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Jeffrey H. Pulse

Field education for our students is an important part of their formation as pastors. At Shepherd of the City, this fieldwork takes on some added dimensions. In the past, various field workers have shared the Gospel with the homeless man sleeping on our front steps, prepared and delivered home-cooked meals to the shelters, participated in outreach dinners to our communities, tutored school children after classes—they have worked in the midst of the disease of poverty. This can be quite the wake-up call for our seminarians, but it also helps prepare them for a possible call to urban ministry.

7 Mentoring a Vicar

David R. Nehrenz

It is a privilege to mentor vicars. Much work is required. The congregation must also be committed to doing their part in showing the vicar what parish life looks like in the real world. The rewards are a joy to behold when we see men go all around the country and world to be pastors in Christ's church. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to raise up pastors in His harvest field!

10 Urban Immersion Detroit 2022

Don C. Wiley

Our CTSFW trip to Detroit for a weekend immersion in urban ministry was two years in the making (due to COVID). Finally, at the end of April, three pastoral and two diaconal students headed to Detroit to take it all in. The immersion trip served its intended purpose. We gained insight into the challenges and blessings of urban ministry, and eyes and hearts were opened to serving the Lord and His church in such ministry.

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Correction

In the Summer 2022 issue, we incorrectly reported that the Rev. Dr. Juhana Pohjola, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland (ELMDF) and speaker at the CTSFW Commencement Ceremony May 20, was found guilty of hate speech in his trial in Finland. He was, in fact, acquitted. Thanks be to God!

For the Life of the World

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

Field Education



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

Above left to right: *The Shepherd's Hand Community Outreach Center next to Shepherd of the City Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana.*

The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Pulse installs CTSFW students Ruth Mussman, Zac Johnson, and Tim Schleusener as field workers at Shepherd of the City Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne.

Community members come check out one the health fairs offered by The Shepherd's Hand.

Deaconess Tiffany Manor, Director of LCMS Life Ministry, leads a workshop on choking prevention during The Shepherd's Hand Family Health Fair and Diaper Giveaway.

I grew up on a cow farm in Iowa. I began my college years studying to be a veterinarian. My first call was to a rural parish in Burt, Iowa—rural ministry should be my thing! And yet, here I am writing an article on field education in an urban/inner city context. What do I know about any of that?

When I came to CTSFW 15 years ago, I soon thereafter volunteered to be the vacancy pastor at Shepherd of the City Lutheran Church in the inner core of Fort Wayne. I was missing the parish life, so I jumped at this opportunity. That was 14 years ago. I am still serving Shepherd of the City today.

Urban ministry in Fort Wayne is not like Baltimore, Philadelphia, or Chicago, but our zip code is the lowest per capita income in our state. There are some serious needs and issues. I learned this reality quickly when I came to church early on my first Easter Sunday and

cleaned up the syringes and bottles from our parking lot.

The last 14 years have been a steep learning curve for me and my family—and it provides an opportunity for our field workers to experience the same curve! We learn together that we live in a broken world—a broken world with broken cities and broken people. While this is true for the whole world, in the inner city, in the urban core, brokenness hits you up the side of the head with the force of a two-by-four. Brokenness is not a pretty Band-Aid on a little boo-boo—it is an open, bleeding sore. It is

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Jeffrey H. Pulse

The solution to brokenness, to sin, is not the “social” Gospel that is employed too frequently in the inner city. Sadly, much of that is a guilt response by those who have fled. The solution was, is, and will always remain the same: the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, His real presence in the midst of His people, in the midst of His city.



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

there for all the world, all the city, all the community to see. In the city brokenness is inescapable. You cannot turn the corner or close your eyes and make it all disappear. There is no clicking heels and reciting, “There’s no place like home, there’s no place like home.” This is home—to so many. The only way to escape the brokenness of the inner core is to leave it behind, flee the city, hide in the suburbs, and take up hobby farming—and that has been the option chosen by many who have options. It has also been the option chosen by many churches in our history. Get out!

Of course, this leaves the city broken. Nothing has been solved, no attempts have been made to deal with the reality. Flight and avoidance are responses, but they are not solutions. Fifty-two years ago Shepherd of the City was formed because people chose, intentionally, not to leave the city behind. The solution to

brokenness is not to flee and ship in aid—it is in the real presence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The solution to brokenness, to sin, is not the “social” Gospel that is employed too frequently in the inner city. Sadly, much of that is a guilt response by those who have fled. The solution was, is, and will always remain the same: the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, His real presence in the midst of His people, in the midst of His city.

Field education for our students is an important part of their formation as pastors. At Shepherd of the City, this fieldwork takes on some added dimensions. In the past, various field workers have shared the Gospel with the homeless man sleeping on our front steps, prepared and delivered home-cooked meals to the shelters, participated in outreach dinners to our communities, tutored school children after classes—they have worked in the midst of the

disease of poverty. They have learned that poverty is not about money and the lack thereof. Poverty has become a way of life in our community—generation after generation struggling with the lack of health and good nutrition amid gangs, violence, undereducation, and underemployment—and to those who do not live in this context, the solution seems simple and easy. Give money and things and tell them to stay in school, get a better job, open a savings account at the bank—get their act together! Not so simple. The cycle of poverty must be broken!

When an inner city resident wins the lottery—and it does happen—they share the money with all their family and neighbors until everyone is “poor” again. Wealth and goods are not the problems. This is the attitude of poverty at work. This can be quite the wake-up call for our seminarians, but it also helps prepare them for a possible call to urban

Shepherd of the City continues to stand firm in the city while teaching others to be a part of a mission field. We see the city as a mission field with mission eyes—not because the inner city is more important, but rather because it is equally as important as any mission field. We stand firm in the city by being a physical presence in its midst. The church—physical and spiritual—is a place from which the hungry are fed, the thirsty receive a cup of water, the naked are clothed, the homeless are housed, the sick healed, and those in prison are visited.

Below left to right: *Vicar Bill Winter helps a student with his homework during The Shepherd's Hand's Homework Club held for free every Tuesday.*

A volunteer helps distribute diapers during The Shepherd's Hand Trunk.

ministry. It is important to recognize and know what you are dealing with.

Recognizing the problem for what it is prompted Shepherd of the City to explore ways to meet the real needs of our neighborhood. Twelve-plus years ago the idea, followed by the plan, for an urban outreach center was formulated. The building across the street went up for sale, and with the help of some generous friends, it was purchased and renovated into an urban outreach center. It took almost 10 years, but the outreach center, known as Shepherd's Hand, is now a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Shepherd's Hand is another opportunity for our members and fieldworkers to be actively involved and hands-on with the needs of our neighborhoods. We are especially focused on nutrition, health, and education. We are part of the National Diaper Bank and to date have supplied over 240,000 diapers in the Fort Wayne community. We teach healthy cooking, eating, and birth classes and have provided after-school tutoring. We conduct three to four health fairs every year and serve many different income levels and ethnic groups by providing resources.

Obviously, we have many partners and a lot of volunteers and supporters. Our deaconess, Kimberly Trombley, is

now spearheading this outreach, and we have both MDiv field workers and deaconess field workers. The church yearly has a vicar, so our opportunity to prepare men and women for service in our church body, and perhaps in the area of urban ministry, is great.

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