



LTS TODAY

Lutheran Theological Seminary, a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, nurtures and challenges all people for Christ-centred leadership and witness for God's mission in the world.

LTS AND THE WORLD

Rev. Dr. William Harrison, President



LTS is a school that cares about the world.

Our slogan, "Challenge Yourself. Challenge Others. Challenge the World." focuses our life toward the kinds of changes that each of us must undergo in order to invite the church into transformation, with a view to participating in God's

transformation of the whole world.

We must learn from others. We must grow with others. We must live into God's community of all. For "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17). If Paul meant "everything," if he really meant a "new creation," what difference might that make?

For LTS, it is a reminder of our connections to the wider church and the larger world, where God is working transformation in a variety of exciting and challenging ways. This newsletter talks about those ties, especially with Lutherans in South America. LTS is planning to focus its cross-cultural studies and experience on Colombia and our Lutheran World Federation partner there: **Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de Colombia (IELCO)**. I begin by sharing a bit about **my summer trip to Colombia**, with a delegation from ABT Synod. **Jorge González** talks about our group's visit to Medellín, from the perspective of Colombians. **Tricia Hoepfner** – who will help to support our seminary connection with Colombia – shares with us the story of IELCO, which is also a family story for her. In addition, we hear about **Hernán Ariza**, Tricia's father, whose life of service to God binds Canada with Colombia. Ariza, on his death in late 2022, left a bequest for the **Grace Fund for Faculty**.

Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero adds to our encounter with South American Lutheranism, reflecting on a visit to LTS by the **Rev. Dr. Mercedes Bachmann and President Wilma Rommel** from Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Unida - Argentina y

Uruguay. Dr. Bachmann and President Rommel took time with STU faculty, staff, and students on the afternoon of October 4, followed by an evening lecture by Dr. Bachmann.

In partnerships that are equally transformative while being more local, we introduce two more members of our STU faculty. **Dr. Bernon Lee** (St. Andrew's College - SAC) discusses his varied experiences of church in Singapore, Minneapolis, and Western Canada, and talks about aspects of studying and teaching Hebrew Scripture that bring him joy. **The Rev. Dr. Trish McCarthy** (College of Emmanuel & St. Chad - ESC) speaks to her experiences of prairie church, along with joys and challenges of pastoral work and reflection. We welcome a new staff member, **Kristi Baxter**, who serves as our Finance Manager, along with her role as Director of Administration with SAC.

In a different vein, I share some news about my plans for administrative leave (like a sabbatical), next year. I will work on a book project about **leading in a church where numbers are dropping**, a resource that I hope will serve seminaries and leaders – clergy and lay – well.

We are pleased to share the news that **LTS enrolments are rising**, after a slower couple of years during the depths of covid. The intriguing news is about the ways that they are climbing, as the church's approaches to ministry shift and change.

We provide information about the **money that you, our kind donors, send to us** and ways that it gets used. We hope that this update will help you to understand LTS more deeply. We are heart-thankful for the faithful and generous people of God who sustain the work of your seminary. Please continue to give to the General Fund and the Grace Fund for Faculty.

We announce an Art Auction of paintings by John Dyck, a welcome gift from alumnus, Pr. Eric Dyck. This is a wonderful chance to get a beautiful work of art and support LTS, simultaneously. A joyful two-for-one!

WHAT I LEARNED IN COLOMBIA

Rev. Dr. William Harrison, President

I had an amazing time in Colombia, visiting our friends in IELCO, a Lutheran World Fellowship-affiliated church. I have an extensive font of stories; you should (if you have plenty of patience!) hear me talk about the beautiful *ruana*, a local sort of poncho that I purchased in Nobsa and mostly lived in for the rest of my visit, and – perhaps more importantly – the wonderful older woman who sold it to me while sharing pictures and stories about her family that has been hand-making these for generations! Then, there's the endless supply of spectacular hot chocolate; of course, I brought home some mix for one version that is a meal in itself.

As joyful as reminiscences are, I remind myself that I went on business. My task was to inquire about the possibilities and benefits of a closer connection between LTS and IELCO, especially for our cross-cultural programme. Thus, I use this space to share a few insights from my trip.

Insight #1: We can learn much from IELCO. IELCO knows how to be small. The IELCO community is developing ways to connect small numbers of committed members spread over large areas, with a rich worship life and impressive capacity for mission. The small church community that we visited in Medellín is based in a small apartment in a residential building (see article by Jorge González). Worship services occur in the living room and connect to people in a variety of communities electronically; services are truly hybrid, with members from all over contributing music, readings, and other forms of direct engagement. Moreover, IELCO is truly a diaconal church. We saw this in our visit to the Good Shepherd Center for the Elderly in Soacha (part of Bogotá), where meals are served, crafts made, Indigenous dances are taught, and God is worshipped. We also saw it in Caracoli, where Lutheran resources helped to found educational programs now partly supported by crafts made onsite (I bought a polo shirt). There are lessons for our students in these ventures.

Insight #2: We have some things to offer IELCO, in the spirit of mutuality of relationship. One of the greatest challenges for IELCO is theological education. They do not have a seminary; nor is there one handy that specifically serves Lutherans. Instead, IELCO works with a variety of schools supported by other denominations, providing Lutheran formation in parishes. Our hope is that we can offer some Lutheran educational support to their theological training, working with Nélide Mora (Coordinator of Lutheran School of Theology, their training program, pictured with Tricia Hoepfner) and others.



top: Tricia Hoepfner and Nélide Mora

bottom: Pastor Markus Wilhelm, Elizabeth Sandoval (IELCO), and President Harrison



Insight #3: There are strong communities of support in both Canada and Colombia, making this feasible and attesting to the longstanding relationships between our churches. As you will see in the following pages of this newsletter, our histories are intertwined. LTS has played its own role, with Hernán Ariza who served at the CELCO school in Sagamoso. We visited the Sagamoso school on the trip, for a joyful time with students and teachers; I hope we're able to return. We are pleased to feature articles by Tricia Hoepfner, a part of the community of support, who will help us to understand Colombia and organize future visits for our students. We can do this!

PRESIDENT'S LEAVE: HELPING THE CHURCH BE SMALLER

Rev. Dr. William Harrison, President

At its October meeting, the LTS Board confirmed for me an administrative leave for July 1 – Dec. 31, 2024. An administrative leave looks the same as a sabbatical, but the terminology is different for someone whose job is primarily administrative rather than academic. During my time away, an acting president (to be announced) will support the life of LTS.

I will be working on a book project that has been taking shape over the last couple of years. It focuses on the reality that the church is getting smaller, with challenging implications for many church congregations and institutions. The book addresses people, both ordained and lay, who are called to lead in these times.

The core of the challenge is that North Americans are not trained to help institutions be smaller. Most leadership

schools emphasize becoming larger, which is always the priority of our growth-oriented world.

My work provides both theological reflection and practical resources for leaders in contexts where participation numbers are shrinking. I recognize the challenges and stresses, while also calling people to a sense of possibility. Even closing a congregation or institution can come with a real feeling of participation in God's work, if we do it healthily.

This book project comes out of my years as a theologian, administrative leader, church staff, and parish pastor. I hope that it will prove to bring both comfort and strength to the church.



HERNÁN ARIZA AND THE GRACE FUND FOR FACULTY

In this newsletter that celebrates the developing connection between Colombian Lutherans and LTS, we are pleased to share that Hernán Ariza has included a Lutheran Planned Giving contribution to LTS, which will go to the Grace Fund for Faculty. Hernán's gift ensures that his life and work will continue to have an impact on our work, for years to come.

We are pleased to say that the Grace Fund now exceeds \$550,000, well on the way to our goal of \$750,000 by the end of 2025.

Heartfelt thanks go to Hernán and his family for their generous contribution.



A LEGACY OF LOVE

Tricia Hoepfner, Global Mission Ministry Team, Synod of Alberta & The Territories

To tell the story of the foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO) one must begin with missionaries from Canada and the United States who arrived in Colombia in the 1930s. As the granddaughter of missionaries, Gerhard and Helene Ostrem, who served in Colombia, I would like to share a brief overview—from the perspective of one who has heard the stories from my grandmother, my parents (Hernán and Carol Ariza) and my aunts (Ruth, Gladys, and Lori) who were part of this history.

I respectfully acknowledge that many other missionaries played an integral role in building the Lutheran Church in Colombia.

Rev. Gerhard Ostrem, originally from Nebraska, and Helene Anderson from Saskatchewan, were married in Saskatchewan before they left to set sail for Colombia in 1936. The Presbyterian Church had already been evangelizing in Colombia for some time when the Lutherans arrived. They were happy to share some of the mission field where they had been serving. The land they shared was in the department (province) of Boyacá, a beautiful region north of Bogotá nestled in the Andes mountains.

Gerhard and Helene served in various communities in Boyacá, including the communities of Socotá, Soatá, El Cocuy, Duitama, and Sogamoso. Travel was challenging as there were no roads, or bridges over the many rivers. Journeying on horseback, mule, or ox they visited the people of the countryside bringing the love of Jesus and the message of salvation by grace through faith. Gerhard and Helene lived among the Colombian people, experiencing life as the people around them experienced. During their 22 years of ministry in Colombia, four girls were born to Helene who insisted on giving birth to them in Colombia rather than heading home.

In 1940 Gerhard founded the Lutheran Bible Institute in Socotá and was its first director. Here many youth of Boyacá learned theology from a Lutheran perspective.



Left to right: Ruth, Gerhard, Carol (top), Lori, Helene and Gladys; photo from archives of Rev. Harold Olson, former missionary to Colombia.



Soatá, Boyacá. Photo from archives of Rev. Harold Olson



One of the Lutheran schools; photo from archives of Rev. Harold Olson

The Bible Institute moved from Socotá to Duitama during these years.

In 1947 Gerhard and Helene traveled on horseback to the eastern plains (los llanos orientales) in the department of Casanare. Gerhard received from the Presbyterians the congregation of La Aguada with the associated school. The Protestant children were not welcome in the government schools which were run by the Roman Catholic Church; so in each community they served, the missionaries would welcome children to a small school to teach academics as well as stories of the love of Jesus. This was the beginning of the CELCO schools (Colegio Evangelico Luterano de Colombia) which are now renowned alternatives to public schools that teach excellence in academics including English as well as instilling Christian values. (Present-day they are located in Bogotá, Sogamoso, Paz de Ariporo, and El Cocuy and have over 1500 students.)

In 1948 civil war broke out between the Conservative government, a dictatorship, and the Liberals. This was a time of turmoil in Colombia called “La Violencia.” Lutherans and other Protestants faced persecution during La Violencia including brutality, incarceration, book burning, vandalism, arson and death. The church and school in La Aguada was burned to the ground. The people of the congregation were displaced and forced to go into hiding. Some fled to the city of Bogotá. Gerhard remained in the plains with his beloved congregation, while Helene and the four girls went to the city. After over six months in hiding in the jungle during which he supported the community with everything from spiritual support to delivering babies, Gerhard was reunited with his family in Bogotá.

The people of La Aguada, scattered throughout the eastern plains during La Violencia, would later (1958) form the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran in Paz de Ariporo with Rev. Gerardo Wilches who was a former student of Gerhard Ostrem’s, and one of Colombia’s first pastors. Today there is a vibrant congregation and CELCO school in Paz de Ariporo.

During La Violencia, the Bible Institute was moved to Bogotá for the safety of the students and teachers. Canadians Rev. Arnfeld Morck and Señorita Joyce Bergh, among others, also served as directors at the Bible Institute. The Bible Institute continues to this day as the Lutheran School of Theology in Bogotá, whose director is Nélida Mora.

In 1953, El Redentor (Redeemer) Lutheran Church and parsonage were built in Bogotá with Rev. Gerhard Ostrem as the first pastor.

In 1955, Lutheran families from Casanare—whose children were not able to go to school because of the



armed conflict—were taken in by Lutherans in the town of Sogamoso. A school and residence for these families was started and would become the CELCO School of Sogamoso.

Rev. Gerhard and Helene served in Colombia until 1958

when Gerhard was ill with cancer. Not wanting to leave his beloved Colombian people, Gerhard stayed until he was very weak. The family left Colombia only six days before Gerhard died; after he passed away, Helene and the girls settled in Camrose, Alberta.

Presently in the IELCO there are 16 congregations, 5 missions, and four schools. The IELCO is active in social programs serving youth, single mothers, seniors, displaced persons, indigenous people, and migrants as well as being involved in the peace process and in human rights issues. Twelve pastors—four of whom are female—and four seminarians serve the various congregations and programs.

In my journeys to Colombia I am often moved to tears by the stories shared by the Colombian people, who are deeply grateful for the impact of the missionaries on their lives. I am so excited that Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon is embarking on a relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia. It is a way of continuing the legacy of the first missionaries and ensuring that the relationship between Canadian and Colombian Lutherans is preserved. To God be the glory!



Students at the Lutheran Bible Institute in Bogotá, with Joyce Bergh and Rev. Harold Olson on the far left and Hernán Ariza top left; photo from archives of Rev. Harold Olson.



Medellín at night

A TRANSCENDENTAL VISIT TOOK PLACE IN THE HEART OF COLOMBIA

Jorge González, Emmaus Lutheran Church, IELCO

“Go and tell [all] what you have seen and heard” (Luke 7:22, paraphrase). A transcendental visit took place in the heart of Colombia! From July 29 to 31, 2023, the Evangelical Lutheran Church Emmaus in Medellín, La Tebaida and Cali, was honored with the presence of the Bishop of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Larry Kochendorfer, accompanied by pastors and leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada (ELCIC). Its objective was to know, disseminate, and strengthen the evangelistic actions of the church in these regions of the country.

The event was headed by Bishop Atahualpa Hernández of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO),

who together with Jorge González, leader of the church in Medellín, La Tebaida and Cali; Melissa Gómez, coordinator of the Evangelism and Mission Strategy; Elizabeth Sandoval, executive secretary of IELCO, and other prominent leaders, hosted the meeting.

On Saturday, the Church was filled with fervor and emotion as it welcomed the visitors. A united worship, which connected hearts and souls, in both languages, took place both in person at the Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church in Medellín, and virtually in the Coffee Region, Valle del Cauca and faithful from different parts of the country, who together in faith celebrated the meeting around the Risen One.

On Sunday, the visit continued with a meaningful tour of Medellín's Comuna 13, a community that has faced challenges and found hope in its struggle to rebuild its social fabric. The Medellín Memory Museum was also visited, a moving space that honors the memory of the victims of the armed conflict in Colombia.

Finally, the journey reached its climax. The leaders and coordinators of the projects met to present their efforts and achievements at the site of the Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church in Medellín. The sister church came together to hear about IELCO's María Magdalena Project, Indigenous People's Own Education and Communities for Life, excited about the possibility of contributing to the well-being of others.

The event was enriched by the presence of Bishop Larry Kochendorfer and the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, who shared their international commitment to strengthening the faith and working on social projects.

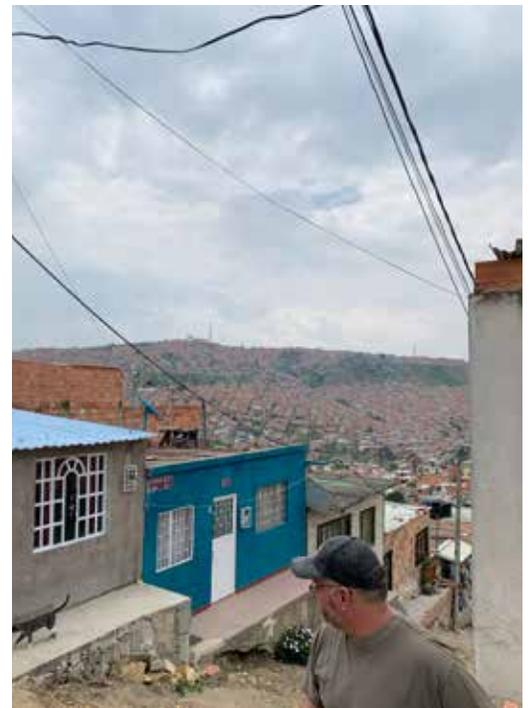
The community of the Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church, as well as the María Magdalena, Self-Education for Indigenous Peoples, Communities for Life and Evangelism and Mission Strategy projects, felt honored and grateful for the visit of these dear visitors. An experience that has been a clear example of how faith and working together can have a positive impact on the lives of many people around the world.

Thus concluded this historic visit, leaving a legacy of inspiration and commitment to the local and global community. Together we will continue working for a better world!

Reprinted with permission from Jorge González. Please note: this article appeared originally on the IELCO website.



Jorge González, Bill Harrison, and Melissa Gómez Yepes



HERNÁN ARIZA, PRODUCT OF MISSIONARIES

Tricia Hoepfner, Global Mission Ministry Team, Synod of Alberta & The Territories



“I am a product of missionaries,” José Hernán Ariza would say. Hernán was born in Soatá, Colombia in 1933. One of 5 children, his mother Zenaida was faithful and devoted to God and to her children. His father Antonio provided for his family by working as a blacksmith. Hernán gave thanks for the message of salvation by grace through faith brought by the Lutheran Missionaries to Colombia, including Gerhard and Helene Ostrem, Trigve and Alvida Salte, Harold and Opal Olson, Arnfeld and Hildur Morck, and Joyce Bergh to name a few.

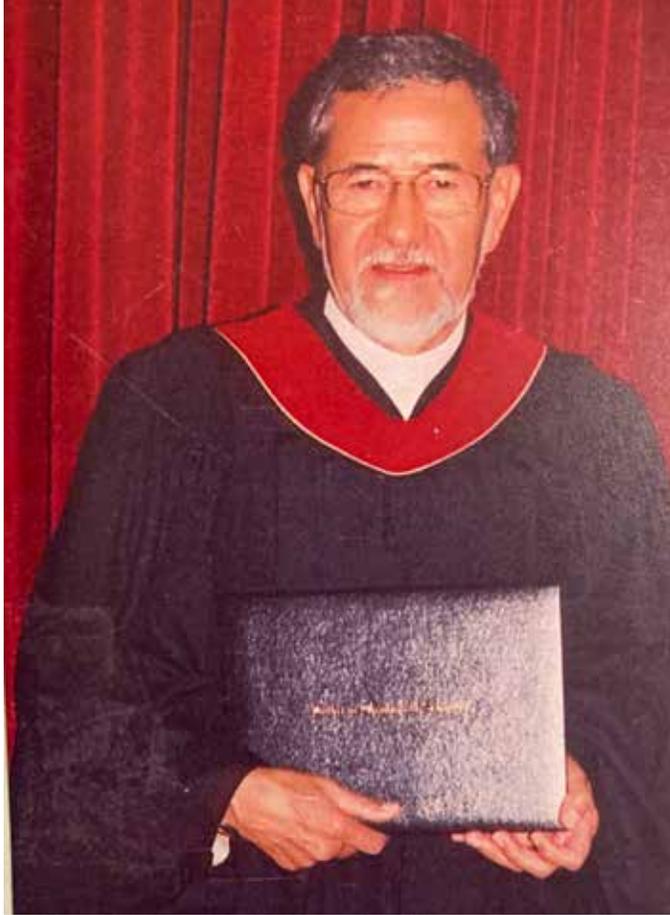
Hernán grew up during the civil war in Colombia called “La Violencia.” For their safety, Hernán’s family fled to the jungle near Venezuela where they lived for four years. In his early teens, Hernán was the hunter, providing meat for the family.

Hernán attended the Lutheran Bible Institute in Bogota from 1951-55 while Rev. Gerhard Ostrem was the director. Later Hernán served with Rev. Gerardo Wilches in the eastern plains of Colombia near Paz de Ariporo and then taught at the CELCO school in Sogamoso. He was honored to serve with the Colombian Military Police for 2 years.

Childhood friends, Hernán and Carol (Ostrem) were married in 1964. Hernán attended Augsburg Seminary in Mexico for one year and during this time their son Cito was born. A visit to Camrose to see Helene turned into a life in Canada. Their daughter, Patricia, was born while Hernán worked at the STELCO steel plant. Hernán was driven to educate himself and enrolled at U of A, earning a master’s degree in Sociology. Hernán was hired by the Government of the Yukon to work in Whitehorse as Life Skills instructor and Student Advisor.

At the age of 50, Hernán answered the Lord’s patient call and enrolled at Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon to complete his theology studies. After ordination in 1986 Hernán and Carol returned to their beloved Colombia to serve with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO) at Emmanuel Lutheran Church and the CELCO





school in Paz de Ariporo. Due to Carol's diagnosis with cancer in 1988 they returned to Canada for Carol's treatment. Back in Colombia in 1989, Hernán was elected Bishop of the IELCO. During his time as bishop, Hernán made it possible for two young Lutherans to become the first women to be ordained in the Lutheran Church in Colombia.

After Carol's death in 1992, Hernán served as Director of Communications with the IELCO. Hernán married Marjory Quilliam, who joined him for a time in Colombia before the two returned to Canada where Hernán served as pastor in Athabasca and Ellscoff until his retirement. In 2003 Hernán facilitated the signing of the Companion Synod relationship between the IELCO and Synod of Alberta and the Territories when Rev. Nehemias Parada and Rev. Steve Kristenson were bishops.

Always an advocate for education, in 2005 Hernán opened the Hogar Llanero Brisas del Canadá, a residence for children from the countryside to attend school in

the town of Paz de Ariporo. For his work in Colombia, Hernán was honored by LTS with an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity.

Back to Colombia full time in 2007, living at his finca (ranch), Hernán devoted his time to the Spanish translation of Martin Luther's Table Talk. In 2019 Hernán returned to Canada to be close to family. By the grace of God he completed the translation in June of 2022, and his children will ensure that it is published as an original work.

On November 18, 2022, Hernán passed into the Realm of Glory to be with Carol once again. His wish was that funds from his Lutheran Planned Giving life insurance policy would benefit LTS. The Grace Fund for Faculty ensures that the seminary is staffed by theologians who will provide seminarians with the study of grace based theology and Lutheran liturgy, something that Hernán would most assuredly stand behind.

To God be the Glory for Hernán's life of service! Amen.



NEW STAFF AT LTS

Kristi Baxter

I joined Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon in April 2023 as the new Finance Manager upon Monica Johnson's retirement. My involvement in the Saskatoon Theological Union and my employment with St. Andrew's College supported my new role. I joined St. Andrew's College in 2022 as the Chief Administrative Officer. This job facilitated my move back to Saskatoon. I grew up in Saskatoon and most of my immediate family are in Saskatoon.

I joined ATCO in Edmonton in 2017 as the Manager of Accounts Payable in their newly formed common services group. As part of this new position, I was responsible for the integration of 7 AP departments which ultimately ended up in a group of 24 direct reports with people located in both Edmonton and Calgary. I was also instrumental in the implementation of an invoice imaging system in 2017 and part of the team that implemented the Oracle Cloud ERP system in 2018.

Prior to ATCO, I was the Manager of Accounts Payable at PotashCorp (now Nutrien). During my tenure at PotashCorp, I held various positions and helped the

company in the areas of finance, system implementation, and change management.

I am a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, where I majored in Accounting and Health Care Administration. I went on to get my CPA, CMA designation.

When I am not keeping busy with my work, you can find me hanging out with my grandchildren, traveling, reading, hiking, golfing, or playing soccer. I enjoy learning, trying new things, meeting new people, and visiting new places. I also enjoy volunteering. I received the CMA Saskatchewan Member Recognition Award in 2010 for my contribution to the Society of Management Accountants. One of my more interesting roles was as a member of the Canadian Soccer Finance Committee from 2008 to 2012. I currently volunteer as the President of my Edmonton condo board, as a member on my Saskatoon condo board, as a member of the McClure Place Board, and as a member of the Saskatchewan Soccer Audit and Finance Committee.



FROM BUENOS AIRES TO SASKATOON

Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, Grace Professor of Leadership



Dr. Mercedes Bachmann

LTS was fortunate to have President Wilma Rommel and Dr. Mercedes Bachmann on campus on Wednesday, October 6. Their visit, part of a larger tour of the Saskatchewan Synod, provided opportunities to contemplate ministry and theological education in the 21st century. It included a reception in the afternoon and Dr. Bachmann's lecture, "The Bible in Buenos Aires," in the evening.

During the afternoon reception, President Rommel and Dr. Bachmann introduced the context in which they minister and teach. Rommel highlighted the importance of ecumenical relations among the historic Reformation traditions in Argentina and Uruguay. Since each tradition is small by itself, coming together in a common witness is vital. This message of grace challenges the popularity of the prosperity gospel and the inherent suspicion of institutions in countries with a history of corruption and greed.

In her role within the national church, Dr. Bachmann is responsible for educating lay people for the work of ministry, especially as the church sees its work in *diakonia*

—the work of service. Drawing on Lutheran ecclesiology, she reminded us that the Holy Spirit makes the church by gathering and moving us, and these actions lead to visions and dreams.

These visions and dreams may not look like ministry from a decade or generation ago; instead, it is the church's response to the needs of people today. "God doesn't need our protection; God needs us to witness," Dr. Bachmann said about the role of theology in the church. The witnessing, through preaching, brings about God's mission in this world. She asked, "Which voices are only shy and unable to speak directly?" For her, it is "the task of the Church to lift up these voices."

"When we are so few, we must work together, or as we say in Spanish, 'turn a necessity into a future,'" Dr. Bachmann said in her lecture. She expanded this communal activity to not just be about denominations or congregations working

Are we ready to give up traditional models of ministry?

Are we ready to try new models?

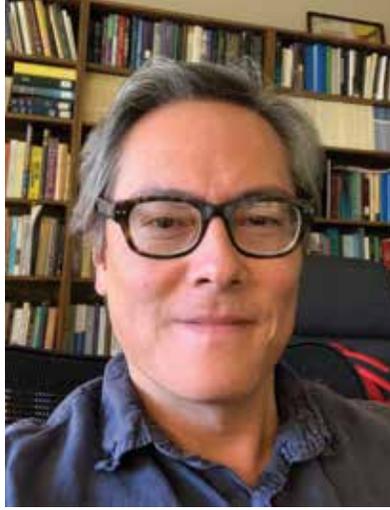
How much personal or local flexibility should there be in trying new models?

Are we ready for ministry teams, rather than do-it-all burned-out executives?

Are we training people for new models?

together but also understanding that all God's people are ministers in their work. She stressed that congregations develop a person-to-go-to ministry, someone embedded in the community who can direct people to others and that the church sees this as a vital ministry.

Dr. Bachmann concluded her lecture, "I didn't bring many answers but rather invite you to reflect on the questions that we've been asking in our context."



A RICH JOURNEY: BERNON LEE

I was born in Singapore, five years after it gained its independence from British rule. I attended a mission school founded by British and American missionaries of the Methodist Church. My parents were married at Paya Lebar Methodist Church, and I was raised in that congregation. My father served as an elder, but I cared little for the Christian faith. I dreamed of a life in the West, one of glamour and excitement, maybe working in the film business. My parents sent me to university in Calgary. I was 21. Free from that Confucian-fueled brand of Christian conservatism, I would live my way. Strangely, under the influence of a Protestant parachurch ministry, I found myself back in the embrace of the religion of my youth at the end of my undergraduate years.

My studies and later appointments to teaching posts brought me to downtown Toronto, to the corn fields of northern Indiana, to the first-ring suburbs of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Congregational interactions and institutional affiliations took me into Swedish Baptist circles, into the company of rural Presbyterians. I sat with Fundamentalist Brethren, with urban Episcopalians, with migrant workers in Indiana's vast fields of corn, with immigrant Chinese professionals in the orthopedics industry. I was struck—hard sometimes—by the often-peculiar cultural sensibilities of the various communities in their wrestling with Christian belief. One group protested the tie and sport coat I'd donned at a meeting, seeing in it symbols of their oppression. Another would find the command to honour one's parents sanction for the veneration of ancestors. These were the little signs of the (profound fabric of) cultural (and theological) diversity across our continent and world. Something of this varied experience of Christianity has stayed with me.

I teach the Hebrew Scriptures at St. Andrew's College in the Saskatoon Theological Union. Given the contours to my religious-cultural sojourning, it may be of little surprise that interactions in the spaces between cultures in the biblical story garner my interest: Israel's negotiations with Egypt, its revulsion for the Moabites, its intercourse with Aramean commercial interests, its mixed abhorrence of and attraction to the Babylonians. At the forefront of my interpretive imagination, also, are our varying notions of 'fairness', of 'piety', of 'worship', concepts flavoured always by place, by personality, by language and its accompanying cultural disposition(s). God meets us in the particular and the peculiar.

In a similar vein, my scholarly interest lies with the ways by which biblical interpretation interacts with cultural hegemony and prestige, whether it's about the returning deportees of sixth-century Yehud navigating the Persian imperial landscape in reading the Torah; or of Josephine Butler's tangles with fin-de-siècle church-established notions of female depravity and 'indigenous backwardness' in reading the Book of Judges; or of Florence Nightingale's seconding of the racialized tropes of nineteenth-century scientific talk in the comments on the margins of her Bible. Always, humanity's intercultural wranglings and the sense of a divided loyalty in our troubled (collective and individual) consciousness grab me.

And so, here, in the STU, I am enthusiastic to discover how our cross-denominational and mixed perspective to theological studies might chart a fresh vision for this troubled nation so much in need of Our Savior's reconciling grace. Our future beckons.

Dr. Bernon Lee is Professor of Hebrew Scriptures and Educational Coordinator of the Lifelong Learning Pathway at St. Andrew's College.



BEING PASTORAL ON THE PRAIRIES: TRISH MCCARTHY

I was ordained to the Anglican priesthood in 1993 and married my beloved, Art Howell, a year later. While we have no children, we currently have a small dog named Lexi and a Tennessee Walking horse named Lucy with whom I enjoy summer riding in official Saskatchewan Long Rider (Endurance 25+ mile) rides.

I have served mostly full time in Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan, in both urban and rural contexts. I have volunteered in Christian camping ministry for eight years—sometimes as Chaplain, and more often as Camp Director for the Anglican Diocese of Calgary. I attended four Truth and Reconciliation Hearings in Regina, Fort Qu'Appelle, Key First Nation and Saskatoon. I was deeply moved by the courage of Residential School survivors as they shared their experience of cultural, familial, and spiritual deprivation, as well as sexual and physical abuse as youngsters. The lack of cultural sensitivity was the result of just one of the disastrous policies held within the Residential school system.

I have taken three Clinical Pastoral Education units—in 1991, 2015 and 2017. With my interdisciplinary tendencies, I also served as a Victim Service Advocate Volunteer using my pastoral skills for five years with the Hanna, A.B.R.C.M.P. and two years with the Niagara Regional Police. In parish and other contexts, I have exercised my certified skills in Spiritual Direction and have often been sought out for guidance by people discerning a formal vocation. Having prepped approximately 150 couples for marriage over 30 years, I have much experience and insight in supporting folks as they prepare to enter Christian marriage.

In 2005, I graduated with my Doctorate of Ministry from the University of the South in Sewanee, TN, having written a 200-page Pastoral Care Curriculum. Since that

time, I have taught Pastoral Studies in parish and diocesan settings, First Nation contexts and, since 2010, in the Saskatoon Theological Union.

I greatly enjoy the interaction with STU students and would share (veiled) vignettes from my 30+ year ministry to highlight specific aspects of my pastoral care and spiritual formation teaching. In the Spring of 2024, I am planning on undertaking some professional development in the areas of “Congregational Conflict Management and Mediation” as well as in Ecumenism.

The wonderful cosmopolitan dimension of both Regina and Saskatoon parish ministry settings have been exciting and demanded a creativity to ensure that all those who attend feel welcomed and that their cultures are celebrated and appreciated. In reflecting back on these special times, it seems that there are some basic ideas that help receiving congregations to warmly enfold new people: to learn and use their cultural name, to honour their culture and to learn how God has worked in their family and national histories.

When LTS professors accompany students on intercultural immersion trips, the learnings must be invaluable for students in their future ministries. Ultimately, as we prepare people for ministry in multicultural settings, there is so much to learn and enjoy—not only about people of diverse backgrounds but also about God, who created us all!

Rev. Dr. Trish McCarthy is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Internship Field Education Director at the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad.

\$337,076

**DONATION REVENUE FROM
245 INDIVIDUAL & CONGREGATIONAL DONORS
WHO MADE 477 GIFTS**

Breaking it down ...

**GRACE FUND:
\$143,785**

**GENERAL FUND:
\$99,448**

**BEQUESTS:
\$83,443**

**TRUSTS & ENDOWMENTS:
\$10,400**

DONOR RETENTION / RECAPTURE / CAPTURE

179 individuals gave in 2022-23

RETENTION: 122 of the 179 also gave in 2021-22. That represents an **87%** retention rate. Given the national retention rate for Canadian charities is 40%-50% (depending on where you seek that info), this is quite an impressive number.

RECAPTURE: 51 of the 179 had given previously, but not in 2021-22, and now returned to the fold in 2022-23.

CAPTURE: 6 were new donors.

WE'VE GONE ELFEC AND OTHER FINANCIAL NEWS

LTS has gone ELFEC! We have moved our investments to ELFEC, a financial management company founded by the Eastern Synod of the ELCIC. Our total investments exceed \$7 million, so this is significant. ELFEC's mission statement is inspiring, reflecting what LTS is all about: "We believe that generosity grows at the crossroad of faith and finance. Our mission is growing generosity among the members, supporters, congregations and supporters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada." We look forward to participating actively in the life of ELFEC, along with Lutheran and other partners.

Thank you very much to all our donors! We are pleased to announce a record fundraising year in 2022-23, which is part of an ongoing trend of increasing generous giving from all of you. Last year, you gave a total \$337,076.

The Grace Fund for Faculty received \$143,785; the General Fund, \$99,448; Bequests (a total of 6), \$83,443; and Trusts & Endowments, \$10,400.

Much of this came from individuals and families. We received gifts from 179 individuals, a very impressive

number for a school of our size. Equally encouraging, 122 of those same people gave in 2021-22; in the jargon of the field, that's an 87% retention rate, far greater than the usual rate of 40-50% for Canadian charities! Along with gifts from previous givers, 6 new donors contributed.

Congregations also donate. We received gifts from 66 ELCIC congregations, approximately 25% of all congregations in the four Western synods!

Your gifts have meant the hiring of our new Grace Professor of Leadership, Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero. Also, last year's students had 99% of their tuition and fee costs covered by bursaries and scholarships. Because you support us so well, we are able to adjust for the impact of government grants that do not increase with inflation and limits to diocesan grants imposed by shrinking budgets, though these continue to be longer-term considerations.

Your generosity continues to be a source of joy to us. The money enables us to fulfill our mission. Moreover, we feel your kindness as an encouragement to us, an expression of your belief that the work to which we are called is a participation in God's Kingdom call.

STUDENT NUMBERS

Student numbers are rising, in new and exciting ways. As of now, LTS has 27 degree and certificate students and we're seeing enthusiasm (and new applications) all the time.

Today's successful theology schools, including LTS, are developing a student profile that differs from that of a decade ago. Growth is coming in a variety of programs that support the complex leadership systems of today's church, even as the most traditional program, the Master of Divinity, gets somewhat smaller.

We have 9 Doctor of Ministry students (DMin), a recruiting record. Leaders in the church undertake the DMin degree because they recognize that the church and world are changing. The DMin is a practical advanced degree. Leaders need to develop advanced skills to live into God's call. Moreover, because we don't really know what the church will look like even ten years hence, DMin students engage in significant research to help the church discern faithful ways forward. The STU has a total of 14 DMin students.

The Master of Divinity (MDiv) program has 5 students. The MDiv is the traditional degree for those seeking ordination to the roster of pastors. It continues to be a valuable degree program and a major focus of our work. There is a total of 23 MDiv students in the STU.

Our Master of Theological Studies (MTS) program, with 7 students, is growing. This degree is for students who are interested in learning about theology but are not seeking ordination in the ELCIC. It is especially popular with Lutherans from elsewhere in the world, who appreciate a chance to increase their knowledge base and perform research.

We have 5 students in Diaconal programs, the older Certificate and the new Diploma. These credentials prepare students for ordination and rostering as deacons in the ELCIC. As the church seeks to become more diaconal, responding to the 2019 ELCIC statement, "Reimagining Our Church: Public Ministry in the ELCIC," these programs become more popular and central to our mission. We have the only diaconal programs in the STU.

In Summer 2023, we created a new program, the Certificate in Lutheran Leadership (Lay track). We are pleased to welcome 1 student, this year. We are hearing a lot of interest, encouraging us to believe that in the future, as lay leadership expands, this program will be valuable for many.

The STU has a total of 86 students. Together, we are a strong learning community.

LTS COURSES FOR **YOU** THIS WINTER

LTS is excited to open the following courses to continuing ed students, occasional students, and auditors.

Register now before spots fill up!

War, disease, climate change – the challenges of the world make us wonder: Who is God? What is the relationship between God and Creation? If God made Creation good, why is there suffering in the world?

God and Suffering (FND 106) brings together biblical interpretation, theology, and fiction to think through the relationship between God and suffering, using insights from collective trauma theory, intersectionality

theory, and 21st century theologies from below. The goal is to help people develop nuanced understandings that can be practically applied to pastoral care and worship leadership.

This is an introductory course, so no previous seminary courses are required.

Online, March 4th – 15th, Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein

ART AUCTION FOR GRACE FUND

JOHN DYCK (1921-2005) was a recognised artist in Saskatchewan and classically trained in Europe. His landscapes, still life depictions, along with some portraits (not ever of any one in particular) were oil on canvas and included romantic European scenes and familiar prairie views. The paintings capture the imagination and draw the viewer into an appreciation of the landscape, flowers, a reminiscence, or home. Dyck paintings hang in private residences across Canada, in Europe, and in several commercial buildings.

A major benefit sale in autumn of 2022 saw over forty paintings of varying sizes sold in support of the Saskatoon children's food charity. The works were supplied by the artist's son, Pastor Eric Dyck (LTS class of 1984) and arrangements were also made with Lutheran Theological Seminary to offer some paintings for fundraising in support of the Grace Fund. As a graduate of the seminary and parish pastor for nearly forty years, Pastor Eric has often read of the need for funding at LTS, especially to provide relevant preparation for 21st century ministry. He is motivated to share this legacy of his father's paintings with the seminary knowing the funds raised will aid future

ministry. With generous bidding for the paintings, relevant support for the seminary's programmes can happen, while at the same time a supporter's home will be enhanced by an original work of art.

The fifteen original and framed canvas paintings reflect a variety of subjects and portrayals: dramatic floral depictions, exciting wild fowl, and romantic landscapes, with a variety of sizes. All are appropriately framed and ready for display.



These works will be offered in the 'Affordable Art Auction', an online art auction hosted by the Saskatchewan Network for Art Collecting, with all opening bids under \$100. The online bidding will open

November 9th and close December 3rd, at the SKNAC dedicated auction site:

<https://connect.invaluable.com/saskatchewannac>



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