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Volume Twenty-Seven, Number One



For the Life of the World

PUBLISHER

Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President

PUBLISHER ASSISTANT
Carrie M. O'Donnell

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Colleen M. Bartzsch

EDITOR
Kristine S. Bruss

COPY EDITOR
Trudy E. Behning

ART DIRECTOR
Steve J. Blakey

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For the Life of the World is mailed to all pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the United States and Canada and to anyone interested in the work of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

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D. Richard Stuckwisch

The liturgy is the heart and center of the church's life, the very thing to which the lost are called by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. That is to say, the liturgy is not simply a "means to some other end," but it is the very Kingdom of Heaven here among us in the Word and works of Christ Jesus. Apart from that liturgy, there would be no point or purpose to the mission of the church.

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Every One His Witness was designed to "equip Lutherans to be Third Article witnesses telling the Second Article story using their First Article gifts." It makes a clear and important distinction between the work we do as the Church Gathered (i.e., outreach) and the work we do as the Church Scattered (i.e., witness). But it dismisses the idea that evangelism is a work that we do on our own.

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Servants Formed to Reach: Confessional Theological Education

Arthur A. Just Jr.

At the Tower of Babel, Moses writes: “And the Lord said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech’” (Gen. 11:6-8).

Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles with tongues of fire, and they began to speak in other languages. And when the people gathered there in Jerusalem heard the apostles, “they were amazed and astonished, saying, ‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?’” (Acts 2:1-8)

God reversed the confusion of languages at Babel in the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In his letter to the Romans, Paul writes: “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ . . . So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:14-5, 17).

Fundamental to forming pastors, missionaries, and deaconesses to send into the world to reach the lost is equipping them to teach the Good News of Jesus Christ *in a person’s own language*. This is the lesson of the Tower of Babel and Pentecost.

Since 2017, the Office of International Mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), along with former students from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), has been reaching out through theological education to people who speak Spanish, English, Mandarin, Farsi, Urdu, and Arabic. A church that reaches the lost in these six languages is covering most of the world.

Theological Education in Spanish: Seminario Concordia El Reformador

For many years, Pastor Ted Krey (MDiv, CTSFW 2001), Regional Director of Latin America and the Caribbean, knew that we needed a seminary in the northern part of Latin America. Sadly, during his tenure as a missionary, many seminaries and theological colleges were either closed

or moved away from a confessional Lutheran focus. So in the fall of 2017, Pastor Krey convened pastors from Latin America and the United States to form a confessional Lutheran seminary in Santiago de los Caballeros in the Dominican Republic on the same location of a mercy center. Since that time, Centro de Misericordia y Seminario Concordia El Reformador (Concordia the Reformer Seminary) has prepared 20 pastors and 100 deaconesses and organized four theological conferences for church workers from all over Latin America and the Caribbean. (Read more about the work in this region on page 22 of this issue.)

Theological Education in English: The Livonian Lutheran Project

In September 2020, Dr. John Bombaro (MDiv, CTSFW 2007) and his colleague Dr. Charles Cortright launched the Livonian Lutheran Project, an online bachelor’s-level curriculum of confessional Lutheran theology in partnership with the Riga Luther Academy in Latvia. This English-speaking route to ordination for pastors and consecration for deaconesses is for indigenous men and women in mission fields where it is not possible to establish their own seminary. It will also make Lutheran theological education available to a wider audience of anyone interested in furthering their knowledge of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Most of the students are from European countries—Italy, Bulgaria, Ireland, Switzerland, Romania, Czech Republic, and the Russian Federation—but there are also eleven students from Pakistan. Since most of the classes are taught in a Zoom classroom, you can imagine the excitement when all the students met for the first time in a residential course I taught on Lutheran liturgy in Wittenberg, Germany, over Reformation Day in 2021. The course was so successful they held another face-to-face course on *diakonia*, which I taught in Riga in April 2022, alongside Archbishop Jānis Vanags, a distinct honor.



Theological Education in Mandarin: A Confessional Lutheran Seminary in Taiwan

Pastor Joseph Lu came to CTSFW to study in our PhD in Missiology program from China Lutheran Seminary (CLS) in Hsinchu City, Taiwan, which trains pastors for the Chinese Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC). He served the seminary for many years as business manager and professor. Little did he realize that during his years of study and attending services at Kramer Chapel that he would return to Taiwan to spearhead the first confessional Lutheran seminary in Taiwan that would teach its courses in Mandarin.

During the pandemic, I chaired a task force to discuss and make plans for the formation of this seminary, working with Dr. Lu; Dr. Michael Paul, an LCMS missionary in Taiwan; Pastor Charles Ferry, the Regional Director for Eurasia; and Pastor Andrew Miao, the president of CELC.

In September 2022 I taught a three-week course at CLS in Hsinchu City to all the pastors, pastoral students, and deaconesses of the CELC and other Lutheran denominations. The course on pastoral theology in Luke-Acts presented the core principle of the curriculum for the new Mandarin seminary, namely, that theology is done through the pastoral acts of baptizing, preaching, and the Lord's Supper. This course was both continuing education for CELC pastors and deaconesses as well as the first course in a colloquy program for other Lutheran pastors who want to join the CELC.

Plans for the new seminary, now called Concordia Theological Seminary Taiwan (CTST), were finalized during my 2022 visit. It will start its residential program in September 2023. In the meantime, CTSFW professors will be traveling to Taiwan this year to teach other courses in the colloquy program.

Theological Education in Farsi, Urdu, and Arabic

In November 2021, Dr. Christian Tiews (DMin, CTSFW 2017), along with myself and Dr. John Bombaro, were invited

to Berlin for a meeting with former CTSFW student Dr. Gottfried Martens, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Berlin-Steglitz, a Lutheran congregation of some 1,500 members, 1,400 of whom hail from Iran or Afghanistan. Pastor Martens was overwhelmed by his work in reaching out to the Iranian and Afghan refugees in Berlin and asked us to help him develop a program of theological education to reach the lost in the languages of Farsi, Urdu, and Arabic both within Europe but also in places like Iran and Afghanistan, where people are starving for the Gospel. Dr. Martens passionately implored us to reach out to these people in their own language to explain the basics of Christianity. He noted that there are well over 120 million Farsi speakers for us to reach.

As a result of that meeting, three 10-minute instructional videos were developed on Christ's atonement, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper—key components of Christianity that resonate strongly with Persians and other Middle Eastern people. Our idea was to record the videos in English, overdub them in Farsi, Urdu, and Arabic, and distribute them around the globe via the internet. These videos will be available soon.

Faith comes through hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ *in a person's own language*. Through Seminario Concordia El Reformador, the Livonian Lutheran Project, Concordia Theological Seminary Taiwan, and mission outreach in Eurasia, former CTSFW students are playing a central role in forming confessional pastors and deaconesses to reach the lost in a language they can understand, be it Spanish, English, Mandarin, Farsi, Urdu, or Arabic. 🇺🇸

The Rev. Dr. Arthur A. Just Jr. (Arthur.Just@ctsfw.edu) is Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and also serves as Associate Executive Director of the LCMS Office of International Mission—Theological Education.



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod