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For the Life of the World

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

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Spreading the Gospel is likened to the Sower who intentionally goes out to sow the seed and throws His seed on all types of soil. The Sower is reckless in His love ensuring that the seed falls on all the soil. This seed, of course, is the Gospel our Lord desires all people to hear.

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Started by German missionaries in 1846, the Seminary has always had a heart for serving the Lord with a vision for global impact. Over the years this vision has taken many forms and expanded exponentially. During our 175th year, three consistent strategies have emerged and endured: recruit world-class faculty, bring students here, and raise up and send out leaders from and to all corners of the earth.

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Word and Sacrament

The Means for Mission

The Theological Rationale for International Theological Education

Arthur A. Just Jr.



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

The mission of the Holy Trinity sent Jesus the Son into the world to journey from heaven to earth, to Jerusalem, and then back to heaven in the ascension. In His mission into our world, Jesus healed the nations by cleansing the world through His blood and rising on the third day to show in His own body the healing He brings to the creation He made new.



The ascension of Jesus to heaven set in motion the journey and mission of the Christian church. The Acts of the Apostles document how the disciples are now empowered to go out into the world, armed with Word and Sacrament—the means for mission.

How did the apostles know that this was the way to make known the deeds of Jesus? On the road to Emmaus, Jesus set the program for the Church in her worship and her mission. He created burning hearts on the way through opened Scriptures and then at Emmaus opened eyes in the breaking of the bread. The recognition of the risen Lord at the table at Emmaus is the foundation of the Church’s mission then and now.

When the faculty of CTSFW revised the curriculum 15 years ago, it was based on the biblical foundation that Word and Sacrament are the means for mission. We believed that theology is done through the pastoral acts of Baptism, preaching, and the Lord’s Supper, so we designed a curriculum that formed pastors to carry out these means for mission.

Our experience in helping establish a seminary in Siberia in 1996 confirmed for us that the means for mission were the pastoral acts of baptizing, preaching, and Lord’s Supper. As theological educators our calling was to help international seminaries form students to plant Lutheran churches through the pastoral acts. We believed that theological education was foundational for a new

Left, top to bottom: *The Rev. Javier Lozano, pastor of Iglesia De La Santa Biblia (Church of the Holy Bible) in the Rancho Anapra community of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, baptizes a young boy.*

The Christ candle in Kramer Chapel at CTSFW.

The Rev. Matthew Wood consecrates the elements during worship in Chiayl City, Taiwan.

Photos: Erik M. Lumsford/The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

church like the one in Siberia to spread the Gospel in a land that had just emerged from the darkness of communism.

At that time, forming pastors through rigorous theological education at seminaries was not as central to international mission as it is now. The success of the Russian Project showed us that, for Lutherans, Jesus' mandate to the Emmaus disciples of Word and Sacrament as the means for mission is also central to our mission as a seminary to assist in international theological education.

Our mission statement reflects this connection between theology, mission, and mercy: "CTSFW exists to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all." Forming pastors and deaconesses is integrally related to reaching the lost and caring for all. The mission statement of the Office of International Mission (OIM) affirms this: "Sharing the Gospel, planting Lutheran churches, showing mercy."

Sharing the Gospel begins with pastors who are formed to plant Lutheran churches through the pastoral acts of Baptism, preaching, and the Lord's Supper and deaconesses who show compassion as women of mercy. This happens best through theological education. This is why CTSFW is committed to develop, nurture, and sustain theological education around the world. As a Seminary, we are not called to plant churches, but we are called to assist in the formation of pastors who plant Lutheran churches, as well as deaconesses who show mercy, as they work alongside LCMS missionaries and pastors.

Since 1996, CTSFW has fully embraced this partnership with international mission. It all began with the Russian Project. That was our Macedonian call to help start a seminary in Siberia, but soon others were asking us to teach courses, help in curriculum development, and train men and woman at our Seminary to serve as leaders in theological education around the world.

At CTSFW we believe that residential pastoral and diaconal formation is the gold standard, and our assistance in establishing the Siberian seminary is an example of this. We have been

instrumental in providing our expertise in theological education in other parts of the world, especially in supporting regional residential seminaries such as Matongo Lutheran Theological College in Kenya; Riga Luther Academy in Latvia; Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, South Africa; Lutheran Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines; Timothy Lutheran Seminary, Wabag Enga Province, Papua New Guinea; Concordia Theological Seminary in Nagercoil, India; and Seminario Concordia in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We also have a vital Master of Sacred Theology program (STM) in Gothenberg, Sweden, that draws students

How did the apostles know that this was the way to make known the deeds of Jesus? On the road to Emmaus, Jesus set the program for the Church in her worship and her mission. He created burning hearts on the way through opened Scriptures and then at Emmaus opened eyes in the breaking of the bread. The recognition of the risen Lord at the table at Emmaus is the foundation of the Church's mission then and now.

from all over the world and recently celebrated its first graduation ceremony.

In the fall of 2017, Centro de Misericordia y Seminario Concordia el Reformador (Concordia the Reformer Mercy Center and Seminary) in Santiago, Dominican Republic, opened its doors for the first time to form pastors for the entire region of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain. This ambitious project gave birth to its first eight graduates from Bolivia, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and México in May 2019. Concordia the Reformer Mercy Center and Seminary serves 14 Spanish-speaking countries, offers theological symposia that draws participants from our nine partner churches, and provides mercy ministry in

the Dominican Republic and beyond.

However, residential theological education is often not possible in many of our regions. In 2015, CTSFW, in conjunction with Seminario Concordia in Buenos Aires, Argentina, began an online program in theological education for Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain entitled "Formación Pastoral para Hispanoamérica (FPH)" (Pastoral Formation for Hispanic America). This four-year program follows the original design of CTSFW's curricular development, where after the first year of introductory courses, the next three years are centered in the pastoral acts of Baptism, preaching, and the Lord's Supper. Built on the same rationale as the LCMS's "Specific Ministry Pastor" (SMP) Program, this program succeeds through strong pastoral mentors and the support of the local church.

In 2017, the courses in this FPH curriculum were adapted by CTSFW for its own bilingual program entitled "SMP – Español/English" for students in North America. Today CTSFW and the seminary in the Dominican Republic share resources as CTSFW, in its SMP—Español/English program, forms Hispanic pastors for North America and the Seminario Concordia el Reformador forms pastors for Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain.

CTSFW looks forward to collaborating in new initiatives with the Office of International Mission in developing theological education in Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Latvia, and Wittenberg, Germany. For now, professors from CTSFW are privileged to be invited to participate in global theological education in partnership with the OIM and our partner churches to prepare pastors in the ministry of Word and Sacrament—the means for mission. 📖

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