THE TRUTH OF CHRIST IS THAT IMPORTANT!

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

Alongside the other seminarians, Mark stands up and gets in line. His heart is pounding. His wife is watching and waiting. He hears his name read. He hears the name of the district, the congregation, the city and state. This is Mark’s first call into the holy ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The seminary hands him a packet and a diploma. Mark and his wife pack the U-Haul and drive to their new community. They get out of the car and enter a whole new world.

The world Mark steps into has changed from what he read in his textbooks from the days of Luther (1500s), or Walther and the beginnings of the LCMS (1847), or stories he heard from the glory days of the LCMS from his grandparents (1950s), or even the declining church he observed from his parents. Mark begins to meet the people of his congregation and community. They’ve all been affected by the world. Some believe in the Triune God who created and redeemed the world. Some believe there is a god out there who started this mess, but they would rather rely on their own reason and strength and are rather skeptical about the truthfulness and accuracy of the Bible. Some, even in the church, believe the world started with some big bang and evolved into what it is today. Others don’t believe in God at all and instead think everything that happens to them happens by chance. Others in the church and community believe their faith is based on their emotions, and they define God the way that suits them best — regardless of what the Bible says. Others have been watching too much “Star Wars” and “The Office” and the Hallmark Channel, and they either believe that life is totally meaningless or they see themselves as their own little god that everything in the world revolves around. And still others in Mark’s brand-new world are pretty faithful in the congregation but are rather vocal that every other religion and idea is just as valid as their Christian faith and that, in the end, everyone is going to go to the same happy place.

Since the time of his Baptism, Mark has been formed to be a Lutheran pastor. After the Hymn of the Day, Mark will stand in the pulpit and preach the forgiveness of sins and eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is the creator of the world. Mark will preach and teach this eternal truth in Bible class, to the youth group and to the shut-ins. The abiding truth of Jesus Christ, embedded in the inspired and inerrant Word of God, will permeate Mark’s ministry. This truth of Christ will be preached into the lives and souls of His people as He provides them with pastoral care on earth and prepares them for eternal life in heaven.

This is the importance of pastoral formation in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod!
Our Lord promises to send laborers into His fields, and one way that He works is through the encouragement and support of all those in the lives of young people considering church-work vocations. As we serve these neighbors, we need:

✚ To be intentional.
✚ To remind our pastors to talk and preach about the joys of church work.
✚ To be relational with our youth and have a general interest in their spiritual lives.
✚ To be patient and walk alongside someone who has potential for church work.
✚ To find ways to interact with potential church workers through music, sports, youth programs and more.
✚ To build a church-work vocation program in the church and school where we can talk about, advocate for and support church workers.
✚ To encourage our children to attend a Concordia university. (Start by visiting one!)
✚ To make LCMS church, school and youth events something we all want to be in.
✚ To teach God’s Word with truth, purity and integrity — this is what they want!
✚ To show our thankfulness for our Lutheran identity anchored in the Gospel.
✚ To mentor and develop relationships with our youth through conversations about church work.
✚ To care for our current church workers to show this is a vocation that is respected, appreciated and admired.

How can you encourage kids toward church work?

Church Worker Focus Groups revealed:

✚ The middle school years are when most individuals first decide to pursue church-work vocations.
✚ The greatest influencers on a child entering a church-work vocation are parents, pastors, youth directors, directors of Christian education, teachers and coaches, as well as anyone who says, “Have you ever considered serving in the church full time?”
✚ People are attracted to full-time church work for the sense of community and belonging, the Lutheran schools, and the feeling of being called to do God’s work and make a difference in the lives of His people with the Gospel.

Increasing interest in church work

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Pastoral Formation Summit: Leaders met to assess the current situation and outlook for pastoral formation in the LCMS.

A comprehensive plan to move forward with a church-worker formation initiative focused on forming church workers from font to grave.

WHO WAS THERE?
- President REV. DR. MATTHEW C. HARRISON
- Chief Mission Officer REV. KEVIN D. ROBSON
- Pastoral Education Executive Director REV. DR. JAMES BANECK
- Senior Assistant to the President REV. DR. JON VIEKER
- CTSFW President REV. DR. LAWRENCE RAST JR.
- CSL President REV. DR. DALE MEYER
- Concordia University Presidents REV. DR. PATRICK FERRY, REV. DR. BRIAN FRIEDRICH and REV. DR. DANIEL GARD
- and Senior Vice-President GRETCHEN JAMESON of Concordia University Wisconsin

LCMS delegates passed Res. 6-01, “Church Worker Recruitment Initiative,” by 94%

Focus Groups Completed: 10

WHAT’S NEXT?
- Church Worker Recruitment Initiative communications will permeate the Synod
- Standing Partnership meeting in Spring 2020 with the LCMS to plan the initiative
- Aslanian Market Research will survey more than 2,000 individuals across the Synod

JULY – DECEMBER 2019

Completed Focus Groups: 10

SEPT. 11–12, 2018

JOINING THE CONVERSATION

LCMS National Mission, International Mission, Mission Advancement and Communications; district presidents; seminary faculties and seminary students; Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS); multiethnic conference; International Mission regional directors; Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML)

- Generous Support –
  - $125,000
  - SCHWAN FOUNDATION
  - $125,000
  - LCMS Board of Directors

Signed Contracts:
1. Aslanian Market Research (AMR) to research church workers in the LCMS
2. Standing Partnership Marketing Communications to design a comprehensive communications and marketing initiative that permeates the entire LCMS
The following data, updated Feb. 17, 2020, shows funds disbursed from the Synod to its seminaries during the past six fiscal years. (The LCMS fiscal year runs July 1–June 30. Blue rows indicate Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Yellow rows indicate Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.)

SYNOD SUBSIDIES: YOUR WORSHIP OFFERINGS

Undesignated Synod funds provided for undesignated seminary operations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY14</th>
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YOUR GIFTS VIA THE LCMS JOINT SEMINARY FUND**

Designated Synod funds raised by LCMS Mission Advancement for undesignated seminary operations.

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<tr>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
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<th>FY17</th>
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YOUR SEMINARY-SPECIFIC DONATIONS

Designated Synod funds raised by LCMS Mission Advancement from individual donors who restrict the use of their gifts to either or both of the seminaries for undesignated or designated seminary operations.

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<tr>
<th>FY14</th>
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<th>FY16</th>
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YOUR SUPPORT OF THE GLOBAL SEMINARY INITIATIVE (GSI)

Designated Synod funds raised and restricted grants secured by LCMS Mission Advancement as Synod’s contribution to the GSI, a program which provides (1) graduate-level scholarships to international students studying at either of the Synod’s seminaries or (2) financial resources for sending seminary faculty members overseas for temporary teaching assignments.

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<tr>
<th>FY14</th>
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FORWARD IN REMEMBRANCE

Designated Synod funds raised in a major, focused fundraising campaign in support of international students studying at either of the Synod’s seminaries (the fundraising campaign ended in 2015, but the accumulated contributions earn investment income, which is disbursed to the seminaries).

| NA | $40,036 | | Program change | Program change | $67,859 |
| NA | $59,963 | $38,052 | Program change | Program change | $67,859 |

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Designated Synod funds raised in a precursor initiative to the GSI program.

| $178,233 | | Model shift | NA | NA | NA |
| $178,233 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

YOUR GIFTS FOR SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIPS/STUDENT AID

Designated Synod funds disbursed in support of various scholarships, paid out of restricted funds and endowments controlled by the Synod.

| $116,464 | $203,674 | $175,693 | $115,908 | $116,292 | $142,833 |
| $94,804 | $281,181 | $102,782 | $197,708 | $144,575 | $114,389 |

EIIT SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

Designated Synod funds disbursed in support of LCMS Southeastern District students enrolled in the seminary’s Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT).

| NA | $19,669 | NA | NA | NA | NA |

SPECIAL GRANTS

Undesignated Synod funds provided in support of “one off” purposes and initiatives (varies by year).

| $0 | $3,750 | $3,756 | $3,750 | $3,750 | $3,750 |
| $0 | $10,200 | $3,750 | $3,750 | $3,750 | $3,750 |

RECRUITING PASTORS IN YOUR CONGREGATION

- **SEE** every boy as a future pastor.
- **BE INTENTIONAL** — Encourage every boy to be a pastor.
- **BE RELATIONAL** — Take interest in the young boy’s life and genuinely care for him.
- **KNOW** that it is in middle school when most boys decide to be pastors.
- **REMEMBER** that parents, pastors, youth leaders, coaches, music directors and teachers have the greatest influence over whether a young boy will eventually decide to become a pastor.
- **EXEMPLARY** a joy and love for being Lutheran that attracts young men into the holy ministry.
- **TEACH** boys the truth and depth of God’s Word so they are more apt to be drawn to the holy ministry.

YOUR MERCY/HUMAN CARE GIFTS VIA GRANTS

Designated Synod funds provided for disaster relief projects and studies.

| NA | $75,000 | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| NA | $75,000 | NA | NA | NA | NA |

OTHER DONOR-FUNDED GRANTS

All other grants disbursed from the Synod to seminaries — generally in support of special projects requested by the Synod.

| $35,050 | $43,657 | $180,965 | $44,188 | $51,688 | $8,385 |
| $60,766 | $126,380 | $194,309 | $4,266 | $40,450 | $16,725 |

FACULTY SERVICES

Undesignated or designated Synod funds paid as fees to seminaries in return for services provided by seminary faculty members (e.g., presentations, seminars and short-term intensive teaching assignments).

| $75,000 | $203,674 | $175,693 | $115,908 | $116,292 | $142,833 |
| $94,804 | $281,181 | $102,782 | $197,708 | $144,575 | $114,389 |

SUBTOTAL

| $1,907,113 | $2,088,888 | $1,928,678 | $1,556,436 | $1,757,172 | $1,879,470 |
| $1,722,061 | $1,822,630 | $1,788,233 | $1,572,203 | $1,584,981 | $1,693,286 |

TOTAL

| $3,629,174 | $3,911,518 | $3,716,911 | $3,128,639 | $3,342,153 | $3,572,756 |