

Table Talk

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Table Talk

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
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Gettysburg

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From the Editor

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

God's grace and peace to you all! It is in some ways fitting that this long expected first edition of Table Talk for the 97-98 academic year is being published during the season of Advent. Advent is a season of anticipation and longing. Our patient anticipation during Advent will be satisfied in-part by the celebration of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas. It is also more frequently satisfied when we are met by our Savior at his table in the form of his body and blood in our Eucharist meal. However, the ultimate satisfaction of our longing will be met only by his return in glory as he promised.

Cliff Eshbach, President of our Student Association, recently shared a story about his introduction to a new acquaintance. Cliff explained to the person that as a second year student at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg he had the pleasure of being a member of the class of the year 2000. The other person replied that it was too bad Cliff wouldn't be able to put any of his Seminary education to use. It seems this person was one who believes that the dawning of the new millennium will bring with it the "end time", in one manner or another. I'm not sure how Cliff responded to the person, but I do know that he hasn't dropped out of Seminary.

During this season of Advent we are all reminded that no one really knows when the time of Jesus' return will happen. Jesus himself said that even he didn't know when that day would come. For that reason he told us to make ourselves ready and to be prepared for that end time, whenever it may come.

It is for this reason that we are all here, in this place, at this time, preparing ourselves and each other for the many various forms of ministry required by God, our Church, and the people we serve.

We are here because of what we do know. We know by reason of our faith that God has redeemed all of creation through his saving grace shown to us by the death and resurrection of his Son our Savior. We know that each of us has been called in one way or another to share and live out that good news in order that all may be prepared for his coming. That is our reason for being.

I wish I were either welcoming you back to Seminary for the Fall Semester, or to Seminary for the first time, with this edition of Table Talk. Unfortunately, it was not meant to be. Our thanks to those who contributed articles for this edition. I also remind you all that your input is needed for future editions of Table Talk, and your input is always welcome.

So, instead of welcome, I and the Table Talk staff wish you God's blessings at the close of the Semester, and pray that you may enjoy Advent and Christmas seasons that are both safe and joyous. See you next year.

Peace, *Mark Olsen*
(*Mark is a first year student from the Metro D.C. Synod*)

One Day in November...

...as I woke up early in the morning, again, with a book flopped across my lap, again, I had had enough. "Damn it Dr. Crump", I said as I set the book aside and wandered off to bed. I urge myself to remember "Everyday really is a reading day." It's sort of like the seminary's version of, "There's no place like home". Click your sneakers three times, and you'll wake up. That was my most recent moment of frustration. They come and go. So do reading days, social statements and γαρ clauses.

So what elucidates us as we push on to December 12th, and May 15th? Actually, the answer to that question is rather easy.

I get the answer every time I attend chapel. I get the answer whenever I hear a professor or a classmate proclaim the word of God. Then I remember how fortunate I am for being at this place, at this time. Grace is amazing! How finally, after a lot of sweat, tears and teeth gnashing, God has provided an order to my life that first convinced me to make application and now God provides an order that gets me through reading days, social statements and γαρ clauses.

And I find this order, this peace, in chapel. Chapel is that personal worship experience that helps to center my thinking. Chapel is also that corporate worship experience which brings us together. That's why I need to be in chapel as often as possible.

There's no place like home.

Cliff Eshbach

(Cliff is a second year student from the Lower Susquehanna Synod)

I Gave My Blood, Christ Gave His

I gave my blood
Christ gave his

I gave a pint
He gave all

The needle is small and sharp
The nails large and dull

The table soft and relaxful
The cross rough and painful

The nurses kind and gentle
The soldiers cruel and mean

The crowd applauds my sacrifice
They that passed by reviled Him

Mine is O positive
His is for positively all

Mine at best will prolong a life for a while
His without doubt, can save all forever.

- Johnstown American Red Cross

Alison Fisher
(Alison is a first year student from the Allegheny Synod)

Sleeping with Bread

During the Bombing raids of World War II, thousands of children were orphaned and left to starve. The fortunate one were rescued and placed in refugee camps where they received food and good care. But many of these children who had lost so much could not sleep at night. They feared waking up to find themselves once again homeless and without food. Nothing seemed to reassure them. Finally someone hit upon the idea of giving each child a piece of bread to hold at bedtime. Holding their bread, these children could finally sleep in peace. All through the night the bread reminded them, "Today I ate and I will eat again tomorrow."

*From Sleeping With Bread:
Holding What Gives You Life
Dennis and Sheila Linn and
Matthew Linn*

The Spiritual Formation Group has been experiencing what gives us life as Christians: Christian fellowship and time deliberately set aside to allow ourselves to be formed in and by Christ. It has been a life-giving time together.

Anyone is welcome to join the group, which meets Wednesday evenings at 7 PM in the Meditation Chapel.

If you have questions or want details, you may contact Sandra Mackie at 334-8389.

(Sandra is a second year student from the Delaware-Maryland Synod)

Distant Travelers

You came from afar ____
To enter our fold,
From Slovakia, Tanzania,
And Germany we're told.

You shared with us stories ____
From your native plots,
You shared with us visions,
You unlocked our thoughts.

You all soon became ____
A part of the throng,
Together as one ____
We sang the same song.

Together a family ____
United as one,
Together we gathered ____
To worship the Son.

Together we chuckled,
Together we prayed,
Together we honored ____
What each had to say.

But soon to your countries ____
Our friends, you'll return.
The time is upon us,
It's time to adjourn.

May God's peace be with you,
As you travel on -
Christoph and Dorothy
Michaela and Jan.

Don Costic
(Don is a second year student from the Allegheny Synod)

You Might Be a Lutheran Seminarian

If you have ever felt the need to have a tool to help you in the discernment of your call; if you have ever wondered whether or not seminary is the right decision for you; if you have ever questioned, "Do I have what it takes to be a Lutheran Seminarian?", well maybe this list can help. It includes tell-tale signs that you too might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If when you hear that someone is talking a trip to the Holy Land, and your first thoughts are of St. Paul, MN...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If you have any book written by Garrison Keillor on your bookshelf...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If you have ever tried to explain away your ever increasing waist size as a development of your "pastoral identity"...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If you consider Beer to be one of the basic four food groups...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If you consider coffee to be one of the other three...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If someone asks you to read from the "Good Book" and you pull out a copy of the Book of Concord...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If your grammatical knowledge of Biblical Greek is better than your English...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If you have ever found yourself justifying your actions with the quote, "Sin Boldly", you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

If while thinking about your student loans you unconsciously begin to recite Psalm 23...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

And if you have more than five Biblical studies/Theology books on your bookshelf still wrapped in plastic...you might be a Lutheran Seminarian.

*Matthew Fuhrman
(Matt is a second year student from the Delaware-Maryland Synod)*

Calendar of Events

January Term

- Jan 5** **First Class Sessions**
- Jan 19** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; No
Classes, Offices Closed**
- Jan 30** **Close of January Term**

Spring Term

- Feb 2** **First Class Sessions**
- Mar 23-27** **Spring Recess**
- Apr 28-29** **Seminary Days and Spring
Convocation**
- May 15** **Close of Spring Semester
Commencement**