

Table Talk

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Commencement



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at Gettysburg.

Members of the Publication Division

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Table Talk
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
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From the Editor...

It doesn't seem possible. Did the time really go by this fast?

It is possible and yes the time did go that fast. We're at the end of another academic year and we are scratching our heads as to how we accomplished all the assignments and maintained our balance as students, friends, parents, volunteers, etc.

We accomplished all this thanks to the grace of God, who knows we work hard and allows us to play with equal vigor. We thank God for the chance to learn, to proclaim, to challenge, to question, to laugh, to mourn, to look forward, to care, to be ourselves.

We still have have a lot of growing to do. Some will experience this on CPE or internship. Some will experience this at their first call. Wherever growth occurs, take a minute, relax and thank God for the chance you have or the chance you had, to grow at this campus, at this time.

Personally, thank you to the student body for electing me to a new position of service in the next academic year. I'm looking forward to thoughtful government...and I'm looking for a lot of help from you.

Cliff Eshbach
Editor

Transformation

Last year I served my internship in Sacramento, California. One thing I realized while I was there was how much I missed the change of seasons, especially the fall. Granted, it was great not having to deal with all the snow that fell on the east coast, and I definitely enjoyed having flowers blooming all year round. But I greatly missed seeing hillsides of bright colors and the crispness of the fall air.

So this past fall I greatly enjoyed watching the leaves change colors. I collected leaves, pressed them, and sent them to my friends and family in California. I took lots of pictures around campus, too, knowing that I won't be here next year to enjoy it. I also have enjoyed watching the buds form on the trees this spring and the bright green leaves that eventually emerged.

Well, I guess because this is my senior year, I've been getting nostalgic about all kinds of things. One day recently, I was thinking about how leaves relate to our years of seminary.

In the spring (first year of seminary) those leaves are so green and fresh. In early fall (middle year) they begin to change colors, sometimes several colors at the same time. Finally, the winds force the leaves off the trees (graduation). They are gathered together, then sent who knows where (1st call) for yet another purpose. In the winter the trees are bare, but again in the spring, new buds form and eventually new, green leaves emerge.

Those leaves sure go through a transformation!

As students, we too go through quite a transformation during our seminary years. Every time I rejoined my classmates on campus after being away for a time, I saw how we had changed

and grown. Some started their seminary careers single, and are now married or engaged. A few are no longer married. Children have been born, friends and family members have passed on.

We've put on weight, lost a little hair, said goodbye to old and faithful cars, but gained valuable knowledge and experience in the classroom and through field education opportunities that have helped to shape our ministry.

We've learned from each other, from professors, from field education supervisors, from our families, from our successes and failures, and most of all, from God. Within weeks of beginning classes, my friends agreed that even if we never made it through the ordination process, the education we received would be invaluable for life.

My seminary career has flown by, yet at times it feels like it took forever. I don't dare count the number of pages I've read nor the number of pages I've written, but I know that these four years will have prepared me (as best they could) to serve the church of Christ. I look upon the task with fear and trembling, but with confidence that God guides us always.

Transformation is a part of the seminary process. So don't be afraid to learn, to soak up the sun, to change colors, to be blown off the tree and thus find new life, new meaning in another place. Be open to God's possibilities for you.

Gwenn Trout
Senior, Lower Susquehanna Synod

Thank You Bishop Anderson !

In deciding how to write about Bishop Anderson's visit with students during Spring Convocation, I took many notes from one of his conversations with students. However, it seems that the few notes I took during his morning presentation on April 30th reflect not just his conversation with students, but also his conversation with the church. So, it seems appropriate to review his seven recommendations for the church.

1. Deepen our worship life.
2. Teach the faith.
3. Witness to God's action in the world.
4. Strengthen one another in mission.
5. Help the children!
6. Connect with youth and young adults.
7. Develop leaders for the next century.

Whatever form our ministry has, or will take us, it seems that these seven themes will engage us on a regular basis. Bishop Anderson has thoughtfully put before us the challenge and the opportunity in ministry.

We shouldn't be deterred by the amount of time it will take. Instead we should take the time, to take the lead in working to achieve the goals of these themes. Sounds hard.

Sounds fun.

Thank you Bishop Anderson!

cliff

In a few short weeks I will be crossing the mountains heading west to Southwestern Pennsylvania. It was just four short years ago that my car broke down 19 miles away from Gettysburg as I was heading for an incredible journey. As I look to the west and watch the sunset, I reflect on my life as a Seminarian these past four years.

There have been many times when I have crested the last rise and seen the goal clearly and the valley laid out before me. While I could look back and see where I have been, I can also look ahead and see the wide open road that lays before me.

If I were to leave a few words of advice to those who will follow on the path to the mountain top that will lead to the valley of ministry, I would say take time and admire the view. do not get so involved with your studies that you never take the time to get to know your classmates and those who will be future ministers in the Christian Church. There is so much to learn and it is not all in print. Professors and Candidacy Committees are your friends, they are not out to get you, they are here to help you become the best minister possible. God is there for you, so pray. Prayer will help you through the trials and tribulations that you will face as you climb the mountain.

As I look out across the valley I know that I have climbed a mountain that has given me a glimpse into the future. A future that is wide open and full of fertile fields, that I have been called to plant, tend and water with the Living Word of God. It is for the fertile field that we climb the mountain of Seminary, and it is Seminary that equips us to "Go in Peace and Serve the Lord!!"

Keith Deckinger

Senior

Nebraska Synod/assigned to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

Endowment Established

Please Help it Grow!

The class of 1997 has established an endowment fund in the name of Thomas C. Cloutier, a dear friend and classmate who died of a heart attack on December 14, 1996. In memory of Tom's love of theological education and of his love of the seminary, the Senior Class has decided that the interest from the endowment will be used for general student scholarships here at LTSG. The goal is to raise \$10,000 over five years so this fund can become a perpetual memorial to Tom.

You can help us reach this goal by making your check payable to "Lutheran Theological Seminary Gettysburg" and designating on the memo line "Thomas C. Cloutier Endowment Fund". We continue to pray for Tom's family and hope that you will also keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Thank you for your gift to this endowment fund.

God's Peace
The Class of 1997

Positively Adopted
by
Renata Eustis

When my husband, Paul, and I decided to adopt a baby from China, I understood that this was something that would change our lives forever. Choosing to become a multi-racial family in a racially divided society is a challenging but wonderful prospect, as is parenting a child of another culture. It gives us a chance to embody what we deeply believe: that we are all one human family. I've thought a lot about these aspects of adoption and the way it has changed and will change my life. But in spite of the fact that I've been in seminary for three years and consider myself to be a reflective person, I never anticipated the gifts that adoption would bring to my faith life.

All of a sudden I hear adoption language in scripture differently. We are God's children through adoption! In these months of waiting to adopt I've been given a window to see into what our adoption is like from God's perspective as our Adoptive Parent. It is crystal clear to me that adoption is not "second best." Becoming a parent through adoption doesn't ever happen by chance or accident. It is a choice usually one that involves a lot of work. Many times I have been overwhelmed by the incredible love I feel for our child. This love is not based on anything this child had done or any particularly endearing quality (though I am sure she will have an infinite number). It is based simply on the fact that she is our child.

While the language of scripture portrays adoption in a highly positive light, some contemporary ways of talking about adoption do not. I believe that much of this is done by loving, well-meaning people who haven't been so closely connected to

adoption and don't have any idea about the hurtful impact of their words. Part of Christian love is speaking in ways that build people up rather than tear them down. This new language has been a part of our learning and preparation process and I would like to offer it to you. Our daughter was placed for adoption not "given up", "given away" or "put up for adoption". We will bring our daughter not "our adopted daughter" home. This may seem like a small thing but the message that comes across is that her relationship to us is somehow qualified. Similarly, we are not hoping to have a child or "our own" (i.e., a biological child); she *is* our "own" (as much as any child "belongs" to its parents). The people who gave our daughter life are her birthparents not her "real mother and father" or her "natural parents." giving birth is not what defines a mother, just as impregnating a woman does not define a father. (Keep this in mind on Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day.)

As leaders in Christ's Church it is important that our words convey what we really believe about adoption. Because our primary identity is as God's children through adoption, how we speak about adoption has consequences for all Christians, not just those in adoptive families. It makes a big difference whether we understand our relationship to God as "second best" or as a longed for, chosen child.

*Renata Eustis is a 3rd year M. Div.
Student from the Metro DC Synod.*

The hot ticket this summer...

...for Lutherans is the day the churchwide assembly votes on the two ecumenical proposals for full communion with the Episcopal and Reformed churches.

What do the proposals say and what do they mean for the future of the ELCA was the topic of a Student Association, Lectures Division, panel discussion on Monday, April 28th.

On the panel were professors Duane Larson and Roy Enquist plus Leonard Kline, the pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, York.

Following a description of the two proposals by Dr. Larson, each panel member spoke on their feelings about the documents, plus they also expressed their thoughts on the current ecumenical movement.

Dr. Enquist, provided the audience with his impression of ecumenism based on his years of experience, and stated that after many years of work that "ecumenism's hour has come."

Each of the panel member agreed with the vision expressed in that statement, however Pastor Kline expressed his concerns with the documents, in that the proposals did not deal with some of the critical issues that remain.

While stating he was comfortable with the theological proposals of the Concordat for Agreement with the Episcopal Church, he is concerned with the time frame in implementing Lutheran bishops into the Episcopal Church's historic episcopate.

On the agreement with the three Reformed church bodies, Pastor Kline was concerned that each of the churches were not "mutually challenging" each other on points such as guidelines for shared celebration of the Eucharist and church order.

The panel was in agreement that the two ecumenical documents are "perfectly honest". And they were also in agreement that if the proposals pass, much more work must be done to make the transfer from the theory of full communion, to the practice of full communion.

Stay tuned this summer and stay tuned to the future as we learn about the impact these proposals will have on our ministries.

Thanks to the S.A. Lectures Division for their work in scheduling this program!

Blessings

My Brothers and Sisters:

Blessings is a word that touched my heart last summer. It was a gift from my CPE supervisor. She would end our group sessions and individual sessions with the word blessings. Its a word I picked up and started to use myself.

Blessings are " special favors, mercy, or benefits." (Random House Dictionary) Our lives are full of blessings. Indeed even this year amidst the deaths, cancer, and other medical crises we can find blessings within our lives.

It has been a year in which much has happened. Yet in little ways we have maintained ourselves as a community. We have watched one another's children, we have prepared meals and done laundry for those in need. We have prayed, cried and mourned together. We have also rejoiced and celebrated in baptisms, first communions, affirmation of baptisms and weddings.

As the summer draw nears may God's *blessings* be upon you as you leave for CPE, internships, calls and post-graduate work. You have touched my life in ways that I will never be able to tell you, in ways I have yet to discover. All of you have

been a *blessing* in my life. For that I
Give God thanks.

May God bestow *blessings* upon you for your
journey which lies ahead.

Blessings

Wendy Abrahamson

Student Association Elections

On April 8,9 and 10 the student body held their election of officers for the 1997-1998 academic year. Students were also voting on 17 proposed changes to the by-laws of the Student Association. Election results are:

President:

Cliff Eshbach

Recording Secretary:

Keith Spencer

Corresponding Secretary:

Kathy Baker

Treasurer:

Ray Branstiter

Additionally, all 17 by-law proposals were approved by the student body. The new officers assume their duties following the close of the May 16th commencement program.

Please thank these people for serving and lend them your support and service in the coming year.

Junior Class Elections

The Junior Class, the class of 2000, recently held their election of officers for the 1997-1998 academic year. The results of the election are as follows:

President:
Bill Schaefer

Secretary/Treasurer:
Matt Fuhrman

Trustees:
Dale Cline
Don Costlow
David Darling
Kathy Swords
Nathan Wright

Also at the class meeting, the class gave their appreciation to the outgoing officers: President Jamie Ryan, Secretary/Treasurer Matt Fuhrman and Trustees David Darling, Cliff Eshbach, Serena Grill, Bill Schaefer and Nathan Wright.

Amadeus

How
do I make
a painting of love?

Stones
and bleeding bread,
a china cup,
a cloth with folds,
a perfect shell
in buttery light
and singing dark.

Chiaroscuro
is the theme,
the canvas
is the altar.

Every brush stroke
a paean sings,
sings Creator's praise,
and celebrates in hues of earth
and cobalt,
viridian, chrome and zinc,
alizarin,
cadmiums
cerulean and ochre,
with oils cold-pressed
from flax and pine,
and brushes
made of sable,
bristle,
slender wood,
all bound by metal ferrules.

All God's gifts
of life;
all are God's celebration.

All God's are they,
and we.

I paint God's gifts,
paint us,
ourselves,
and I paint love,
for we
are the love
he
keeps panting.

LLR July 28, 1989
(setting up a still life)

BIBLE PUZZLE

1. To the number of books in the Old Testament
2. Add the number of books in the New Testament
3. Divide by the number of times Peter denied Jesus
4. Multiply by the number of loaves that Jesus used to feed the five thousand
5. Subtract the number of Apostles Jesus had on earth
6. Add the number of years it took to build Solomon's temple
7. Divide by the number of days Jonah remained in the stomach of the whale
8. Subtract the number of pieces of silver that Judas received when he sold his Lord
9. Multiply by the number of commandments given to Moses
10. Divide by the number of Joseph's brothers who went to buy corn
11. Add the number of virgins spoken of in the parable of the virgins
12. Subtract the number of men who were put in the fiery furnace
13. Divide by the number of days it took God to finish the earth
14. Multiply by the age of Jesus when He was with the doctors in Jerusalem
15. Divide by the age of Moses when he was hidden in the bulrushes
16. Add the number of days Jesus was on the earth after His resurrection
17. Divide by the number of persons saved by being in the ark at the time of the flood
18. Add the age of Methuselah when he died
19. Divide by the number of the love chapter in I Corinthians
20. Multiply by the number of spies who returned with good report from the Promised Land
21. Divide by the number of lepers healed by Christ as recorded in the Gospel of Luke

22. Add the number of days it rained to cause the flood at Noah's time
23. Subtract the number of years a certain man had an infirmity, and wanted to be cured by stepping into the pool of troubled waters
24. Add the number of candlesticks in Revelations
25. Multiply by the number of sisters Lazarus had
26. Divide by the number of tribes of Israel
27. Multiply by the number of letters in the shortest verse in the Bible
28. Add the number of times Jesus was tempted in the wilderness
29. Multiply by the number of living creatures in Ezekiel's vision
30. Subtract the number of chapters in the book of Ezra
31. Subtract the number of the shortest chapter, which is also the center of the Bible
32. Add the number of days Christ was in the tomb
33. Multiply by the number of thieves crucified with Christ
34. Subtract the number of years the Israelites were in the wilderness
35. Divide by the number of Minor Prophets from Hosea to Malachi
36. Multiply by the number of books of Moses
37. Divide by the number of mites the widow cast into the treasury
38. Subtract the number of foolish virgins

What is the answer?

With Tongue Firmly Planted in
Cheek...

FROM THE DESK OF...

*THE NATIONAL, WEEKLY WORLD,
STAR, INQUIRER, ETC.*

ON APRIL 1, 1997 AT A NEWS CONFERENCE IN GETTYSBURG, PA, THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY PROUDLY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO PRODUCE A NEW SERIES OF MULTIMEDIA ADAPTATIONS OF POPULAR BIBLICAL STORIES. WHILE A SIMILAR PROJECT IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY WITH THE ABS, THIS NEW SERIES OF VIDEOS WOULD TRY TO BLEND ALREADY RELEASED, POPULAR SONGS WITH APPROPRIATE SCRIPTURAL STORIES OR CHARACTERS. IT IS HOPED THAT SUCH A COMBINATION OF POP CULTURE AND BIBLICAL STUDIES MIGHT APPEAL TO A LARGER RANGE OF AMERICANS THAN THOSE SONGS SELECTED FOR THE FIRST SERIES. THOUGH THE SONGS FOR FOR THE NEW VIDEOS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, SOME HUMBLY SUGGESTED MATCHES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

JESUS EATS WITH PUBLICANS &
SINNERS...

... "FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES" BY
GARTH BROOKS

SHADRACH, MESHACH & ABEDNEGO

... "LIGHT MY FIRE" BY THE DOORS

**With Tongue Firmly Planted in
Cheek...**

THE STORY OF JOB

...**"NOWHERE TO RUN"** BY **MARTHA &
THE VANDELLAS**

THE CALLING OF MATTHEW

...**"TAXMAN"** BY **THE BEATLES**

NOAH'S ARK

...**"WHO'LL STOP THE RAIN"**, BY
CREDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL
(NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH A BAND WITH A
SIMILAR SOUNDING NAME)

DANCE OF HERODIAS' DAUGHTER

...**"FOXY LADY"** BY **JIMI HENDRIX**

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

...**"THUNDERSTRUCK"**, BY **AC/DC**

EHUD THE JUDGE

...**"MACK THE KNIFE"**, BY **BOBBY
DARIN**

**THE PROCLAMATION OF
JOHN THE BAPTIST**

...**"WILD THING"** BY **THE TROGGS**

**LOOK FOR THESE VIDEOS AT A
CHURCH PUBLISHING HOUSE OR
LOCAL VIDEO STORE NEAR YOU!**

Rejoice and Sing!

Rejoice and sing -
for Christ the King -
has set the pris'ners free.

Freedom from death -
eternal breath -
for pris'ners you and me.

God's only Son -
the anointed one -
He suffered in our place.

Lord Jesus Christ -
He paid the price -
Receive God's gift of grace.

Anonymous

FROM THE EDITORS

Table Talk is a publication of the Student Association of this seminary. It is given to students, faculty and staff of LTSG. It is also sent to the board members, and to the seven other ELCA seminaries. Submissions are freely accepted, but not all submissions see print. The editorial staff reviews submissions, and those that we feel are not relative to the primary readership, that is, to the student body, faculty and staff, we have chosen not to publish. We would encourage authors to bear in mind the wide audience this publication sees.

At time, articles have been edited for clarity, length, or errors. The editorial staff strives to remain true to the spirit of the article and the author. We do ask, given, that authors, especially those of non-fiction articles, pay attention to good grammar and form, as spelled out in Turabian. In terms of writing style, authors are strongly encouraged to write in active, rather than passive, tense.

Articles should be placed in the Table Talk mailbox in Valentine Hall. The editors appreciate articles submitted on computer disk in WordPerfect, Ms Word or MS Works format. However, paper hard copy is also acceptable.

Augury

- May : 16 Commencement &
Close of Spring Semester
18 Music Gettysburg 7:30PM
30 Music Gettysburg:
Hymnfest 8PM
30 - 31 Preaching & Church Music
Workshop
- June :
- 16 & 23 S.T.M. & Continuing Ed.
Summer Courses
- July : 6-10 Summer Institute for
Ministry
12-25 Diaconal Ministry
Formation Event
27-Aug. 2 Theological Education
for Laity
- August :
- 11-13 Welcome Churchwide
Assembly Guests!
- 15-29 Summer "Ελλην !
22-24 Lay School Weekend Retreat
- September:
- 2 Junior, Middler & Senior
Pre-sessions
5 First day, Fall Semester
Classes
22-23 Town and Country Church
Institute Annual Program

