The seminary will celebrate Black History Month all of February through worship, workshops and the arts. Check lstc.org/events for updates. 🌿

Seminary Sampler to welcome prospective students in person this spring

LSTC is already gearing up for the spring Seminary Sampler, which admissions staff say will be held in person for the first time post-pandemic.

If you know someone considering seminary, please tell them to mark March 4-6 on their 2023 calendar. This is the ideal time for prospective students to get a taste of seminary life. Sampler allows participants to:

- meet faculty and students,

- engage in discussions about discernment,
- sit in on spring classes,
- worship with the community,
- explore options for living on or near campus, or for being a distance learner.

Perhaps most importantly, prospective students will learn about the admissions process and financial aid, and become familiar with all that student services has to offer. 🌿

Save the date

Grover Wright and
Carole Burns Scholarship
Gospel Concert: Sunday,
April 16, 4 p.m.



life at lstc



In September, the worshipping community recognized the Latino heritage and culture at LSTC with a liturgical altar containing symbols and elements that distinguish and accompany the life and traditions of native peoples.



Yes, even seminary students take first day of school photos, says Sylvia Johnston (MDiv).



Manoj Kumar Gunthoti and Smitha Manoj during the two-day summer outing for our international students.



Abbey Road or first-year students on the CTA tour during Orientation Week? You decide.



Nicholas Breining listens during the field trip to the American Islamic College.



Keith "Doc" Hampton stops by the recess table to collect some pride-friendly goodies!



A highlight of Orientation Week was the field trip to the American Islamic College for lunch (above) and learning.



Gathering around the worship table during the resource fair, a highlight of Orientation Week.



Walking along the water at Promontory Point during Orientation Week.



Lutheran School of Theology *at* Chicago

1100 East 55th Street | Chicago, IL 60615

www.lstc.edu

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Melissa Dailey, third year MDiv student, and their dogs were among those who attended LSTC's annual blessing of the animals in honor of St. Francis.



FALL 2022