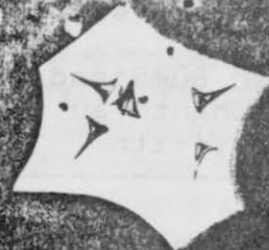


# TABLET

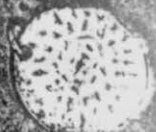
Volume: **XXVII**  
Number: **no. 2**

Render unto Caesar...



Knock and the door shall be opened unto you...

I will make you fishers for people...



IF YOU HAVE FAITH AS A MUSTARD SEED...

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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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## THE CONTINUING QUEST

Although Gettysburg Seminary seems to enjoy a reputation as a place with a strong sense of community, issues emerging in recent weeks make it clear that we also have work to do in that area. The pain, struggles, and brokenness that have surfaced has led to some frank conversations which I consider healthy. I trust this has also driven us in new ways to that grace which alone can empower us to be open, vulnerable and sensitive to one another as we work through these issues. As I write this, I am looking forward to the open forum on November 5 and the forum on financial aid on November 6 for further opportunity for "hearing and being heard".

I am heartened by the commitment from students, faculty and staff to be part of the solution. In spite of frustration, student leaders have been willing to work through the structures available in pressing issues that needed to be addressed and have invested significant amounts of their personal time and energy to find solutions. Student Association President Tami Ruhf and Chaplain Mark Oldenburg deserve special thanks for their extra efforts. The Child Care Co-op Committee has spent countless hours coming up with a creative plan for more permanent and continuous child care services. When it became known that a rather large number of our students and families were experiencing extreme financial stress with lack of food and other basic necessities, I was gratified by the outpouring of concern, advocacy, and financial support from the entire seminary community.

As a result of those mutual efforts, some things have happened. Additional emergency funds have been generated for distribution through the Chaplain's Discretionary Fund. Significant financial aid has been distributed. A food bank has been established on campus. A sizeable gift of money has been designated to establish a permanent food bank on campus which will access government food supplies. The entire procedure and schedule for granting financial aid is being reviewed and a revised plan should be in place by early next year. Smoke alarms have been installed in the apartment buildings. The Board of Directors has approved the installation of more effective security measures in apartment buildings and the matter of campus lighting is being addressed. This is a beginning. It was possible because of people who are willing to risk raising sensitive issues and groups within our community who have been willing to work together in seeking solutions.

Hopefully, we can build on these mutual efforts to deepen our trust and encourage openness in addressing the issues that are still before us. It is apparent that sexism, both subtle and not so subtle, is still alive and well among us. There must be no question that this is simply not acceptable within a community that is shaped by the gospel. Subtle judgments about the relative value of ordained ministry and the ministry of associates in ministry, as pointed out by Tami in the last issue, are not helpful or appropriate. We must develop more effective and intentional lines of communication within our community and commit ourselves to being more open and sensitive to each other. As we continue this quest, I am confident because of what I have already experienced from you and because of our mutual confidence that God's grace indeed can empower us to take the steps necessary for a fuller experience of Christian community.

Darold H. Beekmann  
President

From the  
EDITOR...

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Last month, I discussed some of the issues that seemed to be emerging around the seminary. It has been quite refreshing to see how quickly these issues have been addressed. The Quest meeting of October was a shot in the arm for many of us; students and faculty alike got excited about things that could make this community a better place. "Quest for Community", which is the name of the group this year, has very good ideas for opening up dialogue around the seminary, and a lot of energy for the journey. Amen! This is good news for the seminary. I think that it is also important to note that we have a very actively involved student association president who is not afraid to tread down paths formerly unknown to many students, and because of her energy and commitment, many more have been empowered to speak out. But best of all, this seminary has been blest with the presence of President Beekmann. Because without him, none of this would have been possible this year. President Beekmann has opened up the channels of communication between faculty, staff, and students with his openness and his caring way. There has been an amazing change in the attitudes of many this year, and perhaps it is because they have found their voice, and they have found someone who was willing to listen to their concerns. There are many wonderful faculty members here who are very involved in community life, and it is especially nice to see that faculty and students alike are being supported and encouraged by such a pastoral administration! All I can think to say is.....what a welcome change, thanks be to President Beekmann, thanks be to the faculty, and thanks be to all of us here as we learn better how to live with each other!

Of course, there are still many rough spots, but we are beginning something very important here, and it is the conversation that matters. Hopefully, we will be able to grow in trust and respect for one another, and this will enable us to be more effective ministers of the gospel. Thanks be to God!

Paul Bell



# COMMUNITY DISCIPLINE

Again the community faces down another crisis. Again we dialogue and argue, in the open and in our special little groups. I have seen this now for the many years I have been connected to this seminary (and it has been too long!). First it was inclusive language, a perennial favorite. Then a search for professors who will be of a different makeup than those who predominate here. Then a search for a new president -- what qualifications will determine that choice, professional or political? Again, are we denominational or evangelical catholics? What other storms haven't we faced?

What is the heart of the matter in this latest tempest? What shall we do to build up community? For even if we have always had a hard time creating community, at least this year it has not been brushed under the carpet. We have said that something is wrong; I wonder why it took so long?

I heard two ideas at our community meeting that have to be well thought out if ever they are to be the way we should go to walk in newness of life on this campus. One person mentioned moral character, another discipline and sacrifice. They both said in effect, "It's not an easy word to hear, is it?" No, I think not, not when it is couched in terms that are earnest, and yet spoken more like command than promise.

Let me just plead for the case that everything that we do be done in love. If we are to have community, and if that community is to have a higher moral character, to be disciplined, and make sacrifices, these actions will go nowhere without love. We must know God loves us, and that because of that we can love ourselves and each other.

Now that is a spiritual quest, and as someone pointed out, there are many roads to go to find a spiritual discipline for oneself. But a fault that I have sensed in our generation of the Church is that we seek out a psychological or political expedient to cure a spiritual ill. It is what ails the ELCA; it is what ails the call process as I have seen it and experienced it.

Those who attended a recent synod retreat saw this happen in plain view, as the presenters sought to help us cure our "emotional baggage" without developing any kind of trusting relationship with us. The students were decidedly wary of a group that would later evaluate us asking if we could share some deep hurts without telling us how they might deal with them. Thankfully, the candidacy committee heard that fear and confessed that they had misused their authority. I believe some healing did take place.

But I have heard that same fear expressed when it was decided that faculty would have a crucial role in evaluating candidates for ministry. Trust will be crucial in our new relationships, and that trust and faith will only flow from love. We have to love one another. That is scary, too, but it is an imperative that is filled with hope and promise that a great good will come out of our discipline and sacrifice -- the new life that Jesus promised. And isn't that worth the present pain we'll have to go through? As our Midwestern kin might say, you bet!

# Quest for what? Quest... for Community.

"Oh, they're just a bunch of militant, radical, kamikaze feminists." "Oh, quest, that's just a bunch of men haters." These are just two examples of comments I have heard, both this year and last, describing Quest. Unfortunately these opinions have had quite a bit of following here. Equally unfortunate is the fact that these opinions are often expressed by people who haven't been involved with Quest.

I have to admit that after listening to comments like these I, too, was wary of associating myself with a potential group of "men haters". Since I was already over-extended last year I found it just as easy to stay away. Fortunately, this year a good friend made a personal appeal to me to come saying: "no, that stuff is just not true, please come." My friend was absolutely correct, but if it hadn't been for that appeal it may have been just as easy for me never to find out.

When I went to Quest's first meeting this year I discovered a group of men and women who were indeed concerned with women's issues and also with minority issues. But most of all I found a group of people from this community... both students and faculty... who were just plain concerned about issues that affect us all.

This year that concern has centered around issues of community and problems members of this community are experiencing. Because the overwhelming focus of concern was our community, Quest has -this year- decided to focus on those issues of community and will be known as "Quest...for community". On Monday, Quest will sponsor a community forum, and depending on community response we will probably do so again.

My purpose in writing this article is to make the same kind of appeal to you that my friend made to me. I would like to say to you that Quest is not a bunch of militant men haters. Quest is a group of students and faculty who are deeply concerned about our community and are committed to helping it's members to heal it. Please, come and see for yourself... I'm glad I did.

-Heather Bumstead

from the Student Association President

5.

This has been quite a month. As most of you know by now, a concern arose at a Student Association meeting that there were students, both single and married who were having financial difficulties, often to the point of being forced to decide between paying bills or buying groceries. Much has occurred since this problem was first brought to light. Meetings were held, concerns were shared, donations were generously given, and a food bank was established here on campus.

In dealing with this specific concern, many other concerns were raised. While these concerns were varied, I think they all have a common root in a concern for community. At a meeting of Quest a few weeks ago, this concern was acted upon, and Quest was reshaped. It is now called Quest...for Community. In future years this committee may serve different needs, but for now the focus is on filling what seems to be a serious deficiency: people here want to feel a greater sense of community.

When I first began representing students' concerns, I confess that I went into it feeling as though I had to fight an enemy. However, in reflecting on what has happened in the last few weeks, I see many hands who have joined together to meet the needs of this community, and I am given hope. The crowd that showed up for Quest's Open Forum in the refectory proves to me that we do indeed have a community here. The receptive response I and other students have received from the administration, faculty, staff, and board of directors points to the ministry that does indeed happen here. Things are happening, changes have occurred, people are listening. When addressing the board of directors, I told them that I consider them my partners in ministry, and I hope that this is an image we can all share. We are all partners in ministry, and I am distressed when I realize that we do not trust each other, as was pointed out at the Open Forum. I see this truth playing itself out in many ways. We are often convinced that their synodical committees have only denial on their minds. CFE is viewed with distrust, financial aid is seen as a mystery, people are afraid to open up to each other for fear of later reprisal, competition for grades is stiff despite our pass/fail system.

And yet, I have hope, and I am convinced that the majority of others on this campus have hope as well. The very fact that people are talking to one another and responding to one another, instead of simply pushing community aside as an unattainable ideal gives me that hope. We must be patient with one another; change takes time. Yet we have started on what I see as a first step and I want to thank everyone who is participating in that journey. I won't begin to name names because I'd invariably leave someone out...there have been so many people who have responded in so many ways. Thank you to you all and know that the community appreciates your efforts. And, in it all, let us not forget why we are here and what needs to be

our focus: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has promised to be with us...we don't have all the answers, none of us! We need to keep returning to our baptism and participate in Word and Sacrament...that is where true community begins.

---Tami Ruhl

## Social Action News

The Social Action Committee would like to extend a Thank You to the seminary community who helped make International Night a special evening for students from abroad.

During the month of October, Social Action attempted to raise the community's awareness on the need of affordable housing in the United States. In cooperation with Adams County Habitat for Humanity, volunteers from the Hill got down and dirty (literally) at 135 West Street, Gettysburg, where the current project is only weeks from completion. The beloved Dr. Roger Gobel and his lovely wife, Trudy, provided coffee and donuts for the dusty crew. On October 27, a roadtrip to Penn State to hear Millard Fuller, founder and president of Habitat, was sponsored by Social Action.

In November, Social Action is sponsoring a group from Parents FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) from the Harrisburg area to speak on campus. Two mothers and a Lutheran counselor will be here to talk with us about their experiences and about how we can help further our understanding of the gay community. This group will be with us on Tuesday, November 6th at 7:00 pm in the coffee shop. The committee also plans to share educational materials about homosexuality and homophobia. A movie will be shown in mid-November. The movie is entitled, Maurice, and is based on the novel of the same name by E.M. Forster. The film explores tensions, social pressures, and joys of a homosexual relationship. Because this movie is not rated, parents should be advised that the movie contains some nudity. Marie Kruger will be happy to answer any questions you may have pertaining to her planned events in November.

In December, Social Action in cooperation with the YWCA, will sponsor a blood drive. Please consider giving the gift of life this year.

Brian C Smith  
Social Action, Chair



## Reflection on Student Life

After sifting through the jumbled myriad thoughts of the Sept/Oct 1990 Table Talk editorial several times, I had to respond to four particular sentences. The sentences I refer to are "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."

I too, like the editor, have heard the same views expressed. And I too, like the editor, have been disturbed by those views. However, I have been disturbed in a different way.

First, "student." What is wrong in being categorized as a "student?" Does being a "student" make me unimportant, or make me feel unimportant? Not me! According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary a "student" is "a person who studies, or investigates; a person who is enrolled for study at a school, college, etc." Assuming that a seminary falls into the "etc" category, I then fit that part of the definition of a "student." For I am enrolled for study at this seminary. I also am a person who studies or investigates. Heaven knows I study and God knows I am investigating, a whole multitude of things. And I have to admit I am proud of that. So, do I mind being categorized as a "student?" No! Do the editor and others enrolled in this particular educational institution have a problem with being categorized as "students" -- "as ones who study or investigate, as ones who are enrolled for study?" Do the editor and others object to being enrolled in this particular educational institution? Do the editor and others object to studying and investigating? I know I do not, for here, today, I am a "student." And I have no problem being "lumped" into that category.

Second, "the unavailability and personal distance of the faculty." Is the editor talking about the same faculty with whom I have dealt? I find that extremely difficult to believe. I have never found a faculty member "unavailable or personally distant." Yes, at times it has been difficult to get to see a faculty member to talk to them, due to their schedule or mine (which is usually the problem) but they have always found the time. And I am not referring to those with whom I currently had classes -- but any faculty person -- for any reason. I have found faculty "available" any time -- day or night -- to discuss classwork, personal problems or concerns, or to give input in a discussion with fellow classmates. I have not experienced "personal distance" with this faculty. In all my previous educational experiences, I have never found a faculty with whom I could have both a professor/student relationship and a peer relationship. And this extends to the support staff as well. The opinion of the editor and others reminds me of the slogan "If God seems far away, who moved?"

Third, "community." Do we come here expecting a ready-made "community" that will open its arms and welcome us, immediately making us a part of it? Do we expect "them" to provide that "community" for us? Perhaps we need to take a part in creating that "community." Do I think that everyone here is part of a one-big-happy-family "community?" No. Do I want that? No! Am I part of "community" here? Yes. Actually, part of several. Each one is distinct in itself and all overlap to varying degrees. And all exist

because I and others took the time and responsibility to build that "community." "Community" does not automatically happen, you have to work at it.

Fourth, "caring." There is a great deal of "caring" here. I have experienced it many times. I have personally received "caring" from both faculty and students. As I went through the turmoil of being a first year seminarian and all the questions and doubts and struggles that can involve, I experienced the "caring" of fellow students. People, who understood and "cared" enough to help me sort out the questions and to begin to search for the answers. People who hurt and struggled with me. And I also experienced the "caring" of faculty. People who "cared" enough to be concerned, to worry, to push and prod and to be there to not only help me sort out the questions, but also to pose the questions and to help me to begin to search for the answers. No matter what time--day or night. And again these were not just faculty with whom I had classes.

Actually, my complaint would be the other way. Sometimes I feel there is too much "caring" here. Or at least what some perceive to be "caring" and what I perceive to be intrusive and smothering. I am referring to those who are so intent on "playing pastor" that they haven't taken the time to learn what "caring" is.

And so far this year, I have experienced a tremendous outpouring of "caring." During pre-session, I received some very disturbing news and am currently going through a difficult time. Faculty members have been super in their concern and "care." And not just those who are currently my professors, but all, with whom I have shared this pain, have been there and have continually expressed their "care" and concern. And not just faculty, but support staff as well. And my fellow students. How do I begin to describe the love and "care" I have felt from you? It is impossible. I probably expected my closest friends to "care" and be there for me. And they have been. And I thank God and ask Him to bless each and everyone of them. I did not expect those that I would "categorize" as acquaintances to show such "care." And I certainly never expected those to whom I was much less than "caring" toward in the past would show me such "care." For the way I have treated them, I ask God's forgiveness and theirs. For the way they have treated me, I ask God's blessing upon them.

There is a lot of "caring" here. "Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." (Mt. 7:7-8, NRSV)

PATRICIA D. HENDRICKS

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# "Amen", Daddy

"Amen, Daddy". "God is great!" These are some things my child says in church in addition to asking for crayons and coloring books, cookies and crackers, papers and pencils. A baptized child of God, not yet two, has a place in worship.

However, the seminary chapel is not acoustically child-friendly. When my child shrieks "Mine!", heads begin to turn and you notice a few sympathetic smiles. Kids just aren't made to sit still for two hours. As the children rustle or fret, the poor parent tries to comfort and quiet them. The neighboring parishioners shift from sympathy to annoyance. The concerned looks seem to transform into accusing glares. They seem to say "Why didn't you leave that child elsewhere?"

To be honest with you, we tried to leave our child elsewhere. However, she became agitated and was upsetting other children in the nursery. So now the dilemma: do we take our child along to church, or do one of us stay home with her? We opted to take her to church; later, and not much later at that, we felt we had chosen unwisely. We felt alienated from the assembled congregation because of their reaction to our child's distracting behavior.

My wife removed our child from the sanctuary to the entryway, where closed doors would hide our daughter's boisterous behavior, only to be asked by another parishioner, "Is this the nursery?" (The parishioner was not carrying a child.) "No," she replied, "this isn't the nursery, but Ruthie wouldn't stay at the nursery this evening." This was all too much and Sharon took Ruthie home.

Honestly, we try to respect a serene worship environment. Evening eucharists don't make this very easy. We would like to at least sense that the congregation is not against us as we try to minister to our child. Sharon and Ruthie missed fellowship at the Lord's Table and I felt cut off from them.

Why don't we consider something that may be too familiar to us?

And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them. Mark 10:13-16.

In Mark, the gospel writer portrays the disciples as people who just don't perceive the gospel message. They don't get it. Is our seminary community following this path?

Until our community can embrace every member unconditionally, we fall short of our goals of inclusivity.

Douglas Knupp  
"Amen, Daddy!"

# Food Bank Update

THE FOOD BANK IS OPEN!!! The Family Life Committee finally was able to open the doors to the food bank on Monday, October 29th. Through the generosity of local churches, faculty, students and the Schall fund, the food bank is well stocked. It is open to all seminary students and their families. You DO NOT have to be starving to use it. If you are having trouble squeezing out money for bills, going through a rough period right now, need to supplement your Sunday dinners (which are not provided in the refectory), or just plain tired of eating macaroni and cheese three times a week, we are here to serve you!

I have heard quite a few comments to the effect of 'didn't they know that they would have to make sacrifices when they came to seminary?'. Someone told me that if they would become sick right now that they would not have enough money to go to see a doctor. I'm not sure if one should have to sacrifice this much. The Family Life committee cannot solve everybody's financial problems, but hopefully having a food bank open on campus will help take the edge off of the sacrificing one must do to get through seminary.

The food bank is located in the basement of the refectory. Please enter by the basement door facing the library. Joe Cotner will have the food bank open during the hours listed below or by appointment (334-0783). As always, donations for the food bank can be dropped off at the chapel or the coffee shop or given to one of the members of the Family Life committee (Joe and Donna Cotner, Jeff and Karen Bohan, Lee and Ann Brumback).

## FOOD BANK HOURS

MONDAY 12:30PM TO 1:30PM

TUESDAY 5:00PM TO 6:00PM

WEDNESDAY 10:15PM TO 11:15PM

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## Give Blood-The most Precious Gift

This year the Social Action Committee of LTSC is teaming up with the YWCA for a Christmas Bloodmobile. Remember Christmas? The time of the year with re-runs of all those great Christmas specials and movies, fun parties, Advent wreaths, and "visions of sugar plums?"

It is also the time of the year for life-threatening car accidents and consequently, the time when the need for blood is the greatest. This year, give the gift of blood. Sign up at the bulletin board for a time. It is important to sign up in advance so the Red Cross will know how many nurses to send. The bloodmobile will take place on December 6 between 1 and 7 p.m. at the YWCA. Contact: Sandra Carlson Alexis

# GIVE LIFE



## Homosexual: Compassion or Condemnation ?

I was moved to tears as I read "The Walking Wounded: An AIDS Mother's Story" in the February 17, 1988, issue of *The Lutheran*. I also felt a great deal of anger. I find it hard to believe that anyone could be heartless enough to tell a mother on the day of her son's funeral that she won't see him in heaven because he was gay. Even more astounding is the fact that some families disown their homosexual children to the point of not allowing them to come home for Christmas. Unfortunately, the church sometimes seems to encourage this rejection and makes homosexuals who wish to be faithful, active members feel quite unwelcome.

It is time to overcome our fears, ignorance, and prejudice so that we can reach out in love to provide a desperately needed ministry of reconciliation. Some of those who feel that homosexuality is a sin are attempting to do this. It is a nice gesture on their part, but much more is needed. The church should affirm that homosexuality in and of itself is no more or less sinful than heterosexuality. Homosexuals can have loving, committed relationships which are every bit as moral as heterosexual marriages, and heterosexuals can engage in meaningless physical liaisons that are just as immoral as homosexual ones. We are far too quick to brand any lifestyle, belief, or practice which differs from our own as sinful. Concurrent with that belief, at least in the case of homosexuals, is the view that they should repent and could be heterosexual if only they were willing to change and would ask God for help. As the author of the article in *The Lutheran* points out, it is difficult to believe that one would choose to be homosexual when that choice entails so much pain and rejection. Where did we ever get the idea that one's sexual orientation is a matter of choice, anyway? I know I did not sit down one day and decide to be heterosexual after weighing both options! Furthermore, I could not switch to homosexuality now, even if my friends, family, and church all urged me to do so. How, then, can we justify asking this of homosexuals?

Those who condemn homosexuality frequently cite biblical passages as the basis for their opinion. While the Bible is certainly a good place to look for guidance, it is important to keep in mind that verses taken out of context can be used to justify almost anything. The unwillingness of some churches to ordain women and the incidence of Anti-Semitism among Christians are two examples of this. In addition, the biblical prohibitions against certain homosexual acts must be understood in light of the historical and cultural context in which they were written. Because of the high infant mortality rate and low fertility rate, any sexual outlet which could not lead to reproduction was frowned upon. It is highly questionable to conclude



that the writers of Scripture were conveying God's blanket condemnation of homosexuality.

It is unlikely that all people will ever be convinced that homosexuality is not a sin. This should not keep us from ministering to homosexuals and allowing them to minister to us. They, too, are people created by God and blessed with unique talents and gifts. Not all church members will welcome openly homosexual persons, but positive changes can still be made if enough people are willing to proclaim that God's love extends to all, and demonstrate that belief by creating a truly inclusive church with doors open to everyone who wishes to enter them. Many who are comfortable condemning homosexuals from a distance may find it much more difficult when they get to know fellow members who do not fit preconceived notions of promiscuity or other stereotypes.

As a church, we have a choice to make. We can maintain the status quo, where some churches have wonderful ministries in which homosexuals are a vital and welcome part, but most congregations either reluctantly tolerate or openly reject their homosexual brothers and sisters in Christ. We can continue the current policy of allowing only those homosexuals who are willing to vow to be celibate for life, or who keep their sexual orientation a carefully guarded secret, to be ordained. This is certainly the easier and less controversial path to take, but I do not think it is a choice that those who claim to be followers of Christ can justify making.

The choice that we are called to make, in my opinion, is to take a position which views homosexuality as a form of sexual expression equally acceptable to heterosexuality in God's eyes. This option would do much to ease the pain and heal the deep wounds of guilt and rejection felt by homosexuals and their families. Those who feel called to be pastors could enter seminary without the burden of keeping a secret or promising to forego the joys of a loving, committed monogamous relationship. AIDS victims could be ministered to with compassion untainted by moral judgments. Clearly, this latter path will lead to healing and reconciliation, while the first choice can only lead to stagnation and heartbreak. It is up to us to decide which path we will take.

Wendi Gordon

# Open it up...

There is nothing more boring than a one sided argument. And there is nothing more deceptive than the setting up of an open discussion and having the agenda preset and the "correct" viewpoint assumed.

Case in point is the Social Action Committee's function with the parents and friends of gays support group FLAG. Although advertised as an open discussion, pronouncements by the Social Action Committee concerning the issue of homosexuality appeared daily in the Redactor for a week before event. These "thoughts for the day" made it clear where the discussion was headed and what, in the eyes of committee, was the correct position on the matter. Any opposing opinion, assuming there could be such a thing, would certainly feel unwelcome to such a "discussion."

The seminary and our education would be much better served if the Social Action Committee would stop pontificating and pushing their agenda and seek debate on matters of social concern. They may even discover that if people actually thought they were sponsoring a truly open forum, attendance at such events would reflect the rich variety of opinions one finds in this community.

Jack M. Horner, Jr.

# The Many Faces of Jesus?



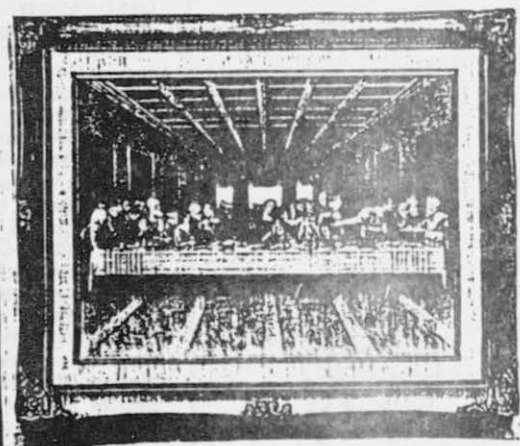
SURFER JESUS  
("Yo Surf's up Dude")



COVERGIRL  
JESUS  
("My foundation gives me that flawless image")



AVON LADY  
JESUS



THE \$12.50 BUFFET  
(ALL YOU CAN EAT)

# Thank You...

Dear Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg:

This is a simple note of thanks; thanks expressed to a seminary that has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help families, couples and individuals in financial need.

The seminary, through its various groups and individuals such as the Family Life Committee, the Chaplain, and other sponsors of the Food Bank, has provided food and financial assistance for the same to my family and others in this community.

Thank you.

Jack, Joshua and I arrived here in September with poor financial security and no immediate prospects of employment for Jack and me. The seminary has been responsible for considerable assistance and support, none of which was expected. I would like to recognize and express my appreciation to the parties involved in this hard work, especially, Mark Oldenburg, the Chaplain, Joe Cotner and others on the Family Life Committee.

Thank you Gettysburg, once again, for the generous support and kindness expressed to those in this community in need of help.

Vicky Horner

THE WASHINGTON POST

## Gold Card for Luther? Master the Possibilities

### Bank Solicits 16th-Century Theologian

By Lynda Richardson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

It took 500 years, but Martin Luther finally has gotten the credit he deserves. He's been accepted for a gold card.

Luther, the 16th-century leader of the Reformation, received a letter at Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington this week informing him that a gold card with a \$6,000 credit limit is now reserved in his name.

Martin Luther becomes part of a "unique and distinguished group" at Chevy Chase Federal Savings Bank, the letter says.

"At Chevy Chase, we recognize and respect your expectations," says the letter signed by a bank vice president, Dennis C. Moroney. "It will be our greatest pleasure to meet and exceed them all."

Bank officials spent yesterday scurrying to unravel the mystery of how the gold card invitation was sent to Martin Luther, the Roman Catholic priest who galvanized a religious movement that led to the birth of Protestantism. An official at Chevy Chase Federal Savings said the

bank was trying to trace the letter back to its source.

But, to be sure, the bank's generous offer—including purchase protection, travel accident insurance, access to cash—legitimizes Martin Luther in a way that some Christians have yet to do.

Luther was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church partly over issues of church credit.

The German challenged the Catholic practice of selling indulgences, a means by which sinners were pardoned if they contributed money to a cause.

After nailing his famous Ninety-five Theses on a castle door challenging what he saw as a cruel money-raising system, Luther was drawn into direct conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. The Lutheran Church was eventually founded on the doctrines and beliefs that he espoused.

The Rev. John Steinbrück, whose church received the letter, said that he is impressed with the gold card invitation. The preacher is not so sure he can get one for himself.

"If Chevy Chase sees fit to give



MARTIN LUTHER

Martin Luther a gold card. I think Rome should reconsider its attitude," said Steinbrück, delighted at the news regarding the new gold card invitee on the eve of the Reformation Festival Season that is observed on Oct. 28.

Steinbrück quickly fired off a tongue-in-cheek response to the bank.

"He's out of town at the moment resolving some credit problems in Rome with the Vatican Banko Spiritu, Inc.," the pastor's letter said, signed in the name of Martin Luther's wife, Katherine Von Bora-Luther.

"But I do know what would be his stand on your proposal. Since we are already offered unlimited free credit (grace)—at no interest—24-hour customer service—with no VISA required and eternal life insurance tossed in for the sheer love of us, we enjoy as 'preferred' a status as we will ever need."

# Dear Gabby:

Dear Gabby:

My spouse and I recently moved onto campus. However, I have a problem that maybe you could help with. Whenever we have sex I feel so guilty. The seminary is such holy ground and after all my spouse will be a minister - a holy person. What should I do?

-Troubled on Sacred Ground

Dear Troubled:

You're having sex? Consider yourself fortunate. The guilt will pass when you come to realize that this community is something quite short of sacred. If the guilt doesn't pass, write again (and could you include more details next time???)

Jealously Yours,  
Gabby.

Dear Gabby:

I'm having some trouble with my Synod. I feel that they are trying to trick me into believing that I have lost my mind. Have you heard this complaint before?

I'm afraid that they might be right.

-Scared at Seminary

Dear Scared:

If you take your synod too seriously you probably will lose your mind. Just remember synod is pronounced SIN-ODD (need I say more?).

Sympathetically yours,  
Gabby.

Dear Gabby:

I understand that the Food Bank has expanded it's services. Is there any cause for concern regarding this change? Especially in light of the current S&L crisis which was the result of similiar expansion?

-Satisfied but Nervous

Dear S & N:

Gee, I feel as if your signature should have been on my first letter... but I digress. I understand your worry, but I don't think there is any cause for concern unless someone on the family life committee is related to George Bush.

Your faithful watchdog,  
Gabby.

PLEASE WRITE TO GABBY C/O TABLE TALK. AND PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT GABBY'S OPINIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THOSE OF GETTYSBURG SEMINARY OR OF THE TABLE TALK STAFF!



# Friends

Is it more important to have friends or to be a Friend? The truth is, it is impossible to have friends without being one. This reality has become vivid to me. The true friend is a warm smile, an outstretched hand, and loving heart, many times we take our friends for granted. When one expresses adversity of any kind, the loss of a loved one, or illness, a friend is like a ray of sunshine. Friendship is an interaction of love for one another which God has given to each of us. How we make use of this ability is up to each of us. To me a friend is a warm blanket of comfort that I can wrap my troubles in and find they melt away. Often an unexpected visit from a friend does much to brighten our day. Perhaps we should try harder to be a friend.

Sandra Gideon



"Lord, we remember the poor of our city this morning ... the hungry, the homeless—and trust that in the remembering we have somehow fulfilled our responsibility toward them ..."

used by permission ... thank Anne



HOW I PREPARE MY HEART FOR HOLY COMMUNION  
 Tim Craven August 2-3, 1989 11PM - 2 AM, Ephrata, Pennsylvania  
 while listening to old Bob Dylan records



Me:

Pastor, I keep having this recurring nightmare  
 which flashes through my brain every time I receive Holy Communion  
 especially when I receive it by intinction:

I'm an old man sitting on the porch horrified.  
 I keep rocking back and forth talking to the pizza delivery boy,  
 "No one can read any more. No one can read any more. No one can read any more."

Meanwhile, my nurses, who are all Nintendo freaks  
 working their way through Cosmetology School  
 are hiding in the laundry room snorting Ajax  
 and discovering a cure for the common cold

Then a drunken blonde woman in neon orange shorts  
 spits in the face of Descartes who is in the chair next to me drooling  
 and won't move his checkers until he has proven they exist  
 and always keeps asking, "What day is this? Is the weather cool?"  
 The blonde screams at him,  
 "Information has been redefined as a rap CD stolen by an eight year old drug addict!"

Divorced children with wooden legs form bicycle gangs and terrorize the Jaycees.  
 My college room mate, Zap Comes, and her boy friend, Info Burning, the Lebanese lab tech  
 invite me to a little party on West College Avenue  
 There flowers explode and self-expression dances in the hallway with the refrigerator.  
 I cut in and mistakenly dance with the refrigerator who is wearing glasses but can cook.

Pastor, should I have guilt feelings when I tell my girl friend  
 that I'm uncomfortable talking to my second wife about my first wife  
 or should I just get a desktop computer with organizational skills  
 to manage my social calendar and simply sleep with the waitress from the diner  
 on New Years Eve?

I'm not the person I used to be  
 In fact, I never was the person I used to be  
 I only found out yesterday that the person I used to be  
 was ~~seen last~~ night leaving a bus station in New Mexico  
 with a brown paper bag under his arm  
 Sometimes when I get up early in the morning  
 I have an unexplainable desire to drive to Philadelphia and make Tasty Cakes  
 Actually ~~for as long as I can remember I've always~~ been someone I haven't met yet

I dreamt I was a football on the opponent's one yard line  
 History is changing her clothes in a phone booth. Herstory:  
 I dreamed I was impotent and went to the doctor.  
 She said I had a microscopic tattoo on my penis.  
 She put me under a microscope and examined me closely.  
 "What does it say?" I asked. "Assembled in Macau," she said.  
 We married and honeymooned there where she took me apart.

HOW I PREPARE MY HEART FOR HOLY COMMUNION  
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I went to the grocery store  
and discovered a group of fifteen year old clerks and stockboys  
having a seance by the bananas  
A pale green banana spider from Ecuador  
with plaid eyes and a walking cane, sort of like an 80's Jiminy Cricket,  
was being deified by American youngsters.  
No wonder the automobile industry in this country is falling to pieces.

I went to buy flea and tick powder for my dog and found it had been replaced  
by a new line of Pet Ouija Boards.  
A Puerto Rican man with a turban and sandals  
was sitting by the floor near the Coke machine  
interpreting the meaning of Oxydol crystals.  
I asked him which phone company I should pick.  
Then I opened a letter from my Mother who said she was starting to feel old  
and wished everyone was Republican because nobody made any sense any more.  
Ministers are wearing colored shirts and athletes are dressing in black.  
People are getting cooler and the Earth is getting hotter.  
Either this is the Great Reversal talked about in the Gospel of Luke  
or Donald Trump will soon be President.  
Donald Trump wants to be President.  
All I want to do is drive a taxi at 2 AM in State College, Pennsylvania  
and take drunk people home safely  
I think doing that would make this a better world somehow.  
What do you think, Pastor?

Pastor:

I think that stress is the devil's champagne  
It bubbles like the bends inside our veins  
It's the drink of choice to exorcise post-modern satanic anxiety attacks  
like the one you just had here right on my couch (I'll get the paper towels).  
Teenagers now brazenly suspect that reason, the False God, has perished  
sacrificed unexplainedly on the altar of traffic jams  
and mystical daycare problems.

I think Descartes has been sitting there waiting to make his move  
for over two hundred years and people no longer have any change left  
to put into the reason meter. spiritual gridlock/constipation

And as for you, well as Martin Luther would have said,  
"My son, I fervently believe that you should trust your future to God  
because you are not in control."  
In fact, my child, I myself am thankful that you are not in control  
'cause if you were we'd all be in a lotta trouble.

Let's pray....

HOW I PREPARE MY HEART FOR HOLY COMMUNION  
Tim Craven page three

Me:

Wait a minute. Pastor, are you in control?

Pastor:

Are you kidding? God's in control, not me.  
Let me tell you about the dream I keep having  
when I distribute Holy Communion, especially on Easter and Christmas Eve:

I dream that I go to a church council meeting and the entire council  
is in the terminal stages of cancer and loaded up with morphine  
but they still insist that they're the only ones  
who should count the money after the service. It's awful.

The Call Committee turns out all along to be aliens  
who collect pastors like little glass sculptures  
and put them on the mantle in the firelight  
so they can read the New York Times with Sam Donaldson  
in the dark and fractured glow of the prism.

The little sculptures grimace eternally.

No, you're not in control. I'm not in control.  
But Communion is still valid.

Let us pray,  
"Thank-you Lord for reaching down and saving the crazy shithouse rat."  
Amen.

**"Amen"**

Amen

"Amen"

**"Amen"**

**"Amen"**

**"Amen"**

"Amen"

**"Amen"**

"Amen"

**"Amen"**

Table Talk  
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TO: