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Concordia Theology Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, has a long-standing history of providing pastors an opportunity of retreat, renewal and rest. From the regular meetings of the Symposia in January and the Good Shepherd Institute (GSI) in November, to the various workshops and conferences throughout the year, CTSFW is heeding the call of Jesus to “come away to a quiet place.”

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Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, provides resources for church workers, laypeople, youth and adults on campus, throughout the country and online. Take a look to see what is available for you.

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## **For the Life of the World**

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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).

# Serving Future in

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Thanks be to God. It is by His gracious will that the Church cares for her future servants. One day these students will teach, reach and care for all. It is our privilege that, through the faculty, staff and congregational members supporting these men and women from across The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we first teach, reach and care for them.

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**F**our years of study at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, is a vast undertaking. When a student begins preparing for a future either as a shepherd in the Office of Holy Ministry or in the role of diakonal servant, he or she has begun a journey that will challenge them financially, academically and spiritually. They are formed through this process. Formed to teach the faithful, reach the lost and care for all.

It is through God's grace and mercy that we first serve His servants-in-training. Physical and financial aid gives students the stability they need to focus on their studies, rigorous academics equip them with the Word, and fieldwork, vicarage and internships make servants of scholars. The spiritual formation that comes from a daily life shaped around the Word strengthens each man and woman to run with endurance the race set before them (Heb.12:1-2).

In the words of members of the CTSFW community, here is a look at how we care for each student in body, mind and soul.

### **Body**

When our students pray the Lord's Prayer in chapel each day, the answer to their plea for daily bread often comes through the CTSFW Financial Aid Office. Financial aid helps students pay their tuition with the tuition grant



# Servants Body, Mind and Soul

By Andrea L. Schultz



program and provides additional resources to cover living expenses through programs like Student Adoption.

This is often the role of the Financial Aid Office, to act as a conduit that connects future servants with the people they will someday serve. “The support that our students receive confirms to them that others care and value the time and effort they spend learning how to serve Christ and His people,” says the Rev. Mark C. Sheaffer, director of Financial Aid. “These gifts provide students with the encouragement they need while preparing for their future ministry. I consistently hear from students how these donations enable them to concentrate more on their studies and families, and spend less time being concerned about money and paying the bills.”

Another ministry of care at CTSFW is the Food & Clothing Co-op.

The Co-op allows current students to acquire items for their family through the use of points, earned by volunteering their time at the Co-op. Students receive food, clothing and household items donated by generous supporters or purchased with the financial gifts given to the Co-op.

As a former student wife, the director of the program, Katherine Rittner, has an inside view of this blessing. “Coming to CTSFW as a family of six, the ability to feed and clothe my family without cost was a lifesaver for us. There are no words that could ever convey the thankfulness and eternal gratitude for those who care enough to provide for the bodily sustenance of those called to serve the Church. Knowing what my family received helps me daily when talking to future and current students as well as donors.”

## Mind

CTSFW boasts a faculty made up of world-class theologians. Yet this boast is built on another, more powerful one: our foundation on the very Word of God. “To use a biblical image found in Ezekiel and Revelation, our students inwardly digest the Scriptures during their respective programs so that the Scriptures, especially as they reveal Christ, form all that they do and say as Lutheran pastors and deaconesses. Their study of doctrine, the Confessions, history and ministry practice all grow from their rigorous immersion in the Scriptures,” explains CTSFW Academic Dean Dr. Charles A. Gieschen.

Furthermore, all pastoral and diakonal students are required to participate in two years of fieldwork in a local congregation, which begins in their first few weeks at CTSFW. The Rev. Prof. John T. Pless, director of



Field Education, explains the value of such a marriage between academics and experience. “It provides an opportunity for our students to be mentored by a practicing pastor. Students acquire and deepen some basic pastoral skills, learning as they serve the Lord’s people. A wonderful collateral benefit of field education is that, in many cases, congregational members open their hearts and homes to students and their families. With prayers, hospitality and gifts these pastors and laypeople support and encourage these future shepherds.”

After two years of study and fieldwork, students then leave the familiar campus grounds to spend a year either in vicarage or on a diakonal internship, once more under the guidance of an experienced pastor. “They learn to take what they have learned in the classroom and in fieldwork and begin to apply it on a daily basis,” says the Rev. Dr. Gary W. Zieroth, director of Vicarage and Internship. “Vicars are given more preaching and teaching experiences, they conduct the liturgy, and visit members, hospitals and the homebound. They are able to work with the youth of the congregation and in outreach programs of the church. Our deaconess students assist the pastor in congregational or other settings to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through works of mercy, providing spiritual care and teaching the Christian faith, as well as visiting the sick and imprisoned, or serving in family or other caring ministry.”

**Soul**

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall

accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” So God promised us long ago in Is. 55:10-11.

By being in the Word, day in and day out, spiritual formation occurs among our students. It also takes place through daily worship in the heart of the CTSFW campus: Kramer Chapel.

First-year seminarian, Ian Kinney, put it this way: “The entire campus is centered around the Chapel and the worship that goes on here. Even architecturally the Chapel is the direct center of the campus. So it’s tough to be on campus and not see the Chapel and hear it when the bells start to ring.”

The Rev. Dr. Paul J. Grime, dean of both Spiritual Formation and of the Chapel, sees worship in light of his roles as both a teacher and a shepherd. “Gathering together each day in Kramer Chapel provides the students the opportunity to grow in their familiarity with the rich expressions of the Gospel that are a part of our Lutheran heritage. But even more importantly, daily worship brings them the comfort and hope of God’s Word, gifts they themselves need as much as their future parishioners.”

Thanks be to God. It is by His gracious will that the Church cares for her future servants. One day these students will teach, reach and care for all. It is our privilege that, through the faculty, staff and congregational members supporting these men and women from across The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we first teach, reach and care for them. 🏡

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