

Pray Earnestly to the Lord of the Harvest

by Pr. Steven K. Gjerde, CORE Vice-President

As Lutheran CORE has focused this past year on recruiting and equipping faithful ministers of the Gospel, one Bible verse has continually surfaced in our conversation: “Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:38).

The Work of the Kingdom

We have no harvest; the Lord has His harvest. For all our efforts to prepare and support new speakers of the Word; for all our theories on what congregation or ministry will inspire such speakers; and for all of our meetings and gatherings and hopes, the work of the kingdom remains steadfastly in the hands of God, and that work includes the task of sending out the workers. Before we do, we ask —“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1) — because the Father has promised to give what His kingdom requires.

That simple promise, so central to a confessional formation of pastors, bids us spend time once more with the gift of prayer. As I listened to Lutheran CORE’s guest speakers in Chicago, each of them engaged in some way with the work of raising up preachers of the Gospel, the theme of prayer recurred time after time. One pastor spoke of young people leading a congregation in prayer; another spoke of his congregation learning to pray for individuals in tragedy or grief; still another church worker explained how he taught families to pray in their homes. Preaching prompts prayer, and prayer makes preachers, for both gifts come



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from the one Holy Spirit.

Word Before Bread

I also can testify to how God worked through prayer to put me in the ministry. My parents taught me a simple, daily rhythm of table prayer, prayer before bed, and weekly Scripture reading that they had inherited from their immigrant parents and childhood congregation. One Christmas Eve, with snow having canceled worship and kept us all homebound, my mother wouldn’t let us eat — over my protests, a small bowl of black olives shining under our kitchen light and begging me to



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What Happened to Timothy?

by Kyle Fever

Timothy was Paul’s understudy. He was the one whom Paul mentored, the one who learned from Paul the depths of the gospel of God – not merely through being taught theological ideas or leadership theories, but also *through mentoring and in being engaged in the practice of ministry in daily life* (2 Timothy 1:13; 3:10).

Timothy was young. According to Paul’s first letter to Timothy, this was a point of some sensitivity (1 Tim. 4:12). Some might have thought he wasn’t ready. Maybe he didn’t have enough “life experience” or years of devotion to the church. Yet, it was Timothy whom Paul invited to co-author letters; it was young Timothy whom Paul sent out to serve, to proclaim the gospel, to inspire and shape early Christian communities (Acts 16-20).

God Works Outside Our Fence

Timothy was *not* the “next generation” pastor. He was given an important role while still in his youth. Paul didn’t wait for Timothy to graduate from Gymnasium. The urgency was too great and Paul’s vision too radical. And Timothy was *not* Paul. Timothy did things in ways Paul did not. And that was just fine. We like to play it safe and to create systems and such; God likes to work outside of our cute attempts to fence things in and make them fit our liking.

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"I Can't Possibly Believe" in a God Who Would Send Anyone to Hell!

by [Pr. Cathy Ammlung](#), Lutheran CORE Secretary

I'll bet we've all heard that from someone. "I believe in a God of absolute love. My God would never consign anybody to hell for all eternity!"

And I'll bet most of us struggle to respond. We don't proclaim allegiance to a stern deity with cosmic ruler in hand, positively salivating at the opportunity to whack sinners straight into the netherworld. But we have trouble articulating our faith to those with oh-so-benevolent definitions of godhood. "Yes, but," we protest – and the other person brands us, our beliefs, and God as hopelessly legalistic and (oh, the horror) intolerant.

Well, anyone can say what kind of god they'd like to have, *choose* to believe in, *decide* to worship. They in essence say, "There's no real God out there; there's just a concept or preference. This is the god I prefer. That makes me holier and more loving than you and your notion of God."

Don't go there! Shift the focus by asking something like, "When you meet someone, do you tell them what kind of person they'd better be if you're going to give them the time of day? Has someone ever unexpectedly expanded your understanding of love?"

You see, God isn't an idea, opinion, or concept. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – not just a person, but the "Three-Personed" God. We don't construct God; we construct idols! In a sense, God is supremely indifferent to what we think he ought to be like. Remember the name he gave to Moses from the burning bush? "I AM WHO I AM," is one rendering. God is more real than reality, more factual than facts. "Tell them 'I AM' sent you." In other words, pack up your opinions in your old kit bag and deal with Me!

Yet in love for us, God chooses to reveal himself (as much as we can comprehend) and his will. He desires obedience and holiness, but he also desires friendship and love that is reciprocated, and then shared with others. Still: God is "I AM." He's not our idea of who he *should* be!

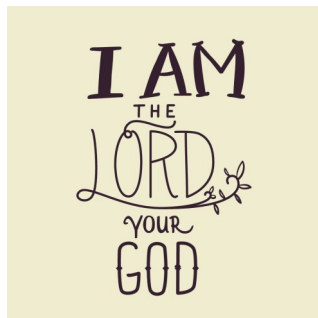
My second point builds on that, but takes the other person's question seriously: "How *can* a loving God condemn someone to everlasting torment and still lay claim to the title 'Loving?'"

What's Our Purpose?

In good rabbinic style, let's respond to a question with a question: What's our purpose, ultimately? Calvin put it nicely: "To know God, and to enjoy him forever."

In the Old Testament, "to know" referred to intimate sexual relationships; it also described deep, intimate knowledge of God. As for "enjoy," look at the Song of Solomon: the delight, the longing, the joyful relationship of the lover and the beloved. So: we are created for an eternal, deep, intimate, joyful, personal, loving relationship with God. Such a relationship *cannot* be

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coerced. Otherwise it becomes a form of rape – or interaction with a robot.

Here's the rub. We also can choose *not* to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, or our neighbor as ourselves. Luther described sin as "the self, incurred upon itself." Our own self, and our projects and opinions, can become god. As that happens, we flee from the One who reaches out, even pursues us, in love. That's a deadly choice!

God's Final Solution

But in Christ Jesus, we have God's final solution. It is one of self-sacrificing love. It is, to use tragically outdated language, the love of the bridegroom who gladly gives his bride all that he has – his obedient and holy will, his loving relationship with the Father, the indwelling of the Spirit with all his gifts and fruits, eternal life in joyful union with Father and Spirit – and in return, willingly takes on his beloved's sin, rebellion, and death. A professor of mine called it "the sweet swap."

And it is absolutely, without reservation or exception, offered to everyone. Period.

The key word is *offered*. Despite our sinful misuse of his gift of freedom, God hasn't repealed the need to freely respond to his overtures. In Baptism, the Father gives us exactly what we need: Union with his beloved Son, who shares with us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us Jesus' own power to freely love, gladly trust, and willingly obey the one he calls Abba, Father. And our Savior longs for everyone, everywhere, to enjoy him forever.

But might some who don't seem to know, much less love Jesus, still be drawn into his eternal embrace? I daresay it is possible. But that would be *his* free choice, not necessity. If it happens, *it's solely because of the good offices of the Son of God, crucified and raised from the dead for the forgiveness of sins unto eternal life*. When our Savior discloses himself with absolute clarity and with no possibility of distortion, confusion, or misunderstanding, there *may* be those who say, "So it was you all along whom I sought without knowing; whom I loved without realizing; whom I ran from in foolish fear and pride? Lord, have mercy on my stupid self!" And there will be great rejoicing in heaven!

Choosing Hell

But – and this is crucial – do I believe that some people, even in the clear and undistorted presence of their crucified and risen Lord, will say: "The hell with you. I don't want to 'love, honor and obey the likes of you. I reject you and all that you stand for'?"

**Freedom brings
accountability.**



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Lutheran CORE Develops International Connections

by Pr. Dennis D. Nelson, CORE Director and President

Lutheran CORE's efforts to develop a relationship with orthodox Lutherans in Germany and Scandinavia are bearing much fruit. We are very grateful to Pastor Paul Borg for helping us get in contact with twelve leaders of the Lutheran church in those countries who believe that the Bible is the Word of God and who are seeking to be faithful in outreach, service, ministry, and mission. We have written to them to tell them about our work, including our pastoral formation project as well as the ways in which we are challenging the church to return to the Scriptures as we see segments of the church departing from Biblical faith. As we hear from them, we know how we can pray for them and how we can mutually support and encourage each other.

One pastor from Denmark, after hearing of the challenges faced by the faithful here in the United States who are still a part of the ELCA, wrote, "It's very interesting that your situation seems to be very similar (to) ours." Most of his colleagues are still in the state church. Therefore, it is even more important to them that they have the support and encouragement of the other members of their Evangelical Lutheran Network. That network is comprised of pastors and churches, some of whom are fully under the authority of the state church, while others are outside of the state church. This particular pastor has recently accepted a new call to serve a congregation in the capital city of Copenhagen. He has asked that we pray with him for someone who is fluent in English who will be able to help them develop an outreach to English speaking people.

Welcoming Committee

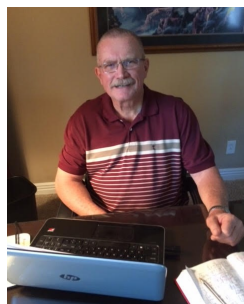
Another one of these pastors is looking forward to coming to the United States for study in the spring of 2019. I have written back, asking him where he will be studying, hoping that we will be able to put him in contact with a CORE-friendly person in the area where he will be, to welcome him and help him feel at home here.

Lutheran Church in Bavaria

A third person wrote about how the Lutheran Church in Bavaria has recently voted to bless same gender relationships. He said that the decision was expected, but it was still a shock. Pastors have been told that they can follow their own consciences in whether or not they will bless same gender relationships, but they cannot say that the Bible only supports the traditional view.

They must say that both positions – both to bless and not to bless same gender relationships – are equally supported by Biblical teaching. I wrote back to tell him

about my deep concern for them because of what we have experienced in the ELCA in just a few short years. Within less than a



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decade the endorsement of same gender relationships has gone from being permitted as one option among many to being the only acceptable option. It is alarming to realize that confessional Lutheran pastors are being subjected to that kind of pressure and control. This pastor wrote, "Please pray for us, that we will never surrender to the spirit of the times, but with steadfast faith (will) follow God's commandments."

Please Pray

Please join with me in praying for these faithful Lutheran pastors and other Christians in Germany and Scandinavia. Gene Veith, one of the presenters during the first phase of the pastoral summit and the person who put us in contact

with Jari Rankinen from Finland, who was one of the presenters during the second phase, wrote to me, "There are more orthodox Lutherans in Scandinavia and in the world in general than many of us realize, and they are doing some good work."

We are not Alone

I am reminded of how the prophet Elijah, after the contest with the prophets of Baal and priests of Asherah, became totally discouraged and told God, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, but now I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." (1 Kings 19: 10) Elijah needed to be told what we all need to hear – that we are not alone. "There are seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and all the mouths that have not kissed him." (1 Kings 19: 18)

**There are seven
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Pastoral Formation Project Gains Support

by Pr. Dennis D. Nelson, and Pr. James Wylie

Many thanks to all who have written since the distribution of my [April letter](#) from the director to tell of your enthusiasm about and support for Lutheran CORE's pastoral formation project. If you have not yet done so, please check out the various resources on our website, www.lutherancore.org, which will tell you about our gathering last month to hear from several people who are doing something unique and effective to raise up future leaders, including pastors, for the church.

A copy of my April letter from the director, which will give you a summary of the six presentations, is available under the Communications tab on the homepage. Additional information can be accessed by clicking on the Pastoral Formation tab. There you will find a more detailed description of the six



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COME, HOLY SPIRIT, COME! ¡VEN SANTO ESPÍRITU!

by Pr. Keith Forni, Lutheran CORE Board Member

As the Day of Pentecost — the fiftieth day after Easter — approaches, the Church's prayer ascends, bidding God's Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth, to revive His people. Those who share the Lutheran heritage often recall Martin Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles Creed:

"I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts and sanctified and kept me in true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith..." (Luther's Small Catechism)

In this classic text, Luther embraces the personal and communal sweep of the Spirit's activity: Both the individual and the community of believers must rely on the power of God's Holy Spirit, to come from beyond themselves.

As baptized people of God, as Pentecost People, we are attuned to actions of the Spirit: calling, gathering, enlightening and sanctifying Jesus' disciples. The third person of the Holy Trinity also unites the people of God, through the bestowing of the seven-fold gifts and the fruits of the Spirit.

St. Paul echoes this dynamic of the Holy Spirit in his epistle to the Ephesians: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (Eph. 4.3) The Holy Spirit's guidance has always been of crucial importance for the Body of Christ through the ages. In our own time, we confront contemporary assaults and erosions on the "faith once and for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

CORE's Role

The ministry of Lutheran CORE exists to encourage and fortify those who hold to the Biblical, confessional and orthodox teachings of Christ's Church. They are wearied by the departure from traditional teachings in matters of the authority of God's Word, the Triune name of God and the historic understanding of marriage.

Lutheran CORE seeks to witness to this historic faith in varied settings. In some instances, CORE connects alienated believers with its larger network of confessional Lutherans. In others, CORE provides encouragement to entire congregations who feel marginalized by what seems to be the prevailing revisionisms of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In this way, their witness within the denomination finds an avenue for continued expression — even as some around them challenge their decision or need to remain "in place."

Encuentro (Encounter)

In the arena of Hispanic-Latino Lutheran Ministry, Lutheran CORE's annual *Encuentro* provides a distinctive opportunity for inter-Lutheran consideration of our Lord's Great Commission as it applies to the increasingly multi-cultural context for

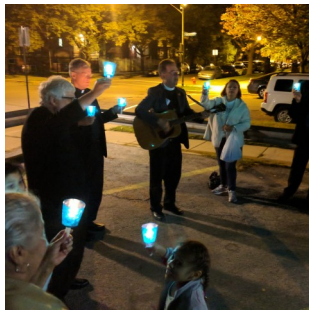
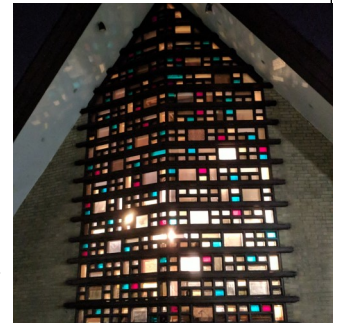
mission in the United States. Participants and presenters will include members from the ELCA, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, North American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ as well as ecumenical guests.

2018 Lutheran Hispanic Latino Ministry Encuentro

Worship at the Inter-Lutheran Hispanic / Latino Ministry "Encuentro" (Encounter) on Friday, October 12th, will embrace a Day of Pentecost pattern by utilizing two of earth's many languages. Parish and community mission matters will be addressed by long-time, bilingual ministry practitioners and theologians, as well as laity and clergy. Lively dialogue and fellowship will be shared. An array of resources will be on display from Lutheran and ecumenical publishers and from the collection of the Bilingual Ministry Resource Center, based in Joliet, IL.

St. Timothy Lutheran Church will be hosting the event again this year; it is located in Chicago on the northwest side of the Hermosa neighborhood at 2101 N. Kildare Avenue (at Dickens Ave.). The St. Timothy parish provides an ideal learning environment for those considering or entering bilingual Spanish & English language ministry settings. Those who have had long term experience in such contexts will find a place of fellowship / *convivencia* and mutual encouragement in the Lord's work.

Encuentro features bilingual worship, fellowship, practical ministry presentations, theological reflections and resource sharing.

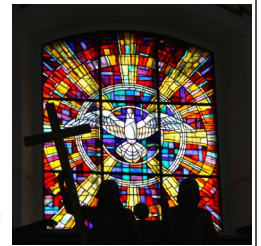


Prayers for Pentecost Sunday, May 20, 2018

Lutheran CORE has a page devoted to worship, including Prayers of the Church, on its website. Please use [this](#) prayer on May 20th.

In addition, the unifying presence of the Holy Spirit is a focal point of the Prayer for the Vigil of Pentecost in the Lutheran Book of Worship. Please join us in the following prayer in the days leading up to and including the eve of the feast day of the Holy Spirit.

Almighty and ever-living God, you fulfilled the promise of Easter by sending your Holy Spirit to unite the races and nations on earth and thus to proclaim your glory. Look upon your people gathered in prayer, open to receive the Spirit's flame. May it come to rest in our hearts and heal the divisions of word and tongue, that with one voice and one song we may praise your name in joy and thanksgiving, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Pray Earnestly to the Lord of the Harvest (continued from p. 1)

gobble them! — until we had first read the nativity in the Gospel according to St. Luke. Word before bread: a simple lesson that stuck, impressing on me the importance of preaching it.

Prayer, then, is not only the gift of God's listening ear, but it is also a vehicle of the Word, planting home the promise of God's mercy and teaching someone (like my childhood self) that Jesus is Lord and worthy of all service. In each of these ways, it stands as an indispensable part of pastoral formation. A question therefore emerges: Are we teaching and learning how to pray in Lutheran congregations and homes? For all the modern talk of spirituality and prayer, are Lutherans learning how to ask the Lord of the harvest for what His harvest needs?

God has given us teaching to do when it comes to prayer.

The disciples asked Jesus, "Teach us how to pray," and Jesus did *not* say, "Oh, it's like talking to anybody else. Just have a conversation with Him." Instead, He gave them a prayer that flowed from His own Word. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches that God is His disciples' Father; that the kingdom comes to the poor in Spirit and the persecuted; that He had come to fulfill the Father's will; and that the Father's way is the way of generosity and peace, imbued with undying providence. The Lord's Prayer comes in the midst of this sermon and prays its promises.

Recruiting, Equipping, Sending

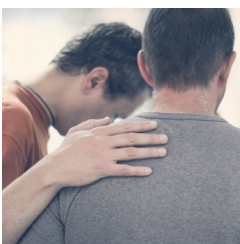
So it goes with prayer among us: First, the Word; second, the prayer that God's Word creates. "The Lord speaks and we listen . . . Saying back to him what he has said to us, we repeat what is most true and

... are we teaching and learning how to pray in Lutheran congregations and homes?

sure" (Introduction to *Lutheran Worship*, 1982). The point isn't that we only dare to repeat Bible verses in our prayer. Any parent of a toddler knows that she will chatter freely once she absorbs the language and worldview given her; so it goes in the Church. Rather, the point is this: God has given us teaching to do when it comes to prayer — He gives us words, histories, commands, and promises to plant in the hearts of His people — and this teaching is for more than personal edification of the believer. It is for the recruiting, equipping, and sending of laborers into the Father's harvest.

Ask, People!

Teaching people to pray is teaching them to ask for what God has promised to give. Not only will a robust, daily practice of such devotion bear witness to its participants regarding the reality of God and His mercy, but it will also lead them to ask for those laborers whom He has promised. In both respects, it supports the task of forming preachers for contexts where orthodoxy is challenged. Really, it's the most important part of it. "Ask, and it will be given to you" (Matthew 7:7). "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). Ask, people! Ask daily. He's already got the preachers He has in mind for you, and He will send them soon enough.



I Can't Possibly Believe ... Hell! (continued from p. 2)

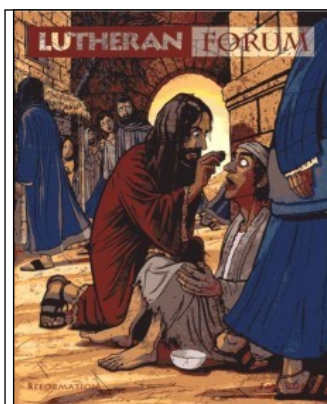
It is entirely possible. I believe that, to those miserable souls, God will at last say, "THY will be done." They will have chosen hell, despite his solemn warning and his repeated invitation to sinners to turn to him and live.

May we pray for everyone to repent and be saved? Absolutely. Must we work, speak, act, live in such a way that "our



light so shines before others, that seeing our good works, they glorify our Father in heaven," as is said when a candle is handed to one being baptized? Absolutely.

But the one thing we may *not* do is to take away the dreadful dignity of freedom — and the accountability it brings — in an attempt to "out-nice God." If our Lord could save everyone, no repentance needed, no exceptions, he'd just zap us with "God Dust" and be done with it, rather than going down the slow, painful road to Calvary.



The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (ALPB) produces two publications centered around "the faith once delivered to the saints and what is going on today in our culture, in our parishes, in our seminaries and in our national churches."

It offers both its monthly Forum newsletter via the regular post office (or PDF by request) and its Lutheran Forum quarterly journal in one convenient and affordable Forum package — just \$28.45 for one year (less if you're retired or a student). You can purchase it [online](https://alpb.org/forum-package/) or [offline](#) (mail or phone). Click <https://alpb.org/forum-package/> for more information.

What Happened to Timothy? (continued from [p. 1](#))

Investment

So what happened to Timothy? He's mentioned briefly in early church writings in connection with another early church pastor-type named Dionysius the Aeropagite from Acts 17. Other than this, Timothy fades into history. But, we know that the church did not die with Paul. In fact, *the ongoing life of the church happened in part because Paul invested in Timothy.*

Timothy represents something: *investment in the lives of young women and men*, creating an environment where young adults are mentored, theologically engaged, and put in the game. Timothy represents the reality that *God works in transformative ways through the raising up of young adults.*

Who is mentoring the Timothys among us?

If there are Timothys among us, who is mentoring them, captivating their minds, and developing their theological imaginations to heed the call of ministry of the gospel? We all know that there is great need in the church today. Where and how do we work together to meet the need?

The Nexus Institute

The Nexus Institute at Grand View University is the answer. The Nexus Institute is a response to a need – to inspire and engage young adults to take up the keys of ministry, to give them mentoring and theological equipping, and a vision for the vast sea of new possibilities for the ministry of the gospel today and tomorrow.

The Nexus Institute is not just a fun high school youth event for Lutheran kids. It is a one-week residential experience of vocational discernment, theological learning, and service work — all within the care of a mentoring Christian community, where participants are formed by Scripture, prayer, and fellowship. Each day is an experience of theology seminars, service experiences, fun, rest, and reflection. Each young adult is mentored. Each young adult comes home inspired and prepared to be actively involved in the life of the church for the sake of the gospel. **And it's free** thanks to a Lilly Endowment grant: *We can even provide financial assistance for travel costs/ plane tickets.*

Last summer, we had a transformational first year of three different weeks of the Nexus Institute, where we mentored, taught, and inspired nearly 30

young adults from Lutheran congregations around the country (as well as 10 college mentors). They all returned home on fire and prepared to be active leaders in their congregations. Several are returning for a second year, one is returning with six others from his youth group, and one, who has gone on to college, is joining our mentor team already this year! We're picking up steam and following the lead of the Holy Spirit to inspire and mentor young adults as they consider a vocation in ministry.



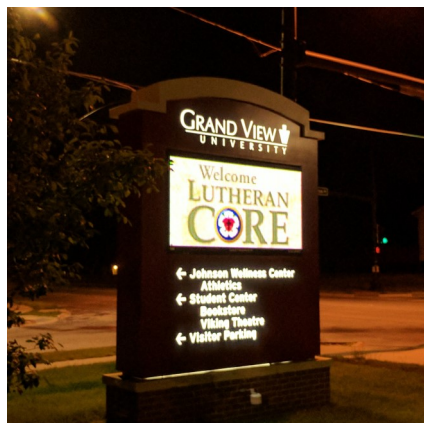
Witness to the Gospel

This year, we will spend part of our learning and reflection time addressing how we live our lives of witness to the gospel in engagement with the world of social media. This is a huge issue and concern for many, and too few are addressing it head-on. We want young adults to be better prepared to navigate both the potentials and the problems in the social media world with the message of the gospel, and to be able to help the church do the same.

Intentional Development

Don't let "Timothy" become a distant memory of the early church! Who are the "Timothys" among you, right in your community? I believe the Spirit of God is calling the church today to intentional development of young adults for lives of ministry in the church for the world. Consider the Nexus Institute this summer as the first step.

For more information go to www.thenexusinstitute.org, or contact Kyle Fever, Director of the Nexus Institute (kfever@grandview.edu).



NEXUS INSTITUTE

Attendance is free and the first session starts on June 17th!

Pastoral Formation Project Gains Support (continued from p. 3)

presentations, video clips related to one of the presentations, and two of several video podcasts of the presentations. Click [here](#) to hear the most recent one. Additional podcasts will be posted soon.

A friend of Lutheran CORE, Pastor Leland James Wylie, has written to tell why he is supportive of our pastoral formation project. He writes —

Two elements have combined to arouse my concern:

- 1) Comments I hear from pastors I have known from across the country by virtue of my work. These comments are impelled by their experiences with colleagues and their own subjective slant on the situation.... “What’s going on at our seminaries” implying (and often detailing) case experience to document the difference in action, outlook and expectation in current candidates from those of twenty and more years ago.
- 2) My personal dialogue with the three most recent presidents of the seminary from which I graduated. The change has occurred over the span of time of their tenure. Of course it reflects the approval of the seminary board and sundry messages overt and direct from the ELCA itself.

Christ’s Mission

With regard to the first...initially I was reluctant to speak up myself because of my age. You know: Ever has it been since the days of Socrates that the older think the world is going to smash because of how the current generation is, etcetera.

In time I came through the emotional/judgment phase and remembered my organizational development (OD) training and moved into the “evaluation” phase. The OD teaching is: “The question is not whether a thing is good or bad but is it going on?”

Yes it’s going on. So a better question might be — is the Church of Jesus Christ and His Mission as depicted in the Scripture and further cauterized in sundry Statements of Faith in Christian Faith Communions, (in our interest namely Lutheran) optimally leading to the accomplishment of Christ’s mission?

Numbers Don’t Lie

My conclusion — still a work in progress — is that numbers don’t lie. Rather than simply preaching the Word (in word and deed) and allowing the Lord of the harvest to carry out God’s plan in the fullness of time.....we have been caught up in numbers and organization management, a virtual spiritual merry-go-round with a few protests tossed in. This is not the M. O. I signed up for on my knees at Central Lutheran a few years back and as one who was deeply involved in putting the ELCA in place (during the work-up we even used the term “New Lutheran Church”). The result in terms of resources, preparation, and accomplishment did not/is not happening. The race horse we were looking to achieve through pan Lutheran merger has not appeared.

Big Picture

In casting a summary of the big picture, I return to the

failed and fading role of our many seminaries well aware that change in length of schooling, patterns of instruction will change and improve.

I give you the six or so display ads in the back pages of [Connections](#) (Sola Publications).

Second, my challenge to the seminary presidents I mentioned originated as I read their quarterly publications and became aware that the term “Pastor” was not used. The copy was filled with multiple references to preparing “Leaders.” It seemed we had lost our way. A review of recent history gives several clues as to how it happened.

How We Lost our Way

After two years in the parish my ministry was spent in senior management at Lutheran hospitals. I posited to the president and staff at my seminary that seminaries are like medical schools in that they have one single function. One educates only physicians and the other educates only pastors. Leaders may indeed come from either but it has never been their core mission to produce “leaders.” Leaders are developed through the church, private and state colleges and universities.

ELCA is Off Base

A further example of how far off base the ELCA itself is with this issue is depicted in a current video to recruit seminary students. It references a grandiose sounding call to “change the world”, et al. No, that job belongs to God Almighty and we are told to expect it will occur “in His own time — in His own way.”



We Plant

Our job is to plant. Plant the Word in love and mercy. We have no call to produce the Harvest — we gather it in as He may invite and we “tend His sheep” as He has directed St. Peter and us to so do.

Leland James Wylie is a retired LCMC pastor who lives in Prospect Heights, Illinois. He and his wife Myrna both spent their professional days in hospitals of the Church in New York and Chicago, Myrna as an RN and Jim initially in pastoral care and CPE and later in administration as senior vice president of the Advocate Health System. He served for a time as CEO of the American Protestant Hospital Association and worked with both Catholic and Jewish hospital associations.

**The term
“Pastor” was
not used.**

**It is not a
seminary’s
core mission
to produce
leaders.**

**Yes, it is
going on.**

**The race horse we
were looking to
achieve through pan
Lutheran merger
has not appeared.**

Coming Events

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Nexus Institute | Grand View University, Des Moines, Iowa | June 17-22; June 24-29; July 1-6 2018 | For the Timothys in your church. | Click here. |
| Summer Revival Conference | Butler, PA | June 23, 2018 | Sponsored by Lutheran Lay Renewal of America | Click here |
| Ancient Evangelical Future Conference (AEFC) | Ambridge, PA | June 7-8, 2018 | Trinity School of Ministry | Click here. |
| Pro Ecclesia Conference, "Hope Today" | Baltimore, MD | June 4-6, 2018 | Sponsored by Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology at Loyola University | Click here |
| LCMC Youth Event | Grand View University, Des Moines, Iowa | July 17-20, 2018 | "Called 2 Follow" | Click here. |
| Lutheran Week | Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center, Denver, Colorado | August 13-17, 2018 | Includes Women of the NALC gathering, Braaten-Benne Theological Lectures, and the annual NALC Convocation. | Click here. |
| LCMC Annual Gathering | Des Moines, Iowa | October 7-10, 2018 | | Click here. |
| Encuentro (Encounter) | Chicago, IL | October 12, 2018 | Hispanic-Latino / bilingual ministries | Click here. |

Sponsoring an Event?

We Would Love to Help You Get the Word Out

If you are planning an event that you believe Lutheran CORE members would want to know about and that is consistent with the [Common Confession](#), please let us know. Brief articles and pictures are always welcome. We also can share them on our website and our Facebook and Twitter feeds.

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Let Us Know About Items of Interest to Confessing Lutherans!

Regular Website Postings

- * Check out our Worship page to see what Pastor Cathy Ammlung has posted for [Prayers of the Church](#) and [Hymn Suggestions and Scriptures](#).
- * Looking for a new pastor? Try [Clergy Connect](#).
- * [Daily devotions](#) are graciously written by Rev. Jeffray Greene; he started writing devotions in 2005.
- * Pastor Dennis Nelson, president of the board and director of Lutheran CORE, posts a [weekly devotional](#) based upon one of the following Sunday's readings every Tuesday.
- * Pastor Steven Gjerde, vice-president of the board, writes a [weekly devotional](#) based upon one of the previous Sunday's readings in the Missouri Synod lectionary series, which is posted every Wednesday.
- * A link to these devotionals is then posted on Facebook and Twitter. Spread the good word about these resources!

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CORE Voice Lutheran CORE's Newsletter

*Published by
Lutheran CORE*

www.lutherancore.org or 1-888-810-4180

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