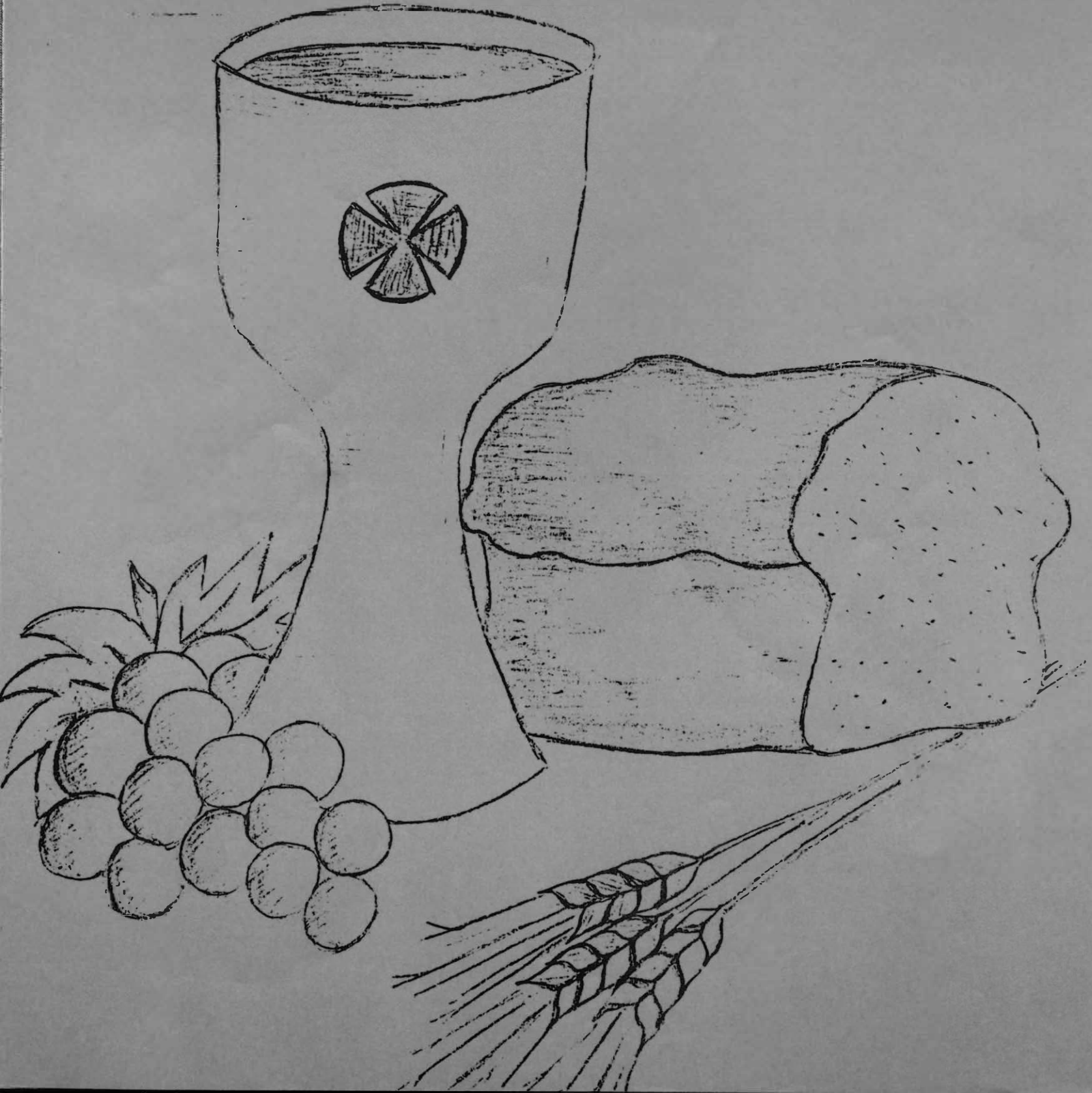


# TABLE TALK

Vol. XXVI No. 1

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TABLE TALK is a public forum for news, viewpoints, and opinions of students and other folks from LTSG. Please feel free to express your thoughts and ideas. Poetry and artwork will be considered, along with letters, book and movie reviews, and manuscripts dealing with assorted topics. All articles must be submitted with author's name; however, upon request and in consultation with the editorial staff, name may be withheld in certain circumstances.

Please submit all material typed, and single-spaced. Please proofread all material submitted.

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TABLE TALK is published monthly by students at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the editorial staff, the student association, or the seminary.

STAFF: Heather Bumstead      Jack Horner  
Chris Chantelau              Bob Knight  
Bill Griffith                  Kris Bell, editor

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TABLE TALK, 61 West Confederate Ave., Gettysburg, PA 17325.

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## A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOME ME

"A Stranger and You Welcomed Me" happened to be the theme of the 1990 Southwestern Minnesota Synod assembly, which was my last official synod event prior to coming to Gettysburg. Marlene and I experienced the implications of that theme in a powerful way as we began our life among you. We discovered this to be a truly hospitable place and thank each of you for the warmth and graciousness with which you welcomed us. In part, because of your gracious hospitality we still haven't really learned to "know the heart of a stranger," which is such an important Old Testament theme.

The awareness of their origins as outcasts and strangers was burned indelibly on Israel's consciousness. Again and again the Old Testament reminds God's people to welcome the sojourner and the stranger because they "know the heart of a stranger," since they were strangers in the land of Egypt. Jesus is so frequently criticized because he is found in the "strangest places," reaching out to those whom others consider "strangers".

Hospitality really is one very concrete and significant expression of the biblical concept of "shalom." This is something which congregations often find very difficult to express. Inhospitality is usually not at all intentional. Congregations that perceive themselves as very warm and welcoming are often shocked to find that others experience them as quite unfriendly and inhospitable. The pain of feeling unwelcome is all the more acute when it is experienced from a community that seems to be so warm and friendly to those who already belong. If we are truly serious about evangelism, we have no choice but to be serious about the biblical call to hospitality in every expression of the Church's life and ministry.

I truly sense the commitment here to model that hospitality. I also sense the awareness that hospitality goes much deeper than merely etiquette. It has to do with our attitudes toward people who appear different from us. It involves an openness to their ideas and their way of doing things and thinking about things. It involves a desire for open dialogue and a willingness to be enriched by someone different from us, which is much more than simply allowing that person to be part of our community. It invites them to help shape and determine the character of our community. It requires clarity about who we are and what we believe so that we can be secure enough to risk dialogue with someone different without fear of losing what is important to us. Finally, it challenges us to become vulnerable to each other and to take risks so that both we and our community can grow.

Although we have work to do before we become a truly diverse community, I am impressed with the diversity that does exist here. e.g., through the presence of international students, people with very diverse life experiences, some people with diverse ethnic and racial background, etc. We need to draw upon the richness of that diversity at the same time that we continue our efforts to become more inclusive.

As many of you have expressed desire for more dialogue and broader communication, I sense your commitment to this level of hospitality. I look forward to working with you in finding ways to give more concrete expression to this desire. May this campus continue to be a place of which those who enter truly can say "I was a stranger and you welcomed me!"

Darold H. Beekmann  
President



I must say that I am grateful to all of the people who have contributed to TABLE TALK this first issue. You were all very prompt and conscientious, and I thank you.

In reading back over some of the old issues of this publication, I was struck by the number of articles that reflect the very issues among us today. It was strange to see series of articles with opposing viewpoints on "inclusive language" in worship, as well as in everyday life. It was also odd to read articles discussing the disillusionment of people who had come to seminary, and the sense that this was not a place to come to find community or caring. I have heard this same thing from people this year! People complain about the unavailability and the personal distance of the faculty, and the whole process of lumping everyone who comes to this place into one category: --student. This kind of thing has serious repercussions, for people begin to feel kind of unimportant. It is amazing to me to think that people have been verbalizing this same thing for several years, and nothing has changed! Actually, it is not amazing, it is frightening! The defensiveness that we all seem to carry around our necks like an albatross is also a very good sign of the fact that something is in disarray here. How can we change this? It seems to me that a place preparing people for the ministry of the church needs to be continually evaluating its policies and behaviors. Is the institution setting an appropriate example? Is the institution being a good steward? Or is the institution following the lead of the national church and the country and merely taking care of its own needs and forgetting the needs of those that it is called to serve? (Just a little food for thought.)

Other articles from the past dealt with student apathy, gossip, and all kinds of stuff that we still have among us today. It was a real eye-opener for me, and it concerned me. We have so much that we can learn from one another -- all of us! How much better for it we all would be too! Our most eloquent sermons mean nothing if we cannot find a way to live what we say, and how can we provide any sense of hope and comfort to the people that we serve, if we cannot bring ourselves to identify with, or understand other people who are different from ourselves?

I hope that this is a good year for us all, and that we can respect and encourage one another in our struggles with the various issues that we face. It is also my hope that we can wrestle with and discuss our differences of opinions, and remain open to the fact that we might even be enlightened by the mere exercise of openness.

On a lighter note... there was once a fellow running around in desperate search of a prayer that would sum up all prayers. He went to the priest and asked him if he knew of such a prayer. The priest said, "why yes, as a matter of fact I do, and the prayer goes: 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.' However, I also know a shorter version you may prefer which is: 'lighten up!'" Words of wisdom for us all.

Kris Bell.

EDITORIAL

# NEWS FROM CHILDCARE COOP

But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of heaven."

For many years, the Childcare Cooperative committee has strived to provide daycare for children of the Seminary community in a variety of ways. Currently the Committee, with the enthusiastic cooperation of President Beekmann and the Seminary staff, is working on the development of a permanent childcare center. The importance of permanency is paramount. In the past, students alone have had to organize a new committee each year to arrange childcare. Continuity of care has not been possible because of the continual rotation of seminary students residing on campus, but now, with the support of the Seminary, this can be achieved.

The ideal center would be one that is located on campus, operational year round for both daytime and evening childcare, and partially subsidized by the Seminary. At this time, though, it is not possible to provide childcare on campus because the previous site of childcare, Heiges Hall, as well as the other campus facilities, do not have the appropriate State Occupancy Code necessary to become a licensed center. Future plans do include providing a childcare center on campus but the first step toward this goal has been taken.

With the combined effort of the Gettysburg YWCA, Christ Lutheran Church, and the Seminary, a daycare center will be established at Christ Church and should become operational in late October, as soon as licensing procedures are completed. This center will provide care for the children of seminary students, faculty, and staff between 8:00am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, at a rate of \$1.50 per hour. Since the YWCA is licensed for "drop-in" care only, the children may stay at the center for no more than four consecutive hours, but may return for care after a short break away from the center. (rare exceptions may be possible) The center will be staffed by two adults at all times and additionally by college and high school student volunteers. As in the past, all food and beverages must be nutritionally sound and provided by the parents.

Funding for this center still remains a current need. The YWCA will be providing some toys, but more are needed as well as cribs, floor mats for napping, and high chairs. The Childcare Cooperative committee will gladly accept monetary gifts or donations of the necessary items.

The Committee is truly thankful for the support of the Seminary, YWCA, Christ Church and for the help of all those involved in this deeply important effort.

Please contact any member of the committee with questions or comments.

The Childcare Cooperative Committee  
Bill and Deb Griffith  
Doug and Sharon Knupp  
Jeff and Karen Bohan

# NEWS FROM SOCIAL ACTION!

## THE 1990'S: A TIME TO ACT

Was Jesus only interested in saving individuals so that they could go to heaven when they died? Jesus entered into history with a declaration that He had come to initiate the Kingdom, that same Kingdom in the prayer He taught that might exist on earth as it already exists in heaven. Jesus desired a new social order, a system of human relationships that would reflect love and justice.

The Social Action Committee is interested in promoting positive individual and corporate change throughout our Seminary and the community of Gettysburg. The Committee shall be responsible for discovering and seeking ways for relating the Seminary community to organizations and programs in Gettysburg and surrounding areas. The Committee shall also be responsible for implementing social action programs for the student body.

Plans for the academic year include an "Evening with our International Students," and a series of programs addressing Houselessness, Homophobia, Stress/Suicide Prevention, Adams County Blood Bank, Cultural Diversity, Black History Month, World Hunger, and the Environment.

The Social Action Committee will educate, advocate, and implement direct action. God's Kingdom is right here on earth. Help make a big difference by only offering a small part of yourself.

Brian C Smith  
Social Action Committee

## TABLETALK SEPT/OCT EDITION

For November, the Social Action Committee will be highlighting the issues of homosexuality and homophobia. Because approximately ten percent of the United States population is homosexual or bisexual, the committee feels that sensitivity and understanding of lesbian and gay issues are essential in ministering to them and their parents, friends, and significant others who are members of every congregation. The committee hopes to help educate the community by putting educational blurbs in the Redactor, distributing literature from Lutherans Concerned (A Christian Ministry for Lesbian and Gay Understanding), and their program for congregational acceptance entitled "Reconciled in Christ". The committee plans to show "Maurice", a movie based on the E.M. Forster novel and maybe invite a speaker from PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) come to the seminary. If you have any comments or suggestions, please speak with Marie Krueger or Martin Beyer of the Social Action Committee.

BIRTH, WOMEN, AND MINISTRY  
by Lans E. Alexis

They say giving birth to a child is miraculous, but as an active observer in this process, and after listening to the active participant, I have to say that birth is about suffering too. Mind you, it is a joyful suffering, but it is about pain nevertheless. And thinking about it not very long after the fact put me in mind of God.

I'm now more in mind to think of God as Mother, spinning out the globes of Creation in a caterwaul of painful joy. The child may seem perfect after she or he is born, yet somewhere ahead of God, S/He saw pain lurking. And what of the Nativity -- did God cry out any less than Mary, knowing how the sword would pierce their hearts? Infant Jesus cried, as he would in the pangs of his second birth, when he bore the cross for his fellow children's sakes. The cross, like birth, is a joyful suffering, but it is about pain nonetheless.

Thus, I will make an absurd, and very un-St. Claf, leap: women should have been ministers all along. When we ask about suffering willingly taken up for the sake of others, who innocently offers herself to a calling of bearing pain to see life made new? Yes, it is a natural urge, you can say, but given what the new mother has learned about agony, she could prevent its recurrence. (The old saw: if it were up to men to give birth, the human race goes phht.) And where do men's natural urges get them? Ask a couple of Roman brothers pictured in TIME the week of 9/16.

Now I will rant (it's late, forgive me): how can mandatory celibacy possibly serve to bring women and men closer to God? Those who are blessed to be parents and priests have a stake in the future. It is not my world any longer; it belongs to my daughter. "Give my life to God in serving others? What does that mean?" Yes, my child has shown me how to love someone in need, this helpless life I am in a little way responsible for. Pardon my harshness, but for whom does the celibate risk his or her life? Father God risked his very life, risked his very Son, for us.

I have a clue how much that takes, yet I am now willing to risk my life for my child, as I have done for my wife, and, by God's gracious extension, to as many other children, sisters and brothers as I am allowed. Still, I'll hazard a guess my partner will be abler at being a suffering servant. It is in the nature and caste of women. Only God's only Child exceeds them. Still I gnaw over this: the Daughter of God? How radical....

# QUEST...



QUEST is underway! QUEST is a sub-committee of the Student Association, designed to deal with issues of inclusivity and minority concerns. We hope that everyone in the seminary community--men, women, students, faculty, spouses--will feel free to participate in QUEST events as we address concerns people see as important to our seminary community and ministry. For our first meeting, we will have an informal get-together over refreshments to discuss what we'd like to do as a community for the rest of the year. Our main goal is open communication...providing a forum for exchange of ideas and feelings. Please come join us on Monday, October 15, at 7:00. For more details concerning place, watch the Redactor and the coffee shop bulletin board.

Quest Committee

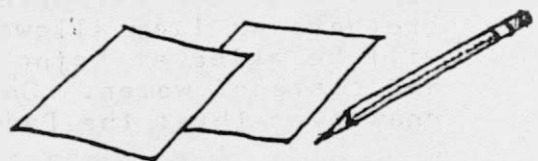
## CORE COMMITTEE

At the first core committee meeting, elections were held for representatives to faculty committees. The results are as follows: Academic Policies - Matt Lamb and Ken Grant. Admissions, Scholarships, and Recruitment - Heather Bumstead and Chris Chanteleau. Library - Laura Stoneback. Field Education - Steven Herr and Brian Stamm.

Several suggestions have been made that a juice machine be put in the coffee shop. It has been researched in the past, and was found to be too expensive. However, this matter is being looked into.

Megan Reynolds, secretary.

# WELCOME !!



Welcome to another year of TABLE TALK! The editorial staff hopes that we can print a variety of different opinions and viewpoints of the students and other people from LTBG. We encourage your input, and thank you for caring enough to express your ideas on paper.

Deadlines for submitting material will be the first of the month, so keep that in mind as you study diligently, or work, or take care of children, or ... you get the point.



# What is our Aim?

In writing my senior approval essays, I was faced with the dilemma of explaining what an associate in ministry is. Actually, this was not too difficult of a task, since I am often faced with explaining myself to others. I am an MAR student concentrating in Christian Education and as such, I often encounter misunderstandings about why I am here at seminary and what I plan to do after graduation. I will spare you all the details of my approval essays. Rather I will attempt to define my ministry by correcting some common misperceptions.

First, I am not a failed pastor. This is a common misperception, as evidenced by comments such as "Oh, you're an MAR student. Why didn't your synod endorse you?" My synod did endorse me; they endorsed me for candidacy as an associate in ministry. I am pursuing professional lay ministry for a variety of reasons, but none of them are because I couldn't make it as an ordained pastor.

Second, believe it or not, I know I am not stupid. Several apparently well-meaning people have told me that I am a seemingly smart person, who could probably do very well in the MDiv program. Thank you for your supportive stance, but the MAR program is not merely a dumping station for stupid people. Professors grade us on the same scales as the MDiv candidates, and in fact, we take many of the same courses; notice that we do not have special sections designed for remedial work!

Third, I am planning on doing "real ministry". This is a response to those of you who insist on asking me why I don't become a "real minister". I consider my journey to be just as real as anyone's and I believe I will fill a real need in some real congregation. Luther speaks of the ministry of all the baptized, out of which some are called to provide for the ministry of Word and Sacrament. In Acts we read of those who were set aside to perform a ministry of service in order that the apostles could concentrate on their ministry to the Word. None of these ministry are better than others; rather they all work side by side in order to proclaim the gospel. So it should be in the church today. In their study of ministry, the ELCA is attempting to define what ministry is. I would urge them to look at the current stipulations surrounding ministries in our hospitals, colleges, pastoral care facilities, hospices, etc. Not everyone is called to be a parish pastor. Does this invalidate the worth of other ministries to which some of us may feel called?

In conclusion, I suppose I am asking that people be a bit more sensitive to those of us here who are not studying for the ordained ministry. I do not appreciate being constantly asked if I have "seen the light" and have switched to the MDiv program. I do not appreciate the assumptions that everyone here has taken E to F. I do not like being patronized and told that "it's nice that you want to run a Sunday school program." Not everyone acts this way, and I thank those of you who realize the importance of

what I have chosen to do and support me in it. I've been told that I might as well just accept the fact that this institution is primarily for preparing people for ordained ministry, and as such does not need to meet the needs of others. If that is true, then I believe our church to be in extreme trouble indeed.

-Tami Kuhf

# POETRY...

35 miles of 11E in East Tennessee...

Wild, purple flowers  
in the median strip of a highway,  
As I rush by -- your brightness catches my eye,  
and the combination of hues green and purple  
Leave an imprint on my mind--  
bright and daring,  
You -- flamboyant, colorful ones  
aware of your beauty.  
Shug Avery, you were right to say,  
" It pisses God off when you pass by the color purple  
and don't notice it..."  
Purple flowers --  
Leaning, yearning toward the light.  
You are a gift from God  
for the wayward soul to find.  
The mowers crush you once a month,  
but you find a way to triumph  
as you assert yourselves over the vast ugliness  
that humans have pressed upon you.  
You are survivors  
community of purple saints  
pushing, pressing, celebrating birth and rebirth,  
amidst the greens and the greys of the median strip.

(to the glimmer of purple light in us all)  
Kris Bell.

# Dear Gabby

From: troubled  
To: Gabby



The "Dear Gabby" advice column is a new regular feature in Table Talk. Gabby brings with her many qualifications; not the least of which is the fact that she is completing her 16th basic unit of CPE. Letters to Gabby may be left in the Table Talk mailbox. Gabby is not obligated to answer her letters. Gabby's opinions are her own and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Table Talk staff or of Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary.

Dear Gabby:

I just finished my first basic unit of CPE. I'm back at Seminary now but I just can't seem to let go! I talk CPE, I think CPE, and my conversations with my friends and professors always seem to turn into IFR sessions. Help!

-Addicted to CPE

Dear Addicted:

I'm hearing a lot of confusion and anger there. I sense a lot of unresolved issues within you. I would invite you to consider how this all makes you feel. My word for you would be to get in touch with your feelings and consider how this conflict is affecting your ministry. When you figure out what it will take to lessen the confusion and anger, get back to me.

Thanks for Sharing,  
-Gabby

Dear Gabby:

I'm a first year student here at the seminary and I'm confused by the view of the Bible expressed here. I have a hard time believing several people, like this Jedp, edited the word of God together. Didn't the people who wrote the Bible write down exactly what God told them to?

-Searching for the Truth

Dear Searching:

I affirm you in expressing your true feelings! If you think it is - of course the Bible is the literal word of God! I think Biblical criticism is just plain silly, don't you? It sounds as if you're threatened by your professors. Why don't you claim your authority and speak to them? Good luck (you need it).

Scholastically Yours,  
-Gabby

Dear Gabby:

I've just returned from internship and I'm beginning to realize that I don't like it here at the Seminary anymore. What should I do?

-Unhappy

Dear Unhappy:

Buck up, or get out.

Sensitively Yours,  
-Gabby



Hey Kids!!!  
We want your stuff  
too! Please  
give us your poems,  
Pictures, etc., etc!



**ADAMS RESCUE MISSION**  
2515 York Road E. • P.O. Box 3178  
Gettysburg, PA 17325 • 334-7502

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO RECYCLE!!! THERE ARE THREE BARRELS BEHIND THE POWER HOUSE FOR CARDBOARD, GLASS, AND ALUMINUM. THE ADAMS COUNTY RESCUE MISSION PICKS UP MATERIAL FROM THESE BARRELS EVERY TUESDAY.

IF YOU PREFER, YOU MAY TAKE MATERIALS DIRECTLY TO THE MISSION. WHATEVER YOU DO, PLEASE RECYCLE!

ALSO, THE ADAMS COUNTY RESCUE MISSION IS IN NEED OF MONEY TO REPAIR THEIR BROKEN BOILER. PERHAPS WE COULD HELP THEM WITH A SPECIAL OFFERING. THEY PROVIDE A VERY USEFUL SERVICE TO ADAMS COUNTY AND DESERVE OUR HELP.

**ITEMS ACCEPTED AT MISSION**

- GLASS** - sorted by color, remove lids & rinse, labels may remain on bottles
- BI-METAL CANS** - rinse & flatten cans, leave labels on
- LEAD-ACID BATTERIES** - no cracked batteries  
\$1.00 charge
- NEWSPAPERS** - take to Mission, no magazines
- CARDBOARD** - Flatten, no waxed or plastic coated cardboard
- AL CANS & OTHER AL SCRAP** - remove webbing from old AL furniture
- PLASTIC BOTTLES** - clear plastic soda bottles, gallon milk, & water jugs, soap-detergent bottles, rinse and remove lids
- OFFICE WASTE** - includes envelopes, letters, files, flyers, computer paper, photo copies  
**DOES NOT INCLUDE** newspaper, magazines, carbon paper, styrofoam cups or food wrapper
- CLOTHES** - ladies hand bags, shoes and other resalable items



Care for God's

Batter my heart, three personed God; for you  
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
That I may rise and stand, O'erthrow me and bend  
Your force to break, blow, burn and make me new.  
I, like a usurped town, to another due,  
Labour to admit you, but oh, to no end;  
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
But is captive and proves weak or untrue.

Yet dearly I love you and would be loved fair,  
But I am betrothed unto your enemy:  
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,  
Take me to you, imprison me, for I  
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

~ John Donne  
1573 - 1631

