

# CONCORD

*A Journalistic Ministry of Students at Luther Seminary*

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## Unfinished Business

Still words left

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### On the Divine Liturgy

*Some seniors call us back to basics*

*Plus: Letters, Poetry, Blessings, and a Winding Walk to Serenity*

# CONCORD

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Marc Ostlie-Olson

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Readers are encouraged to interact with *The Concord* in a variety of ways. Articles and 'Letters to the Editor' are welcomed, as are less formal responses offered through the online version. All submissions should include the author's name, telephone number and, if applicable, class standing. Submissions should be received in our mailbox in the Olson Campus Center (701), at our office, Gullixson 10, or by e-mail.

The Managing Editor reserves the right to publish, edit, or disregard all submissions.

## On the Cover

As promised, the solution to the 4/19 Noncord's crossword puzzle "Thick with Heretics" by Castillo Monroe. We ran out of space.

## Letter

Dear Editor,

Reflecting on Dr. Rogness's lecture (Aus Memorial Lectures, March 7, 8) led me to ponder the question: Who was his audience?

Was it the student body or the faculty? My own reflection on this leads me to think that his was a lesson necessary not only for us students—soon to be loosed in the world, but that the faculty needed to hear it for the sake of their students.

It has often been discussed among students that our professors seem to assume that we are all coming from the same place educationally, socially, and geographically. But we are not the typical seminary students of twenty years ago. We are not coming to this institution straight out of college with degrees in religion or philosophy in hand, and most of us are not naïve enough to believe that, after leaving here, we will go out to save the world. Some of us are coming from technical fields, others from the business world and service industries.

In light of this, I would like to remind our faculty that the best teachers meet their students where the students currently are, not where the teacher thinks they should be. The best teachers push their students to think beyond where the students are, but not by throwing out big concepts to show how smart they are all the while making students feel belittled. Noble teachers acknowledge that they can learn from their students. Great teachers celebrate the diversity of the life experiences present in their classroom, using them for more effective teaching.

I would like to ask our professors to remember that they are often preaching on Mars Hill...right here in Saint Paul. I would ask them to be not just good teachers, but *great* teachers that meet all of us where we are.

Blessings,

Amy Santoriello, MDiv Junior

## Announcement

### *Emergent Church Workshop*

May 4th in the OCC from 1:00 - 9:30 pm

(Come when you can leave when you must)

12:00 – 1:00 Panel Discussion with Dr. Rollie Martinson, Amanda Weitzel, and others

1:00 - 4:00 Open and Self-Guided Activities

4:00 – 5:00 Discussion with Emerging Leaders

The day will conclude with a concert by Jonathan Rundman at 8:00 in the Chapel of the Incarnation.

## *Unfinished Business*

Time enough, and space, for a few more words

By Marc Ostlie-Olson, Managing Editor

We're at that point in the term – perhaps we're even past it – when I begin to realize that not everything is going to get finished up the way I'd hoped. The papers will get written, I suppose – and the rest of the requirements will limbo beneath the proverbial wire. But there will be some conversations begun that will not reach conclusion; some relationships launched that will float away like untethered kites. Some trains of thought have run out of track. Pale and sore from studying, Elvis has left the academic arena to get some sun and read a novel of his own choosing. Usually I'm a pragmatist and not particularly prone to nostalgia, but the end of the Spring term always weighs a bit with might-have-beens.

Of course, it's rife with possibilities, too; I know this. Many of us are headed from here with adventures on the horizon. Some of these will last a few months; some will stretch into yearlong internships. Other ventures are of the more permanent variety: first calls, first children, first paychecks after a long dry spell. Weddings. Funerals. We blow out of here like dandelion floaters and come to rest God-knows-where and God-knows-for-how-long. And even if God doesn't really *know*, God at least does the blowing.

Though not quite the final issue of the year, this month's *Concord* contains a few last calls and some snatches of the unfinished community conversation. The subjects are as vital as they are unremarkable: ministry, worship, prayer, learning and teaching, living at home. Our writers this month remind us that even though the intensity and focus of this particular semester at Luther is ending, the world continues to spin, and God calls us into that larger and wider community. How has the 2005-06 academic year equipped you to join this conversation?

And, perhaps more immediately, what remains

for you to say to those with whom you have spent at least this year, of whose calling you have been a part, and whose ministry you will share as God blows us where the Spirit wills?

## *Publishing Schedule* May 2006

Monday, May 1  
Mayday Issue

Wednesday, May 10  
Summer Reading List

Monday, May 16  
A Final(s) *Noncord*

## **You try it.**

The *Concord* is seeking a Managing Editor and staff for the 2006-2007 academic year. Training and coaching in layout and design are available. Email [concord@luthersem.edu](mailto:concord@luthersem.edu) or see Marc Ostlie-Olson with questions.

# What's Your Roster?

There is more under heaven, Horatio...

By Emily Chrissis, MA Senior and Diaconal Candidate

“What’s your roster?” This was a question posed to me when I visited PLTS last year. As part of an introduction on their campus, one frequently asks, “And what’s your roster?” – indicating that this is as important to know about a fellow student as whether the person is M.Div. or M.A. I was taken aback!

We don’t often ask that rostering question around Luther Seminary. One reason could be that we don’t know much about the 4 rosters in the ELCA. We, as church leaders, can count on working with Diaconal Ministers, Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses and of course, those ordained when we’re out in parishes and church service organizations. I’d like to take an opportunity to raise your awareness of one of the ELCA rosters that is relatively new, growing rapidly and is my answer to “What’s your roster?” – Diaconal Ministry.

Diaconal Ministry is the ministry of Word and Service, and it is lived out in the intersection of the church and the world – connecting the two and constantly bringing the one into the other. What does a ministry of Word and Service at that intersection look like? Diaconal Ministers are called into ministries as varied as Hospital Chaplaincy, Christian Education, Prison

Ministries, Funeral Direction, LVC Coordination, and Mission Development (find stories at [www.elca.org/diaconalministry](http://www.elca.org/diaconalministry)).

## Did you know that Diaconal Ministers:

- are both men and women?
- are required to have an M.A. degree in Theology?
- can do CPE?
- go through the same candidacy process as M.Div’s?
- must complete 40 hours of Spiritual Direction?
- attend a 2-week Diaconal Ministry Formation Event (DMFE) at Gettysburg Seminary in July before Endorsement?
- must complete a field experience/practicum (700 hours, 200 of which must be congregation-based)?
- create a ministry project at the end of their practicum that can count as their M.A. thesis project?
- are consecrated, not ordained or commissioned?
- are committed to the following 6 principles?
  1. Be Rooted in the Word of God
  2. Be Trained to Carry Out a Particular Service
  3. Be Committed and Prepared to Equip the Baptized for Ministry in the World and in the Church
  4. Give Particular Attention to Ministries at the Boundaries Between the Church and World
  5. Exemplify the Life of Christ-like Service Addressing all Forms of Human Need
  6. Be Grounded in Community

I’d love to hear more people asking, “And what’s your roster?” or “Are you thinking about becoming rostered in the ELCA?” because it opens up important conversations surrounding questions like: Why become rostered? What are the differences in the rosters? Why is it necessary to have these 4 rosters? It also leads to discernment of our own gifts when we learn about others’ calls to ministry and speak about our own.

Fill up Krista Lind’s (Coordinator for Candidacy and Placement) calendar with your questions about rostered ministry and know that there are many students on this campus discerning how/if their gifts for ministry should be utilized through rostered – not just ordained – leadership. If you know someone who is passionate about serving the church and the world but not through the office of pastor, maybe one of the other rosters – maybe Diaconal Ministry – is for them!

Next time you’re logging on to Luther’s homepage, wander over to the Diaconal Ministry website at [http://www.luthersem.edu/candidacy/candidacy\\_resources.asp](http://www.luthersem.edu/candidacy/candidacy_resources.asp) for much more information.

# Mormons Playing Poker

## Hand number one.

By Kevin Bergeson, MDiv Intern

Vegas has taught me about the popularity of *Texas Hold 'Em*, a popular version of poker. You work with the hand that is dealt you. In the West, the stakes have been raised.

Las Vegas is growing by 6,000 net people a month and Lutherans are, ahem, losing market share faster than the post dotcom bubble burst in the market. The West is notorious for its outlaw spirit and independent nature. Thus, all the larger churches in town are independent and nondenominational (though, we can argue if that really is a denomination anyways). The West is spiritually curious. Add some drugs, legal prostitution (in 12 counties in NV), gaming, and huge migrant worker population, and we got issues. Oh yeah, and let us not forget the Mormons.

Mormonism (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, or LDS) is a relatively new religion (1800s). ELCA headquarters advises that a formerly Mormon person be baptized when converting to Christianity. One of my pastoral care appointments had to do with just this. Rodney Stark, social scientist and author of *The Rise of Christianity*, predicted that Mormonism would be the one religion Christianity will be contending with soon. Why, what's the attraction?

It's very American: Mormons believe in the importance of the family unit (you are "sealed" to your spouse for "time and eternity"). They are patriotic and they vote. You have seen missionaries out just about everywhere (think the parable of the persistent widow). They require, for membership, that everyone tithe. *Everyone*. They routinely pay cash for all new lands and buildings. No stake house (local congregation) is over 130 families; they keep dividing. They have a social system for Mormons-only that is a better safety net for young single moms than welfare.

Mormons do not have a Trinitarian theology. God, Jesus and the Spirit are not equal. Through a lifetime of good works, including avoidance of caffeine and alcohol, we can become equal to God -for God was once human. No person of color, until recently, could attain salvation or become part of the church. There are no professional clergy. There is a strict male hierarchy that traces to the top man: the prophet, and his two chosen - collectively called the First Presidency. The current,

typically octogenarian, prophet is Gordon Hinckley. They believe in modern revelation, and that God speaks through revelations to individuals. Joseph Smith, the lauded founder, read the original Book of Mormon off of gold plates, through

special glasses, (said to be a form of Egyptian hieroglyphs): a recounting of Christ's visitation to America. Photo walls of all the LDS prophets, with Gordon Hinckley placed alongside a picture of Jesus, can be found.

We need missionaries in the West who are willing to teach that the cross of Jesus Christ is central to our faith. Mormonism has no place for the cross (it is not shown in art or on buildings). This mission calls us to hold aloft the cross. It is the cross and the power of prayer that will carry confessional Christianity through, and see the kingdom of God grow. CLC in Vegas is the largest Protestant community offering a sacramental understanding of Christianity. That is who we are: our identity!

I have been making sweeping claims about Mormons. So if you need a face to go with it, a real person, try next door.

See also: *Under the Banner of Heaven* by Jon Krakauer, *Mormon America* by the Ostlings, *Mormon Growth and Practices: Christian Theological Reflections*. By Dr. Pat Kiefert, [Word and World](#) 24/3 (2004)

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## *On the Divine Liturgy*

An open letter regarding worship at Luther

By Rachel Oldfather, MDiv Senior, Ryan Mills, Non-Degree, and Joseph Winston, MDiv Senior

On Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Luther community gathered together for a service of Holy Communion, which was followed by a celebration of Dr. Fretheim's contributions to this Seminary, the church, and the academy. In a service that could have presented the deep riches of the Lutheran liturgical tradition, we were instead made concerned about the state of corporate worship life at Luther Seminary. We are not concerned for our own sake, but for the sake of the people that we will eventually be called to serve as ministers of Word and Sacrament. Congregations depend upon seminaries to raise up presiders who will serve the Word's putting-to-death and raising-up of sinners.

The Word is enough! But the Word always comes to us through external means. The Word encounters us most clearly in the gifts of God in the assembly: baptism, the keys, the sacrament of the altar, the preached word, the presider—all functioning to condemn sinners and announce forgiveness for Christ's sake. If any of these means are neglected, we are not given grace or brought to faith, but rather abandoned to our own devices, which will never save us.

Too often we have, indeed, been abandoned. When we substitute personal preference for the ancient patterns that exist around these external means, we introduce chaos and confusion which not only causes little ones to stumble, but also makes a mockery of our unity in the communion of saints and the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

Liturgy is the primary way we experience theology—the way the Word is “done” to us. Good liturgy forms the community according to the Gospel and honors all in the community, from the youngest child to the oldest saint. It is the people's work—it is the way we Christians tell our story. It is not a story we have invented, but

a story that belongs to our community. A community we are but a passing element within, but that we claim and enact again-and-again. In turn, the liturgy sends the

community out to do ministry in everyday life through our individual vocations. Hence the liturgy can never be captive to individual whims or cultural norms, as these can too often serve as agents of principalities and powers. As the bell calls us to the bath and to the table, we are moved by the Spirit to pray for and engage the many needs of this world. Corporate prayer is thus not about us, but rather for “the church, the world, and all people according to their needs.”

Just as the disciples complained about the extravagant anointing of Jesus' feet, some people

may complain about the depth, richness, and “complexity” of the liturgy. But our faith is always centered in the complex reality of “two words”:

law and gospel, saint and sinner, bath and table, death and resurrection. Jesus Christ, himself, and alone. In a disposable, simplistic culture, we hold to that which must be treasured in all its richness and paradox, for it is nothing less than the Gospel. In this way we owe our very

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best to God who gave His only-begotten Son for us. Our prayer and praise does nothing to earn God's favor, but is instead a response to what God has done in our living and our dying.

In many and varied ways, we are all here being formed as stewards of God's mysteries. By getting out of the way of the Word and by maintaining the traditions that have been handed on to us (1 Cor. 11:2), we allow the work of the people to

work the people. All we ask for is that which is ours in baptism: participation in the people's work around Word and sacrament. All we demand is what the one church has always known: that in setting out the gifts of God according to ancient patterns, Christ is most clearly present for us.

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## *Where the Heart is* A Blessing for a Home

By Christopher Byars, MDiv Intern

A home is more than just a place  
To rest your head when you are weary,  
It is more than a building or a house,  
Home is where your heart learns,  
It is a place filled with memories.  
Memories of the struggles and successes,  
Of lean times and times of prosperity,  
Laughter and tears  
With those you love.  
Home is where your family is,  
Husband and wife,  
Joined in a godly bond,  
Friendships centered on God,  
Promises made before God  
A union that is of three,  
Two held together with God at the center,  
A cord of three strands is not easily broken  
And so shall a household centered on God  
Remain a home.  
May the Lord bless this home  
And all who enter.

This was written while on a mission trip with Redeemer Lutheran Church of Fridley, MN working in Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. I wrote this and gave this at the dedication of the home that we built for the Garcia-Reyes family through the *Home of Hope* program led by Youth with a Mission (YWAM) San Diego. After sharing with the team, I was asked to share this with the YWAM base at Ensenada. The director there asked for permission to copy this and translate it into Spanish to give in the welcome package at the dedication of future homes that are built and given to families. It is amazing what God can do with small things. I intended this for one family, but it may bless thousands.

*Homes of Hope* builds about 350 to 500 houses per year for families that can not afford homes themselves. The homes are small by our standards, but for many of these people it is beautiful. If you would like to know more you can contact the YWAM Base in San Diego via [www.YWAM.org](http://www.YWAM.org) and ask about the Homes of Hope program.

by linda e. webster

Reflections -

*More questions than answers*

What am I to do?

*My culture says, "Buy more things, build more houses, acquire more stuff."*

*But, my Savior calls to me and says, "Sell it all and give the money away."*

*Is a response mandatory?*

What am I to do?

*My world says, "Taxes are too high; you don't have enough for all you want."*

*But, my Lord asks me to "feed the hungry, care for the sick, provide for the homeless."*

*Is a response necessary?*

What am I to do?

*My government officials make laws for minimum wage, but don't seem to care if it is a living wage.*

*My God tells me workers are worth their hire and not to cheat them out of their wages.*

*Is a response needed?*

What am I to do?

*My president says, "We've been attacked and we must not ever let this happen again."*

*My Master reminds me, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself and forgive seventy times seven."*

*Is a response optional?*

## *Seminary Labyrinth*

New prayer and meditation resource arrives

*I guide you in the way of wisdom  
and lead you along straight paths.*

*When you walk, your steps will not be hampered;  
when you run, you will not stumble.*

*Proverbs 4:11-12*



Labyrinths have a tradition older than but adapted to Christianity. They have been found all over the world, and have been used throughout history by Greeks, Vikings, and Native Americans. Unlike a maze, labyrinth draws you calmly to the center with one path. The point is not to confuse or lose you, but to peacefully direct your mind and body.

Discover labyrinth at Luther. Take time to clear your mind and journey the Seminary's seven-circuit canvas labyrinth. This project was funded by private donations and painted by students in February. Members of the seminary community lit candles, walked in meditative prayer, and reflected on the Stations of the Cross at each of the fourteen turns during Lent and Holy Week.

Note the Seminary calendar for dates and locations of the labyrinth this spring and summer. Direct questions about the labyrinth to Parish Nurse Karen Treat.

Submitted by Meta Herrick, MDiv Junior