



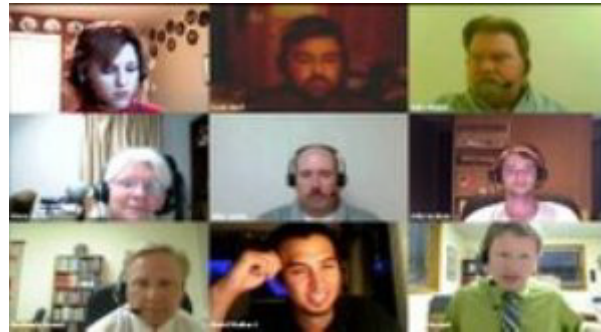
Institute of
Lutheran Theology
an occasional newsletter

the Word at Work

Issue 10 ~ Fall 2009

The First ILT Academic Term Begins

Pastor Tom Walker, ILT Dean of Administration



“Moving Theological
Education Closer
to Home”

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Institute of Lutheran Theology

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“Can everyone hear me?” asked Pastor Randy Freund as he began the first class session of the first academic term of the Institute of Lutheran Theology on September 14th, 2009. All heads in the “Hollywood Squares” style screen configuration nodded in the affirmative to the question that has quickly become the official greeting of the ILT. At this moment the work of many hands and the prayers of many lips culminated in their intended purpose as four professors and eleven students began courses in a curriculum that will prepare pastoral leaders for faithful Lutheran congregations in the future.

From their homes and places of work students and faculty all around the country gather in Cyberspace where they can see and hear each other in real time. At 5:30 pm

Pacific, 6:30 Mountain, 7:30 Central, and 8:30 Eastern students and faculty gather by turning on their computers and donning their headsets, while clicking the proper hyperlink that takes them to the appointed virtual classroom of the ILT. They come together to review their reading assignments, listen to lectures, and to enter into theological dialogue about important matters of the Faith. They rigorously study the history of Biblical interpretation, Law/Gospel dialectic for preaching, and the incredible resources for faith found in Luther’s catechisms. They gather in prayer to study the Word of God to prepare for service to a church that needs the hope of faithful pastors in the years ahead.

The faculty for this term includes Dennis Bielfeldt teaching

Continued on next page



(“Term Begins” continues)

“Principles of Biblical Interpretation”, William Russell teaching “Luther and His Catechisms”, and Randy Freund with Scott Grorud co-teaching “Proclaiming God’s Word.” Students live in far flung places like Idaho, Montana, Alberta, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Texas, and Cameroon. Through the course websites faculty assign readings, conduct threaded discussions, and make assignments. Students gain access to course materials and hand in assignments through these same websites.

Like students on campuses everywhere, ILT students spend a lot of time reading and writing on their own. But, according to the students and faculty of the ILT, what puts the sparkle in the ILT method of distance learning is that they also meet in a virtual classroom where they can see and hear each other in real time. Meeting this way builds a sense of community that promotes theological study. Students and faculty have both expressed surprise and delight at how well the technology works to enable them to feel

that they are participating in a real “around-the-table” kind of discussion where they are fully engaged. Together faculty and students of the ILT have labeled the kickoff of the first academic year a true success. As everyone settles down to the hard work of preparing for ministry through the long semester ahead, there is a real sense of hopefulness that God is at work through the faithful teaching, the careful study, and, yes, the miraculous technology of the Institute of Lutheran Theology.

Your Help is Needed

ILT Prayer Partners - We continue to earnestly seek people willing to join in a partnership of prayer on behalf of the Institute of Lutheran Theology. As an ILT Prayer Partner you will be sent by email, approximately every two weeks, a list of new prayer requests associated with on-going needs along with updates on past requests for you to bring to “Our Father.” Your commitment of faithfulness in this ministry will have real impact in advancing God’s kingdom through the ILT. To become an ILT Prayer Partner please send an email to:

ILTPrayerPartners@instituteoflutherantheology.org

Tax Deductible Donations - A new survey by **World Vision**, an international Christian relief and development organization, found three out of four adults saying the current economic climate has impacted their giving and one in three giving less. As you consider where your charitable contributions are going, please consider a gift to the Institute of Lutheran Theology.

The Institute has begun its Masters of Divinity program offerings this fall, students have started their courses and are on the path to becoming church leaders that are scripturally-grounded and confessionally-based. We are building our library and have been blessed with many wonderful contributions. The Lay classes are once again under way, and the need for your financial support has never been greater.

As we continue to partner with congregations across the globe, your financial support allows for the continuation of the mission of the Institute of Lutheran Theology. Along with your support of prayer, please consider sending a financial gift to the Institute at: **Institute of Lutheran Theology, 910 4th Street, Brookings SD 57006.**

“Moving Theological Education Closer to Home”

Library News

The Library for ILT is advancing rapidly. Already many pastors, seminary libraries, and publishing companies have donated thousands of books to help us build a working library for our students and faculty. We are beginning to process and catalog these books so they can be put to use.

There is, however, still a pressing need for more books. As a seminary library, we must continue to build so we can meet the needs of present and future faculty and students. We continue to encourage active and retired pastors to donate from their personal libraries. We are looking for books and journals in the four fields of theological study: Exegetical, Historical, Systematic, and Practical Theology. No donations are too small or too large, too old or too new. Donors need not fear duplicating books since we have need of volumes for our Main Library and also for our House of Studies libraries. While it is important for us to be able to field a working theological library, we also need books in Philosophy, World History, Anthropology, Sociology, and other areas. Our website will continually list books we believe are needed for a well-functioning library. Please note that any donations of books are tax deductible.

At the moment we are in particular need of Lutheran dogmatic works from the 19th and 20th centuries. We also are looking for Luther's Works in German and Latin. The St. Louis Edition (early 20th century) and/or the Erlangen Edition (middle 19th century) of Luther's Works in German would be more than helpful. Any works by John Gerhard, Martin Chemnitz, Philip Melancthon, and other Lutheran Fathers are needed. Dogmatic textbooks from other denominations are needed. Books dealing with individual doctrines will be of great help, as well as commentaries on individual books of the Bible. Keep looking at the Library Website at: <http://instituteoflutherantheology.org/?q=content/library> to keep abreast on needed books and journals.

Any donated books should be sent to: **Rev. Douglas Morton, Library Director for ILT**. The shipping address is: **St. John Lutheran Church, 780 Court Ave, Marengo, IA, 52301**. Books may also be brought to the Brookings address. Any questions should be addressed to Rev Morton by calling him at **319-521-3751** or by writing him at dmorton@instituteoflutherantheology.org. Questions addressed through the postal system should be sent to the above address for St. John Lutheran Church.



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www.InstituteOfLutheranTheology.org

ILT Welcomes New Staff

We are up and running in our M.Div., Pastoral Preparation, and Open Studies programs, with nice enrollments! Late this summer the Institute of Lutheran Theology made the decision to expand the staff in anticipation of our first academic year.

Dr. Gregory Peterson joined us as a consultant doing the work of the Academic Dean. Peterson is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at South Dakota State University. He is also on the steering committee of the *Religion, Science and Technology Section* of the American Academy of Religion. Peterson teaches in areas such as Ethics, Philosophy of Mind and Religion & Science. His primary area of research is the dialogue of science and religion having had many articles appearing in *Zygon*, and having authored *Theology and the Cognitive Sciences*, published by Fortress Press. Dr. Peterson has his B.A. from the University of Minnesota, 1988, M.A. from Luther Seminary, 1990, and Ph.D., from University of Denver, 1996.

Julie Smith joined us as a consultant doing the work of Dean of Students. Smith is Executive Director of Camp Onamia in Onamia, MN and serves Emanuel Lutheran Church in Bock, MN. She has also served congregations in and around Clarkfield, MN. Smith has a B.A. from Gustavus Adolphus College, 1994 and M.Div. from Luther Seminary, 1998.

We are excited about the addition of these new staff members to complement our already strong staff. Both bring important sets of skills to the important task that lies ahead! Institute staff now include:

Dr. Dennis Bielfeldt, President
Dr. Doug Dillner, Assistant to the President
Dr. Charles Manske, Consultant
Dr. Gregory Peterson, Academic Affairs
Rev. Tom Walker, Programming and Technology
Julie Smith, Student Affairs
Rev. Doug Morton, Library
Nikki Berreth, Marketing
Marsha Schmit, Communications

Christian Life Series

Fall & Winter Courses

The Shack, a book study

Paul Spaulding

7:30 Tuesdays

Nov 3, 10, 17, 24; Dec 1 and 8

Heritage Highlights in History:

The Patriarchs to Present

Alton Fiskness

7:30 Mondays

January 2010

Faith Goes to College

Julie Smith

7:30 Tuesdays

January 2010

To register, please contact:

Nikki Berreth at

605-692-9337 or via email

admin@instituteoflutherantheology.org



Institute of Lutheran Theology



The Shifting Lutheran Landscape

By Julie Smith

Since we began, the Institute of Lutheran Theology has sought to be a pan-Lutheran institution, serving confessional Lutherans from across Lutheran denominations. A decade ago the list of those denominations was quite clear and had been stable for a generation. Today, that is not the case. Lutheran churches in North America are in a state of flux and every indication is that this will continue for some time to come. The ground continues to shift under our feet.

The recent actions of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly have sent another wave of people in search of ways to remain faithful to their convictions in a changing Lutheran landscape. Some of them will find their way into other Lutheran bodies. Some may depart from Lutheranism entirely. And some may find themselves in the diaspora that has marked American Lutheranism in recent years. The Institute of Lutheran Theology is committed to serving confessional Lutherans wherever they may be found. From individual students in remote locations, to associations of congregations joining in this endeavor, we are continuing to discover new and exciting ways that ILT can serve the educational needs of Lutherans.

At the annual convention of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) the pending formation of the Augustana District was announced. The Augustana District shares many of the theological convictions of ILT and has declared their intent to endorse and support ILT as part of the mission of the District. This will make the Augustana District the first group of congregations to collectively and officially support the work of the Institute of Lutheran Theology. We are eager to see how this District develops and to discern more clearly how ILT might officially relate to a body of congregations.

In late September, 1200 Lutherans came together in Fishers, IN at the Lutheran CORE Convocation. They committed to a one year process of discerning what shape a free standing Lutheran body might take. ILT has many friends among those gathered with CORE and we look forward to finding ways that ILT can contribute to the theological education that will be central to CORE's ongoing mission.

As the shape of American Lutheranism shifts around us, the Institute of Lutheran Theology will continue to serve the Lutheran community in a manner that is faithful to our most deeply held theological convictions. As we develop new partnerships and strengthen existing ones our chief commitment to prepare preachers and teachers of the Gospel will remain at the center of our work.