

Birth Announcement of Concordia Theological Seminary:
“The Lutheran Seminary at Fort Wayne.”
By Sihler, Wilhelm (1801-1885)
Translated by Erica Bullman Flores
Der Lutheraner 3, no. 5 (October 1846): 29–30.¹

It has pleased the almighty and all gracious God to revive our precious Lutheran Church on both sides of the Atlantic, despite the false influences of the “unionists” of our times, therefore faithful members of the church in the German Fatherland lovingly worked for their brothers-in-faith here in America. Through their efforts, during the past four years 19 faithful and loyal men have joined us from abroad in order to serve the Lutheran church as preachers and teachers after having been carefully prepared and instructed at home. Recently the love of these devoted men for their American brothers has excelled. Because of the current need, and in anticipation of increased future need, they have decided to establish a seminary in Fort Wayne, so that faithful, qualified young men can receive the necessary training to take over the holy office of the preacher in the Lutheran church. To this end they have not only made money available already for the building project, they have also sent a Professor of Theology as well as 11 young men which have been trained by notable Lutheran pastors.

These have already arrived here last month, and another Professor of Theology will soon join them. After the most basic arrangements have been made — work on the proposed seminary will not commence until next spring — classes are expected to start already this month, with the help of the almighty God.

At this time we are not releasing details concerning these classes. For now we only want to call the attention of the reader and the faithful, Lutheran congregations to two particulars: one is a short explanation of the purpose of the seminary, and the other is a request to all faithful members of the Lutheran church who do not yet have to support such an institution, that they will help take care of this little seedling, that they will help tend it with their assistance and prayers. Referring to the purpose of the

¹Wilhelm Sihler, “Das Lutherische Seminar Zu Fort Wayne,” *Der Lutheraner* 3, no. 5 (October 1846): 29–30. This text was translated for Project Wittenberg (<http://www.projectwittenberg.org/etext/cts/ctsborn.txt>) by Erika Bullmann Flores in 1994 You may freely distribute, copy or print this text. Please direct any comments or suggestions to:

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seminary, we freely admit that it is our heartfelt desire and will to prepare servants for our church, under the mercy and with the blessing of the triune God:

- 1) those who cling to the saving doctrine and remain in what has been entrusted to them, just as the right church — called Lutheran — from the beginning accepts God's word, confesses and teaches it;
- 2) those who do not wish to become associated with this anti-scriptural "church-merging" and false "unionism" of our times. Regretfully, many of the so-called Lutheran synods are embroiled in this matter in either word or deed² but those who fight for the faith which had once been given to the saints, who wish no other union, nor join it, than that of the same faith, confession and doctrine in all matters as given to us through God's Word of truth, leading to salvation;
- 3) those who have a healthy and thorough knowledge of the truth, and if God will, have personally experienced this truth;
- 4) those who diligently teach this truth to others, who share the Word of God, know how to connect Law and Gospel, and thus thwart the rabble rousers and false religious enthusiasts;
- 5) those who humbly and sincerely love their church, in whose clear conscience is embedded the secret of faith;
- 6) those who are willing to bear all sorts of internal and external troubles and tribulations for the sake of the one faith;
- 7) those who take care of themselves and the flock which might be entrusted to their care by the Arch-shepherd, who will faithfully tend to them with Word and Sacrament, both individually and as a group, and by their lives and conduct will bear the fruit of the spirit and be an example to them;
- 8) those who take care to be of one mind in the spirit and in peace with one another, always conscious that not only have they been created by the same father, were redeemed by the same son and sanctified by the same spirit, but

²(Note from the original text) It is a well-known fact that the so-called Lutheran General Synod, for instance, teaches the Reformed view of the holy sacraments, and in their worship services follow the Methodist model; also, members of the Lutheran synods of Ohio and Michigan serve mixed congregations, which means that, for instance, during Holy Communion, Reformed and Lutherans are together.

that in this most holy matter--the building of His holy church--they are God's co-workers.

It is our intent, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to produce such servants for the church, sooner or later, depending on their age and talents. To reach this goal, to make this possible — and this is another reason for my brotherly address — prayer and help is needed not only from those precious brothers-in-the-faith in Germany, but also here in America, for whom this institution is being established.

How many of those here are building houses and barns and are planting orchards, with their children in mind; they carefully tend to these buildings and plantations so that their children and children's children can enjoy the benefits of them? Should they not also help groom this spiritual plantation and tend to it with their faithful prayers and assistance, from which they and their children will, with God's blessing, reap the heavenly reward? Would they willingly watch their friends work their fields and build their houses, while they themselves are fit and strong enough to at least help?

Therefore, I am hopeful that I am not asking the faithful sons of our beloved church in vain — though because of her current decay and distortion there may not be many — to help the German brothers and brothers-in-faith with prayerful hearts and open hands. Are not our feet willing to carry the entire body in whatever direction the head guides it, in return the eyes and hands, yea the entire body bends down to the feet and cares for them, whenever ill has befallen them. Should then we, who are the spiritual body in Christ, be shamed by our physical body, and not tend to one another and together do works of love?

Should we, to whom the precious treasure of the true faith and the unaltered sacraments have been given by the Lord to perpetuate and propagate, remain cold, mistrustful and idle? Should our fervor for the preservation of the pure, saving truth be surpassed by the fervor of the papists and religious dreamers for the preservation of their false doctrine? Therefore, beloved brothers and brothers-in-faith on this side of the Atlantic, you who still love your church as the pillar and foundation of the truth, who are concerned with the preservation thereof among the thousands of emigrating brothers-in-faith who come every year, give a hand here! Together let us — as Nehemiah and his followers of old — with the one hand fight the papists and religious fanatics, the false brothers with their anti-scriptural union, and with the other hand, however, let us — build!

Now the faithful Lord and God who lets the sincere succeed, will make these lovely words of promise come true with us. In His mercy. Amen.³

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Currently Director of Seminary
Fort Wayne, October 24, 1846

³(Note from the original text) Every love offering for the seminary will be published quarterly, with the permission of the publisher, which certifies receipt thereof.