

Table Talk

News and Views of the
Student Body of The Lutheran
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.



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Honeymoon
The Editorial

"When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, to be happy with his wife whom he has taken."

--Deuteronomy 24:5

"I believe that we ought so to love and trust God in our lives, and in all the good things that he sends us, that when the time comes (but not before!) we may go to him with love, trust, and joy. But, to put it plainly, for a man in his wife's arms to be hankering after the other world is, in mild terms, a piece of bad taste, and not God's will. We ought to find and love God in what he actually gives us; if it pleases him to allow us to enjoy some overwhelming earthly happiness, we mustn't try to be more pious than God himself..."

--p. 168. Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Letters and Papers from Prison.

New York, Mcmillan Co., 1971.

I shall not try to be more pious than God;
there will be no editorial this month!

A.E.C.R. Yeago.

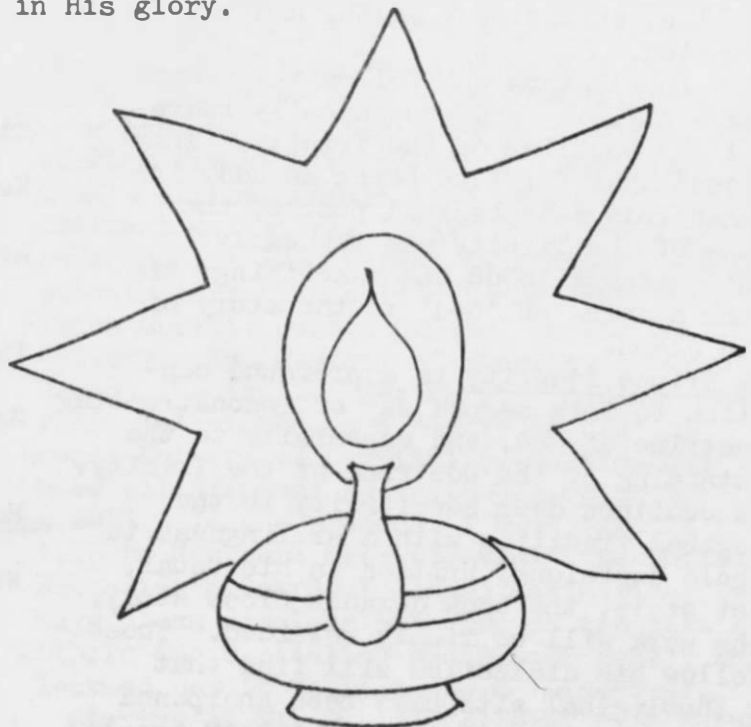
The doctor (Martin Luther) said, "I just recieved a letter from Jonas. He wrote that a dog had shit into the grave of the bishop of Halle. I believe it's fatal, for it has also happened to others before. Once when there was a procession with banners around a church, the verger put the holy water pot on the ground. A dog came along and pissed into the holy water pot.

A priest noticed this because he was sprinkling the water, and he said, 'You impious dog! Have you become Lutheran too?'"

(Table Talk, between April 11 and June 14, 1542 #5418 L.W., Am. Ed. vol. 54)

Art News

On December 1, 1982 the Church of the Abiding Presence will be dressed in blue! Thanks to the 1982 Senior Class the seminary chapel will have new paraments and vestments for the season of Advent. Bill Esborn designed the set in two shades of blue with white stars symbolizing simultaneously the star of Bethlehem and the "Light of the World" whose coming we await. The set consists of an altar and lecturn frontal, a burse and veil, a chasuble and two stoles. They are sure to be welcome and a celebrative addition to the seminary as we worship God in His glory.



This month's book review is by a guest reviewer, David Yeago. David is a student here at LTSG, and is currently on internship. He is reviewing another product of our prolific faculty, The Triune Identity by Robert Jenson, professor of Systematic Theology here at the Seminary. David is one of our brightest theological students, although I would seriously doubt that theology is foremost on his mind as we go to press, with all due apologies to Mr. Jenson. clf

Book Review

The Triune Identity, by Gettysburg's Robert W. Jenson, is a remarkable book. It is a weighty and powerful contribution to the Western Church's ongoing attempt to reconstruct what it means when it talks of 'God'.

Two ways of doing that reconstruction seem to be possible. One, the most common in this country, is to start with the human creature and seek to find God at the depths or the heights or the edges of human experience.

The other course, one followed by many European theologians and a few in this country, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, is to begin with the story of Jesus as the concrete and tangible appearance of God in the world, and reconstruct the Doctrine of God so that all Christian talk about God will be talk about Jesus and what happened in His life, sufferings, death, and resurrection.

Those theologians who follow the second path have mutually and ecumenically rediscovered the Doctrine of the Trinity. They have found that far from being an odd, incomprehensible metaphysical puzzle, the Doctrine of the Trinity was the early Church's attempt to do the same thing: tie down the meaning of 'God' to the story of the man Jesus.

The Triune Identity is a profound contribution to this second way of reconstructing the Doctrine of God, and especially to the understanding of the Doctrine of the Trinity. Jenson combines deep sensitivity to the theological tradition with a willingness to make bold decisions. Written in his usual, compact style, the book demands close study, but the work will be richly rewarded. Those who follow his dialectics will find that their theological wits have been sharpened and their vision clarified. The book is already having a powerful effect on my intern-

ship preaching and teaching. Especially valuable is the way Jenson bases the Doctrine of God and the Trinitarian dogma firmly on a theological and critical reading of the Scripture. The Trinitarian Creeds claim to be a guide to the meaning of the Bible; Jenson shows just how lively and fruitful they can still be in that role.

-- David Yeago

New Books of Interest (Bookstore only)

Theology

Barth, K., The Word of God and the Word of Man, Peter Smith Publ., 1978.

Gese, H., Essays on Biblical Theology, Augsburg, 1981.

Old Testament

Polyzin, R., Moses and the Deuteronomist, a Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History, Part I, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Seabury Press, 1980.

Wiesel, E., Five Biblical Portraits; Saul, Jonah, Jeremiah, Elijah, Joshua, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1981.

New Testament

Bruce, F.F., The International Greek New Testament Commentary on Galatians, Eardmans Press, 1982.

Davids, P., The International Greek New Testament Commentary on James, Eardman's Press, 1982.

Moule, C.F.D., Essays in New Testament Interpretation, Cambridge, 1982.

Early Church

Koeste, H., History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age, Fortress, 1982.

Koeste, H., History and Literature of Early Christianity, Fortress, 1982.

Psychology/Religion

May, G., M.D., Simply Sane, the Spirituality of Mental Health, Crossroads, 1982.

Homiletics

White, W.R., Speaking in Stories, Resources in Christian Storytelling, Augsburg, 1982.

The Tightrope -

The Circus is in town! Yes, and we, you and I, fellow Christians, are the tightrope act. Climb the ladder, inch out slowly onto the tautened rope, get your equilibrium stabilized, focus your eyes on the other end, and ease step by step along the rope. Feel the tautness, the tension that supports the weight of your body, of the body on your left and on your right. The crowd gasps, a man faints, the onlookers fear that you will fall. Are you afraid?

The circus is life, the tightrope is the tension of eschatology on life.

Newspaper writers report of 11,000 political deaths in El Salvador in 1981; of increased nuclear power and arms potential; of technological spies in opposing nations; of limited food and natural resource supplies; of dwindling funds, and even less concern. It's not long before I find myself wishing that the final Kingdom of God would come -- soon. And precisely in this wishing, I express a hope and faith that it will indeed happen. "If you will, you can make me clean." (Mk. 1.40) In this light the words of both John and Paul (Revelation and I Thess.) have a certain urgency about them.

For approximately 1500 years, we have lived without the sense of imminance of the Parousia that characterized the early Church. There is a certain, inveterate, 'status quo' in our lives, based on the finality of the belief that we will indeed die before the final Kingdom of God is realized. Yes, of course, we believe there is eternal life, but that has nothing to do with earth, or our life in the 'here and now', it only comes 'afterwards'. In all practicality, we live between birth and death, waiting for something to happen, for God to do something. We are 'caught' in time. The tightrope is stretched between today and tomorrow, between the near future and the distant future, between the present and the eschaton. We grow up taking for granted that there will be children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We dream of the legacy that will be perpetuated; we live. Yet, the news of each day brings more and more uncertainty that tomorrow will even come. On the one hand, we put money into high interest, long-term savings accounts for the college tuition of yet to be born children, on the other, we seize opportunities to travel now, to experience now, to buy now, because we may never have the chance again. This tension dominates our lives.

Perhaps we have a closer affinity to the early Church than we realize. Perhaps the imminance of the Parousia that was communicated to them is real for us, as well. Perhaps their dynamism and urgency can be ours also. At this time of great uncertainty, it is the faith of that early Church, it's confessions in Romans 6 and I Corinthians 15, that is ours, too. The legacy of One who lived is now being perpetuated because He lives. We can walk the tightrope without fear because Jesus has overcome death, our finality, and lives to offer us unlimited future. We are free to live each day in expectation of another. We are free to live. We are free! God is sovereign.

The circus is in town. See the tightrope walkers? They're smiling and relaxed. They look as if they're enjoying it. Look! There's even one who is wounded -- his hands and feet are bleeding, and his side is bandaged. Their balance seems effortless. No fear for them. Come on, this is our act, too! No fear for us.

And look! No one seems to have noticed the broken cross lying beneath the rope.

-- Beth Schlegel

Washington News

Fellow Brothers and Sisters
Gettysburg Theological Seminary
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Dear members of the LTSG community,

Greetings to each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.

I write this to you as I would be writing in response to one of the many letters I am given at my Action/Reflection site on Capitol Hill. One of my most memorable experiences here has been the opportunities provided me by working for Washington State Congressman Norm Dick's office. Apart from responding to constituent's letters, I have attended a press conference, a \$250/person fundraiser, and a private tour of a collection of paintings by French Cubist, George Braque, in the Phillip's Gallery. My 'History of Missions' course at Wesley Theological Seminary, 'Theology and Politics' at LHS, and 'Intro to CPE' at Howard University Hospital (predominately black) have all afforded me worthwhile opportunities as well. In the process, I have taken a field trip to New York City (to visit the United Methodist's Board of Global Ministries), will have class sessions with two of the text's authors (on Capitalism and Disarmament), and learned how it feels to be a 'minority'.

Staying at St. Paul's College, with Catholic students and fathers, has also been a rewarding experience. I have had the chance to become

more aware of our Christian brothers in the Roman Catholic faith, and have also enjoyed the excellent meals prepared by four Spanish-speaking Sisters. Moreover, I have been aided in the development of my 'spiritual' life with the help of a Spiritual Director.

Opportunities abound in Washington D.C. - opportunities for growing in one's personal life, for developing a sensitivity to other ways of life, to having one's relationship to Jesus Christ renewed and strengthened. Where else would it be possible to join in such activities as the Reformation Service at the National Cathedral, an anti-Klan march, and a tour of the White House?

It is my hope that many of you who are students at Gettysburg will consider this program at the Lutheran House of Studies. Even though I am a westerner, and a Norskie by birth and at heart, I strongly recommend it.

I close by thanking you for your attention to this letter, and for making it possible for my fellow LNTS students, Randy Baldwin and Robert Wertz, and myself to be a part of the LHS, and for your support and prayers.

In Christ's care and saving grace,
Jeff Tengesdal

Pastoral Issues

David L. Ritterpausch, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, a large downtown congregation, shares some enlightening views entitled "God's Frozen People" (or "Introducing Change in the Parish.") Pastor Ritterpusch, a 1972 graduate of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, began his ministry at Zion in February of 1982, his second call.

The experiences of a seminarian and the experiences of a parish minister differ sharply. Perhaps this is an understatement. In the face of the pastor's excitement over various theological issues, expectations over congregational growth, and his general idealism, parishes may seem to be very resistant to change. They may be totally unacquainted with the issues that the seminarian has come to grips with through rigorous study. It would appear, on the surface that such church members are indeed God's frozen people. But of course they are actually God's frozen people.

Frustrations for the pastor arise when one's expectations differ markedly from those of the congregation. Church members don't become resistant overnight, Ritterpusch

observes. Ideas are learned and become acceptable over a period of time and are influenced by pastoral leadership. Pastoral expectations must be tempered with realism so as to bring about change and avoid total frustration.

Some pastors may accept the challenge of helping turn a church with declining membership around. Such a pastor needs to recognize that these church members tend to cling to patterns which were successful at the time they were a flourishing church. But, as Ritterpusch points out, the repeating of certain experiences may no longer be appropriate. Times change, emphases change, needs change.

When involved in such a dilemma how does the pastor introduce and implement change? Ritterpusch outlines the pastor's responsibilities as follows:

1. Introduce a pattern of change during the first year.
2. Avoid belittling the church's history or tradition.
3. Introduce change openly, resisting any temptation to be manipulative, subtle, or covert. Such an honest approach engenders trust.
4. Attack the smallest, easiest changes first. Tackle the tougher issues later. This approach establishes a record of success.
5. Distinguish clearly between short term and long term goals.
6. Recognize that church emphases shift. No one policy need be "engraved in cement."
7. Work to maintain a feeling of friendliness and trust, showing concern for those who oppose your ideas. Take care to separate the issue from the person.
8. Accept responsibility or "blame" for that which you have implemented. ("The buck stops here!")
9. Don't feel isolated if your proposed suggestions make you unpopular for a while.
10. Avoid being arbitrary, offensive, or belligerent if your ideas meet with strong resistance.

Pastor Ritterpusch clearly notes that there are times when one must 'draw a line in the dust'. For example, a pastor could never yield on racial integration within the church. In the face of change, members of a congregation are perfectly free to express negative opinions. They are also free to choose not to participate. They are not free, however, to block change where the Gospel demands it.

--sbm

Hymn Revision

(The following is a reprint from Philadelphia Seminary's newsletter The Seminarian, vol. 45, #5. Thanks go to Timothy F. Lull, the author, and Rick Summy, editor of The Seminarian.)

11 October 1982 - Sts. Ferdinand and Isabella

1. Earth and all stars
Planets with headaches
Cry to the Lord for an end to this song.
Sad asteroids
Comets with limp tails
Spin on their way wishing end to this song.
"You have some marvelous hymns;
So why not praise God with a new song?"
2. Wesley and Watts
Honored hymnwriters
Plead to the Lord for an end to this song.
Luther himself
Throws in the inkwell
Shouts to the Lord for an end to this song.
"You have some marvelous hymns;
So why not praise God with a new song?"
3. Saints with one voice
Make testimony
"How long, O Lord, til the end of this song?
Let us have peace;
Try meditation;
We've heard enough, put an end to this song.
"You have some marvelous hymns
So why not praise God with a new song?"
4. In the Midwest
Out in Wisconsin
Seventy yearn for an end to this song.
One thing is sure
Any new church must
Find some clear limits for singing this song.
"We have some marvelous hymns
Now let us praise God with a new song!"
5. Herb Brokering
What were you thinking?
When you unleashed the effects of this song?
Once is just fine,
Twice is sufficient;
Three strikes is out; put an end to this song.
Write some new, quieter hymns
Teach us to praise God with a new song.

Interview ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

In the Spotlight: Ruth Gritsch

On a recent rainy afternoon, Ruth Gritsch, the wife of Professor Eric Gritsch, sat at the table in her large kitchen, smoking cigarets and talking. She compared her life in Gettysburg to that of Mrs. Gibbs, the person she is currently portraying in Our Town in York, Pa: "Mrs. Gibbs is one of only two people who really want to get out of that small town. One commits suicide; Mrs. Gibbs adapts. I'm a city person -- I don't like small towns. But one adjusts; one finds people who are fascinating. I get 'out of town' by reading Georgette Meyer, listening to Mozart, going to Washington."

Dr. and Mrs. Gritsch have been in the big yellow Victorian house at the corner of Springs and West Confederate Avenues for 22 years. Their three foster daughters have left home; there are two grandchildren now and another on the way. Mrs. Gritsch talked frankly of very difficult times with the daughters, and of her Christian faith. After a miscarriage, "I prayed for many years for a child; when I'd given up hope, three children appeared -- at a time when we could cope with them. My faith was tested and solidified with our first child, Valerie."

Ruth Sandman Gritsch was born in Germany to an atheist, socialist, Gropius-trained architect and his wife, a member of the nobility. They escaped Germany in 1933 to Paris, and fled again in 1940, arriving in New York in 1941, when Ruth was 10.

"A woman who worked for the International Refugee organization introduced me to Uta Hagen, the actress. I had talked and acted my head off ever since infancy-- I'd talked in sentences since I was nine months old. I began to do broadcasts for Radio Free Europe, with Mary Margaret McBride and Eleanor Roosevelt -- I stayed friends with Eleanor until her death.

"It was fun to sit on (Mayor) LaGuardia's lap, and we'd read the comics over the radio during the newspaper strike."

Ruth Sandman got a full scholarship in 1949 to Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y. -- but "I left before I got kicked out -- for morals" (violating the dorm curfews and dating the only black student, twice).

"So I applied to New York University. It was the first time my brains had become untrusted! It was extremely painful; I got headaches; but it was delightful! I majored in political science and acted on the side -- in college plays and at the Circle in the Square. I did Summer and Smoke with Geraldine Page. After doing summer stock I got my Actors Equity card."

After graduating in 1953 from NYU, tenth in her class, Ruth Sandman (in one weekend) taught herself typing, then got a job at the Institute for International Education, processing applications for Fulbright and other scholarships from European students.

Eric Gritsch was a Fulbright-Smith-Mundt scholar who arrived in July 1954 from the University of Vienna. After a week of touring New York with the new group of scholars, he told Ruth they would marry. But she was not interested in this pastor-to-be, and promptly got engaged to a socialist labor lawyer from Hamburg, whom her parents approved of.

But Gritsch ignored the engagement, and continued to come down from New Haven to visit her (he was working on an STM degree at Yale). Soon she returned the lawyer's diamond ring, and married Eric Gritsch in June 1955. He left for Austria in October and she followed in March of the following year.

"He was assistant pastor in Bruck on the Muhr in Austria -- a lovely place, but I felt hedged in by the high mountains. I was a hell of a long way from home. And I was the only American -- who wore makeup and very high heels (orthopedically prescribed for my bad back, believe it or not). The boss was a very pietistic hypocrite -- he ordered me not to smoke in public, said I was a corrupter of youth!

"I soon realized how little Christianity had to do with 'the church.' Through my husband's Bible study group I got a different slant from the pietistic bull perpetrated from

pulpits. Seeing what Christ said, I realized I'd probably been a Christian all along. I'd never accepted the pure luck, coincidence theory. For a refugee, cause-and-effect is woefully lacking as an explanation for things. My parents' atheistic, socialistic explanations were not sufficient to explain why I should have been spared during the strafing and come out unscathed. ...So I became a Christian, and found out I had a perfect right to be as anticlerical as before!

"We came back to Yale in 1957 for my husband to get a Ph.D. He realized his talent lay in teaching. His first position was at Wellesley. Then he became the youngest full professor (at 30) hired at a Lutheran seminary when we came to Gettysburg in 1961.

"The seminary's been good for me. I've mellowed over the years. But I'm more dogmatic. I have less tolerance with students who say, 'Tell me what to do.'

"It's good I'm married to a Reformation scholar: I was exposed early to Luther's Christmas sermons -- and discovered he had room in his theology for more than the stern Calvinism that most American Lutherans have. He talked about the angels: 'There they were, singing Alleluia and Fear Not -- instead of helping Mary with the diapers or cleaning the stable!'

"This is one of the things that disturbs me -- the lack of humor -- in many American Lutheran churches; and unfortunately there's an awful lack of it here in the present generation. The Chancel Players is moribund. For years people looked forward to spring productions.

"Also now there is less contact with students. I am available; some have found that out. And the refectory used to have faculty members and wives for a week of meals -- it's lunch only now, and no spouses. That's one less chance to meet students.

"Being at seminary is a good opportunity to stay kinda young. I'm shocked every once in a while when I'm treated like a little old lady! But I am in training to be a mean old lady -- I have

my intention of becoming like
one of the ladies in those George
Price cartoons -- you know, hatch-
et-faced, with their umbrellas
poking out in front of them. I
have every intention of saying what-
ever I think. If that upsets some-
body, that's tough."

Ruth Gritsch led her visitor
through the large downstairs rooms.
"I love this house. It's a very
friendly house. One time it started
squeaking and groaning. I decided
it needed some gaiety, so we threw
a party -- and after that, there
were no more groans!"

Pointing out the many art objects,
including a Navajo ceremonial rug
over a fireplace, several lions in
sculpture and drawings ("I love
lions!"), Mrs. Gritsch indicated the
many paintings by her lifelong friend
Feodor Rojankovsky, and spoke of his
widow, who is her "only holdover from
that style of life I used to live.
Twenty-seven years later, now it's
nostalgia time. I'm not sure I'd
want to participate in that life now.
Talk about schizophrenia! -- being
divided into several lifetimes in
one life -- being in college and at
the same time acting at the Circle
in the Square; Eleanor calling me to
come for coffee; and then becoming
a pastor's wife in Austria; and
here, being plunged into church pol-
itics! But I've adjusted!"

Ruth Gritsch believes firmly that
for small favors, such as good
weather, one should not bother God;
but there are other gods available:
"You know about my deal with Aquarius?
You notice it hasn't rained on Martin
Luther Colloquium day for 12 years?
Well, only once -- but that was dur-
ing a lecture. It stopped when the
people came outside. And when I'm
traveling, it never rains when I'm
outside."

Having to drive to York that night
for a rehearsal of her role as Mrs.
Gibbs in Our Town, the city lady in
the small town laments that it is
still raining -- "But you watch and
see if it doesn't stop at six -- that
is when it'll be time for me to drive
to York." By six o'clock, it had
slowed to a drizzle.

Luther Colloquy

October 26th was the date of the Martin
Luther Colloquium 1982. Over two hundred
guests registered to hear lectures center-
ed around this year's theme, "Luther, the
Church, and Christian Unity."

The first lecture, given by Dr. Eric W.
Gritsch of the Seminary Faculty, was en-
titled, "The Orthodoxy of Conflict: Luth-
er's Ecumenism." John F. Hotchkin, direct-
or of the National Conference of Catholic
Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical Inter-
religious Affairs, Washington, D.C. gave
the second lecture. His lecture was en-
titled, "Koinonia and Exclusivity." Luth-
eranism and the Ecumenical Challenge" was
the title of the final lecture given by
Daniel F. Martensen, director of the Wash-
ington Theological Consortium, Washington,
D.C.

The day was, as always, an excellent
opportunity to hear stimulating lectures
and to renew old friendships.

The Colloquium concluded with the Fest-
ival of the Reformation held in the Church
of the Abiding Presence. The presiding
minister was Dr. Herman G. Stuempfle, Pres-
ident of the Seminary. Dr. Richard L.
Thulin, Ulrich Professor of the Art of
Preaching, was the preacher.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- November 12 8:00 p.m. Gettysburg Community Concert, Claude Frank, pianist, G.C.
- 13 8:00 p.m. TRIP TO INNER HARBOR, BALTIMORE
"For Your Eyes Only", College Union, G.C.
- 14 3:00 p.m. Sr. Recital, Tammi Stephens, bassoon, Schmucker, G.C.
5:00 p.m. MIDDLE CLASS DINNER, COFFEE SHOP
- 15 5:30 p.m. SEMINARY COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER, REFECTORY
- 16 8:00 p.m. Lecture, Joyce Hollyday, associate editor of Sojourners, C.C., G.C.
- 17 8:00 p.m. Lecture, Joyce Hollyday, C.C., G.C.
- 18 11:00 a.m. Convocation, William Sloan Coffin, speaker, C.C., G.C.
4:00 p.m. "Xala", Bowen Aud., McCreary Hall, G.C.
8:00 p.m. same as above
- 19 3:00 p.m. Jr. Recital, Donna Getz, soprano and Studio Recital, Schmucker, G.C.
8:00 p.m. Fortenbaugh Lecture, 231, College Union, G.C.
8:00 p.m. Sr. Recital, Carol Didden, pianist, Schmucker, G.C.
8:00 p.m. "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers", College Union, G.C.
- 20 DAY HIKE ON APPALACHIAN TRAIL
- 21 3:00 p.m. College/Community Orchestra Concert, Schmucker, G.C.
8:00 p.m. "Victor/Victoria", College Union, G.C.
- 22 10:00 p.m. All Campus Thanksgiving Service, C.C., G.C.
- 25 through 28 THANKSGIVING RECESS
- 29 8:00 p.m. Faculty Recital, Meverda Hook, soprano and Dexter Weikel, organist, C.C., G.C.
- December 1 7:30 p.m. Advent Service, C.C., G.C.
- 3 3:00 p.m. Studio Recital, Schmucker, G.C.
8:00 p.m. Scharf Lecture, Bowen Aud., McCreary Hall, G.C.
- 4 10:00 a.m. MORNING CARTOONS, 206 VALENTINE HALL
8:00 p.m. Christmas Choral Festival, C.C., G.C.
8:00 p.m. "Ragtime", College Union, G.C.
- 5 3:00 p.m. Sr. Recital, Jane Melber, saxophone, Schmucker, G.C.
8:00 p.m. Christmas Choral Festival, C.C., G.C.
- 8 8:00 p.m. Band "Pop" Concert, College Union, G.C.
- 10 WINE AND CHEESE PARTY
8:00 p.m. "La Cage Aux Folles", College Union, G.C.
- 11 8:00 p.m. "Scrooge", College Union, G.C.
- 12 1:00 p.m. "Special Starlight"- Annual Christmas Program, Planetarium, G.C.
3:00 p.m. same as above
3:00 p.m. Messiah "Sing-In", C.C., G.C.

G.C. = Gettysburg College

C.C. = Christ Chapel