

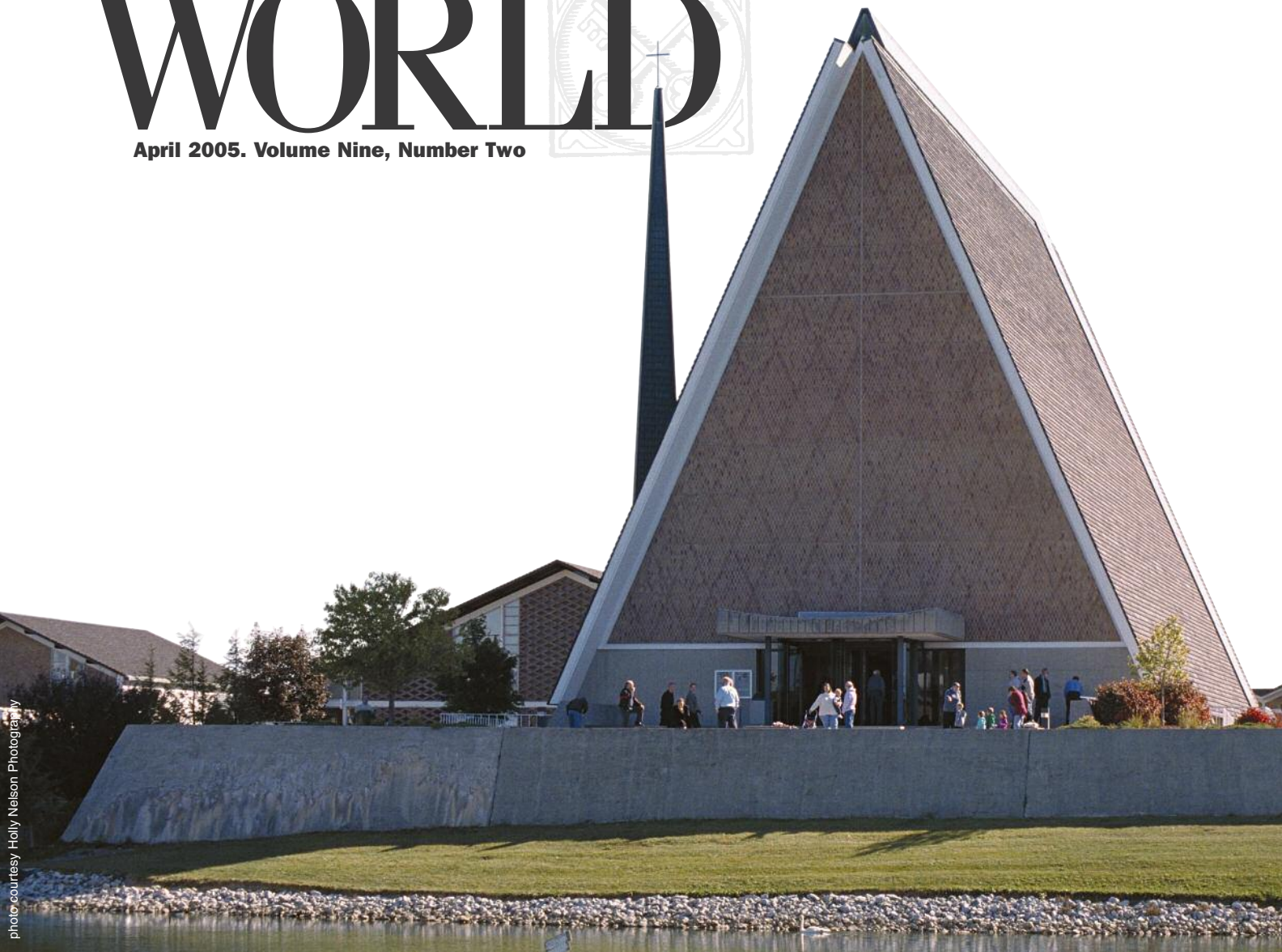
For the

LIFE of the WORLD

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photo courtesy Holly Nelson Photography

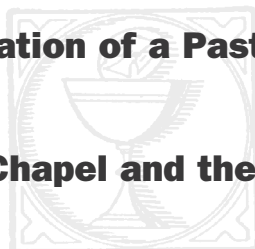


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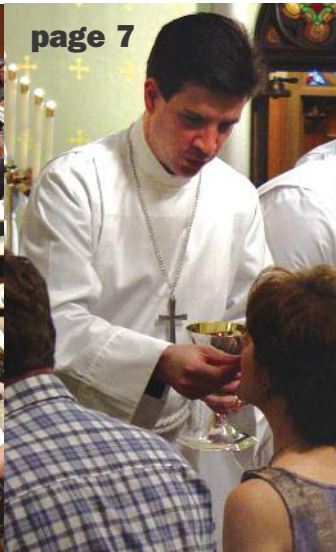


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THEOLOGICAL
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FEATURES

4 Formation of a Pastor: Classroom to Church

By Jonathon J. Bakker, Fourth-Year Seminarian, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

It is no coincidence that the things that make Lutherans Lutheran are the things that Lutheran seminarians learn most in seminary: Jesus Christ as the center of the Scriptures and theology; the proper distinction of Law and Gospel; and the centrality of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection to name a few.

7 Serving While Learning

By John C. Bestul, Fourth-Year Seminarian, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

As the church prays that our Lord would send men into His vineyard, may it also pray that through congregations and pastors He provides those men opportunities to serve. For it might be said that the seminarian serves while he learns in order that he might best learn how to serve.

10 Chapel and the Formation of the Pastor

By Gifford A. Grobien, Fourth-Year Seminarian, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

The chapel services are the services the seminarians will be praying in their own parishes in a few years. They are learning by doing; learning to pray for their people by praying in the chapel.

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O Lord, open my lips: And my mouth will declare Your praise.

By Gifford A. Grobien

It is hard to miss Kramer Chapel. The chapel extends into the sky at an angle exactly complementary to the angle of the roofs of every other campus building. The chapel, not to mention the whole campus, is an architectural masterpiece. Masterpieces are created by geniuses, yet do not always fit everyone's taste. When one realizes that the whole campus is set to imitate a medieval Scandinavian village, with the chapel at the geographical and spiritual center of the community, the chapel design itself makes more sense. Still, the sensibilities of the 1940s and 1950s—plainness, concrete, sharp angles—dominate Kramer Chapel's exterior and interior. The beauty of Kramer Chapel is more than skin deep.



O come, let us worship the Lord: For He is our maker.

Christianity has never been simply about an individual, unless that individual is Jesus. Christianity is made up of community, a community reconciled to Christ and so reconciled to each other. With 300+ students from all over the world, integrating their tastes and worship accents into the liturgy remains a challenge. That there are at least two Divine Services, and three settings of them that are widely used in our Synod, is our particular expression of the truth that there has never been one truly Common Service in Christendom.

Yet a happy, if not perfect solution, has been found. By following a daily rhythm of prayer services (7:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., and 9:30 p.m.) and a bi-weekly cycle of the main Office of the Day (10:00 a.m.), familiar variety invites all in the seminary community to join the universal worship of the church by praying what is familiar to them and what is familiar to their brothers and sisters. “What will we do in chapel today?” is answered

with the synodical worship books: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, *Lutheran Worship*, and the *Hymnal Supplement '98*, from each of which at least two services are prayed within the bi-weekly cycle. This is not a case of pleasing no one by trying to please everyone. These are the prayers of the church, and especially of our Synod, and as pastors we might be praying any of these services at any given time in our ministry.

**O Lord, have mercy on us:
Thanks be to God.**

Although the chapel structure is plain, its furnishings give it life. The furnishings are not just for decoration, although they are made beautifully to the glory of God. The furnishings are servants of the Gospel message. They are servants where God comes to us and meets us, not on our own terms of self-righteousness and failure, but on His terms of forgiveness and new life. The font, pulpit, and altar give the chapel life because they are the places that God gives His life to His people. As in all the congregations of God's people, the font gives birth to the children of God and the altar is the place where the body given for us and blood poured out for us are distributed. The lectern and pulpit stand as the places of proclamation of God's Word, where faith is kindled and strengthened day after day and week after week.

Preaching relates to one other ornament of significance: the altar crucifix. Our altar crucifix is rather small in relation to the size of the chapel. Still it stands as a reminder of whom we preach. The crucifix, a cross bearing the body of Christ upon it, is less common in some of our congregations than in others. Undoubtedly we worship Christ who is resurrected, who has been raised for our justification. Yet a crucifix holds forth the tension that even after the resurrection we preach Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1:23), for it is in this humble event that our salvation was earned. As our salvation is earned on the cross, our salvation is now given in the preaching of that same cross. The crucifix reminds us and points us ever to right preaching.

Preaching offers the forgiveness of sins. True preaching, whether it be in Southern California or in Saskatchewan, announces and gives Christ crucified to the hearer so that the hearer's sin is taken away. At Kramer Chapel preaching plays another, secondary role. Preaching teaches the hearer how to preach. With over 20 preachers among the faculty and staff who step into the pulpit on a regular basis, the future pastor hears different styles, mannerisms, emphases, all while his sins



are being forgiven. More and better than being taught how to preach, the seminarian hears and experiences effective preaching. When the seminarian hears and believes that his sins are forgiven, he also hears how this happens; he hears how to be a preacher. In Kramer Chapel the preacher is formed.



**We praise You, O God;
we acknowledge You to
be the Lord.**

As the faculty and ordained staff serve daily in the chapel by preaching, the students serve as liturgists. Some ask if leading the daily liturgy is a learning experience for the students, or still primarily a time for prayer and worship. If by learning experience we think of a place where students audition, then Kramer Chapel certainly is not this. Prayer services are for prayer—they are to worship God. There is nothing “practice” about them.

But because it is God's service, there are no "mistakes" as such. If the liturgist accidentally turns his back on the altar or stumbles over his cassock or sings the canticle a little flat, he has not ruined the service. God redeems what is done in faith. In this sense, leading prayer is learning. The chapel services are the services the seminarians will be praying in their own parishes in a few years. They are learning by doing; learning to pray for their people by praying in the chapel.

Nothing any of us does in liturgy is good or perfect apart from Christ. Even when the rubrics are followed perfectly, which is what the students are taught and what they strive for, the liturgy has its real value in Christ. Christ redeems and sanctifies us through preaching and prayer. He also redeems and sanctifies the work of the pastor and liturgist. While the liturgist strives always to serve God perfectly, his striving is service to God only through Jesus Christ, our Lord. In Kramer Chapel the celebrant is formed.

**Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**

Martin Luther said a person can only become a theologian through the study of Scripture, prayer, and temptation or suffering. Study is the work of the classroom. Suffering is provided by God. But Kramer Chapel is the place of prayer.

Seminarians pray because they are Christians, but they pray also because of the burden they will bear as pastors. The salvation and care of souls have been placed in their hands, not because they accomplish these things, but because they have been called by God to shepherd His flock and call the lost to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd. Pastors forgive the sins of those who are so burdened that they think they cannot be forgiven. Pastors call to repentance those who think they need no forgiveness. Pastors must know for

which kind of person they are caring in various situations. If the pastor announces the forgiveness of sins to a person who believes he needs no forgiveness, the hearer continues on his path to hell. If the pastor demands repentance from someone who is repenting, who is fearful of eternal punishment but has no faith in Jesus, the person may be driven to despair.

The pastor is the minister of God and as such can do nothing apart from God. His life must pulse with prayer: prayer for his people, prayer for his words, and prayer for his own salvation. In Kramer Chapel the theologian is formed.

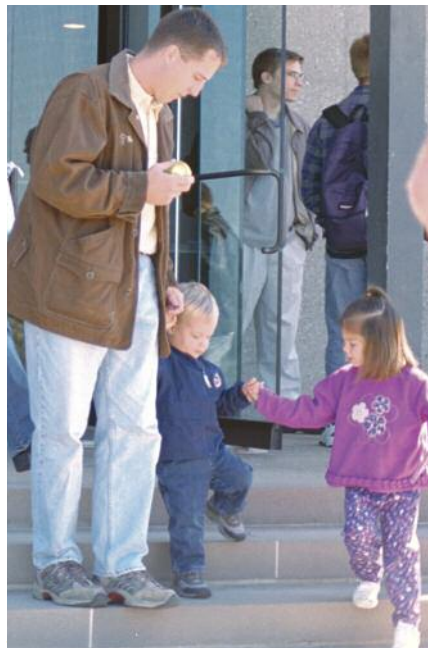
Let us bless the Lord: Thanks be to God.

The beauty of Kramer Chapel is more than skin deep. After being part of Kramer Chapel for six years, it will be difficult to drive off the campus with Kramer Chapel no longer rising in front of me but seen only in my rear-view mirror. If my life of worship was created and nurtured at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Palos Verdes, California, and Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Honolulu, Hawaii,

it is maturing at Kramer Chapel. Yet saying farewell to Kramer Chapel is what we all must do. Kramer Chapel is where pastors are formed, yet Kramer Chapel is a chapel. She is for wayfarers. She is not our destination. The churches of God are our destinations on this earth, although even these are temporary destinations in order to lead God's people to our final destination, our home country of heaven.

**The grace of our Lord,
Jesus Christ, and the
love of God, and the
communion of the Holy
Spirit be with us all.**

Gifford A. Grobien is a fourth-year seminarian at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.



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