



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.

LAY PEOPLE IN A MISSION FOCUSED CHURCH

Rev. Dr. William Harrison, President



Today's church is being reminded of Luther's emphasis on formation of lay people and the priority of lay vocation. The church is changing and LTS is one of the leaders in the ELCIC's reimagining of church purpose, life, and structure.

Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein reminds us of the voices of Luther and

Melanchthon, with their emphasis on lay ministry that we echo with our **Certificate in Lutheran Leadership (Lay Track)**. Our Lutheran heritage provides us with helpful possibilities for today. Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero discusses the activities of lay leaders in a model of church for the 21st century: the "community of solidarity and practice," a way of being God's faithful people that we can learn from our international Lutheran partners. I follow these powerful voices with some insights from my work on **leading in a church with fewer resources**, addressing the sociology of community engagement, and some aspects of lay response. We invite you to see, in the LTS of today, a school that is as much focused toward providing opportunities for parishioners to learn as we are toward our other students.

The lay leadership theme is picked up in a brand-new section for our newsletter: the **STU Pot!** This portion of our newsletter will appear regularly, providing insight into the activities of the Saskatoon Theological Union as a whole, and the specific work of our partner colleges. I'm pleased to share that we, as an STU, are engaged in the work of **strategic planning**, with important contributions from our whole communities – ordained and lay. The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad (ESC) shares the story of the **Western Educational Collaborative Anglican Network (WECAN)**, which supports the preparation of licensed lay and ordained leaders in a variety of Anglican dioceses across

Western Canada. We introduce **Aditya Prabhu**, a business student who is on a work term with the STU, supported by a Lilly Endowment Pathways for Tomorrow grant. We conclude the STU Pot with a series of announcements: **Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis** will serve as the first STU Manager, a position that will rotate among the heads of colleges; our **Year of Intention** concludes with a final webinar on March 19; **Conclusio and Convocation** will be on May 10th and will be livestreamed; and we **invite nominations for LTS honorary degrees** (consider making a nomination, for a lay or ordained person).

We have another new section in our newsletter: the **STU Student Spotlight**. In this issue, all the students whom we meet are engaged in strengthening their capacities as lay leaders: **Sarah Peyton**, an LTS Master of Theological Studies (MTS) student; **Ryan Strong**, an ESC student in the MTS program; **Ellen Duffield**, a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) lay student; and **Linda Buchanan**, a St. Andrew's College (SAC) student in the SAC Leadership in the Faith Community Certificate program.

Although it does not appear in an article, I want to give thanks from LTS and from me personally to all who gave to our **Advent Appeal**. It was tremendously successful. In one of our best-ever Advent Appeals, we received **\$58,000** from 120 donors, second only to 2022's extraordinary **\$80,000**. We deeply appreciate your commitment to the life and work of LTS, not only financially but also in prayers and speaking with friends. Thank you, all.

The final note is a **congratulations** to Dr. Schiefelbein-Guerrero for becoming "the Rev." Dr., in an ordination at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in San Francisco. Dr. Schiefelbein-Guerrero is now rostered in MNO Synod and will be part of our connection to MNO life. Blessings on your transformed ministry among us, Dr. KSG!



LAY MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH: SERVING CHURCH NEEDS TODAY

Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein, William Hordern Professor of Theology, and Dean of Studies

Lay leadership has been important within the Lutheran church since the beginning – Martin Luther wrote the *Large Catechism* for heads of household to instruct those living in their house. Philip Melancthon, Luther’s theological partner and the author of the *Augsburg Confession*, the *Apology*, and the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* (that’s almost half of *The Book of Concord!*), was never ordained. By virtue of our baptism, all lay people are called to proclaim the gospel to the world in and through our various contexts, and to serve God’s people in multiple ways.

It has perhaps been to the detriment of the church that we have relied so heavily on clergy leadership in the past that we have not lifted up the importance, value, and work of lay leaders in churches. A congregation simply cannot carry out Christ’s mission without lay leaders – who would make Council decisions? Who would play the music during the service? Who would teach Sunday School? Who would keep the church’s financial records?

Today, as we experience a shortage of clergy, we also turn to lay leaders to preach, to lead worship, to offer pastoral care, and to serve in ways that we have (unnecessarily) restricted to only pastors.

LTS recognizes the need for and contributions of lay leaders in the ELCIC, and also acknowledges the importance of supporting individuals who feel called to non-ordained leadership. Much of what seminary teaches would be helpful for lay leaders – how to plan a worship service, how to teach Confirmation, how to offer pastoral care in a crisis, how to handle conflict in community – but in the past the assumption has been that only pastors-to-be should, or needed to, learn this.

But we have learned that this leads to an imbalanced church and that lay leaders need more support than we have given them. For this reason, LTS is dedicating itself to “whole-church” education, which means supporting, teaching, and forming all leaders in the church, those who are called to be ordained and those who are called to remain as lay leaders.

What does this look like? For one thing, it means that individuals interested in taking classes at the seminary are welcome regardless of whether they are hoping to be ordained or not. Lay people take classes with those on ordination tracks because we all have much to learn from one another, particularly when it comes to understanding how the offices of deacon and pastor fit together with what we have come to call the “priesthood of all believers.”

We are also encouraging congregations to identify individuals in their midst who might be interested in our Certificate in Lutheran Leadership (Lay Track). This is a nine-course certificate that provides a foundation in Lutheran theology along with teaching additional skills for leading worship, pastoral care, and leadership that would strengthen the work of lay leaders in the church. Sunday School and confirmation teachers, youth group leaders, church administrators, Council members – all of these would be excellent candidates for the Certificate, or for just taking stand alone courses at LTS.

As our baptismal rite says when the baptismal candle is handed over, “let your light so shine before others” – LTS is here to help the light of lay leaders shine more brightly and illumine the path of the church, a path laid out for us by Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon together.



LEADING COMMUNITIES OF SOLIDARITY AND PRACTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Rev. Dr. Kyle K. Schiefelbein-Guerrero, Grace Professor of Leadership

Churches have changed – there can be no denying this fact. In addition to the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic, attendance and membership in mainline congregations in western societies have been on the decline in the past decades; and with the uncertainty that this brings, it is understandable that leaders are anxious and worried.

Yet, this worry should not hold us back from re-envisioning what Christian communities can be in the 21st-century. While some may suggest that people are no longer interested in joining groups, that does not mean that communities have no value in today's society; rather, the nature of communities are evolving from static to dynamic, from permanent to fluid.

In my recent travels in southeast Asia, I was introduced to an emerging community of LGBTQIA+ Christians in Bangkok called Rainbow Stream. They began only a couple of years ago, primarily as an online network of support for their intersecting identities of being queer and Christian. There is no formal structure, and leadership is shared among a key group of volunteers who take on various roles to keep the community going. Only recently did the group begin to meet in-person at a coffee shop, and this past year made public witness by participating in Bangkok's Pride Parade.

While I am probably not the first to use this language, I would argue that this is a prime example of a "community of solidarity and practice." They come together (both online and in-person) to experience solidarity with one another, to provide mutual consolation, and to engage in practices of scripture reading and advocacy. None of this is particularly new; one only needs to look at the Base

Ecclesial Communities of Latin America in the 1960s or the Conventicles in 17th/18th-century Lutheran Pietism. Both of these were autonomous groups (sometimes supported by the official Church although often not) that engaged in reading Scripture in contextualized ways and in discerning how to live that out to transform the world.

These communities can trace their roots to the early Jesus movement and, as Alan Kreider in his book *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church* has argued, contributed to the growth of Christianity in the Roman Empire. The call to "come and see" was not about worship; rather, it was about seeing Christians in public doing Christian things. This public living of Christian *habitus* served as an invitation for non-Christians to explore, learn and eventually convert to Christianity, supported by the community's worship. They are formed to transform.

What does leadership look like in this model of community? It includes having organizational skills to help hold together a loosely-defined group. It includes knowing and embodying the Christian tradition in a contextual way, closing the hermeneutical gap between Scripture-grounded tradition and solidarity with the marginalized. It includes sharing tasks and authority, and having mutual accountability to and for the community.

Through baptism, all Christians are called and empowered to do this work in communities of solidarity and practice. At LTS both those preparing for ordained ministry and the laity are formed as leaders for these emerging communities, being equipped to accompany the people of God no matter where and in what configuration they are.

THINKING ABOUT LAY LEADERSHIP

Rev. Dr. William Harrison, President

LTS is thinking about lay leadership a lot, these days. We have been developing a variety of ways to invite laypeople to grow with us: \$75 per course tuition for non-credit course participation, our Certificate in Lutheran Leadership, and Leading in Faith Today (LIFT) courses. “Reimagining Our Church” invites us to transform into a diaconal church, focused on reaching beyond our own church communities and living out our commitments to love our neighbours – human and not. As part of my work on leading in a church where there are fewer people and fewer resources, I’ve been thinking about how we bring together this renewed sense of mission with the kinds of leaders that we have now and can develop for the future. Many of those leaders are laypeople.

The key to ministry in today’s and tomorrow’s church is a combination of things: 1) recognizing that all community organizations are shrinking; 2) focusing on our purpose, with the necessary trimming of off-purpose tasks; and 3) leading in a team, rather than assuming that we hire pastors to provide the leadership.

We tend to think that the church is shrinking, that it’s our fault, and if only we could find the right pastor, or if we were more faithful/outgoing/mission-oriented/loving/sinless/something else, our numbers would be growing. All the sociological evidence says that’s not a fair assessment. The reality is that all community groups have been shrinking since the 1960s peak, after a period of growth that began at the end of the 19th century and was boosted by two wars (see John D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* – a US-focused book, but Canada is generally parallel). In the post-World War II period, having been rigorously trained to common vision and shared action, a whole generation showed up to church – or, at least, made sure that the children went to Sunday School – and that generation joined every organization open to them. However, successive generations have participated in formal communal life in continually decreasing numbers. This changes the picture. It means that we can’t solve decreasing numbers by ourselves.

Therefore, we must reconcile ourselves to being small. The ELCIC is a small church. LTS is a small seminary, even with its STU partners. Small organizations must be very focused. As church communities, we need to

decide what we do well and do that. For laypeople, this has consequences. First, we cannot afford the luxury of nostalgia; wishing that our congregations could look like 1964 won’t help. Second, we need to participate with deacons and pastors in the work of discerning what our congregations can best commit ourselves to accomplish, as our own participation in God’s work of the Kingdom. This discernment must be realistic and focused. We have limited capacities today and probably less tomorrow; there will be a day when the world shifts again, but we are not seeing it now and may not see it soon. Third, we must own our baptismal commitments and focus on the common vision that our community develops. We must commit ourselves to sharing the Good News in ways that we are truly able to sustain, in the places where we are.

If we’re going to live out this common vision, we cannot assume that we will have a pastor for our own congregation or, if we do, that such a person is “our” pastor. We will need to imagine pastors as serving the whole church – which is more than the ELCIC. Part of doing that will be working with deacons. Where pastors are predominantly committed to “inside the church” action, deacons are more focused on service in and to the world beyond the church, always having one foot in the church and one foot outside. In important ways, deacons will lead us into the diaconal church, a church focused on service to the world, on God’s shalom – God’s peace and justice – in the world.

Today’s invitation is for laypeople to serve in teams with deacons and pastors. This is not about “filling in around the edges” of ordained ministry, while retaining the assumption that we can rely on the pastor to carry our spiritual life. If anything, reality is more like the opposite, because the church is no longer predominantly about serving those who show up on Sunday. Instead, the church is moving into lay territory. Sunday is valuable because it sets the tone for Monday through Saturday. The work of laypeople becomes central to our lives. Deacons, especially, will support laypeople in developing vision for reaching out to the community around. Preparing laypeople to share God’s voice in word and action becomes core to the church’s task, to LTS’s task. This is the vision that motivates the transformation that is occurring with LTS today, and is at the heart of my research and writing. This is the vision into which we invite you.



WELCOME TO THE STU POT!

This is a new feature that all three Saskatoon Theological Union (STU) schools will be using to highlight developments and stories as they arise in the STU.

Like a good hearty pot of stew, we hope this regular feature—whose ingredients change and modify as time goes on—will nourish you with the news of our flourishing, shared life together.

In this inaugural version of the STU Pot, we share a strategic planning update, program news from the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, new appointments, and we let you know of upcoming events and other ways to participate in the life of the STU.



STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE STU

Rev. Dr. William Harrison

The STU is engaged in strategic planning! We have basic operational structures in place to start sharing common functions. We have a Covenant that expresses our sense of what we're about. Our faculties are working together in the Common Faculty and we have shared curriculum for our Master of Theological Studies, Master of Divinity, and Doctor of Ministry degrees. As you can see in this newsletter, we're beginning to share each other's updates. Now, it's time to bring together our STU goals and assemble them into one plan, providing clear direction for everyone in a complex and fast-moving system.

All participants in the three schools – boards, faculty, staff, and students – are engaged in the work, responding to

questions about overall vision and concrete practicalities for coming years. It's a big job. If you have comments about the STU or ideas for our future, please submit them to william.harrison@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca. I'm assembling responses on behalf of the heads of STU colleges: Iain Luke (ESC), Richard Manley-Tannis (SAC), and William Harrison (LTS). The heads will then compose a draft proposal, which will go to the board of the STU and then to the boards of all three schools. When we have general agreement, we'll have a plan. The final plan will appear in this space, the STU Pot, so you will be able to see where we're going. Thanks for all the support and encouragement that you provide.



COLLEGE OF EMMANUEL & ST. CHAD: WECAN AND THE LICENTIATE IN THEOLOGY

What is WECAN?

Since 2017, the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad has supported the development of a network within the Anglican Church in western Canada, connecting dioceses and programs that focus on developing local leadership in congregations. These programs prepare parishioners to take on ordained and licensed ministries in their home communities, with diocesan resources providing supervision, continuing education, and accountability.

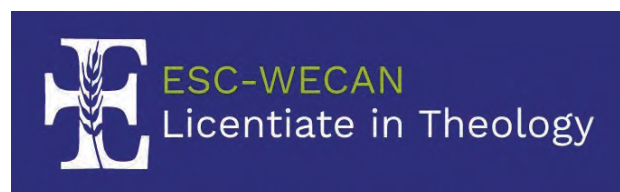
Most of the dioceses in the west have such a program, and WECAN provides a way for them to share what they have together. Most of the dioceses in the west have such a program, and WECAN provides a way for them to share what they have together. Partner dioceses are discerning new ways to go forward in mission and ministry, without being dependent on a model of paid resident clergy, which was no longer working in so many places. We share best practices and educational resources, advocate for emerging models of ministry and the people involved in them, and help to work out differences of practice between dioceses.

WECAN stands for the Western Educational Collaborative Anglican Network. But it also stands for the discovery and recognition that “WE CAN” fulfill the call God gives to each local community of disciples, when we work together effectively.

What is the Licentiate in Theology?

The main current priority for the partnership between WECAN and ESC is the implementation of a Licentiate in Theology, a credential created to identify common learning goals across the different diocesan training programs. Students enrolled in a local program satisfy the Licentiate learning outcomes through a combination of experiences. These include courses offered in one of the participating programs or through the College; supervised practice in leading worship, offering pastoral care, and Christian education; discernment and mentorship. As far as possible, learning opportunities are offered in situ, that is, wherever the student is located and involved in ministry, and are adapted to their context.

The College provides academic guidance and review for the L.Th. curriculum, including the assessment process, trains mentors and supervisors, and serves as a focal point for administration. After our implementation year in 2023, we now have five diocesan partners working with us on the Licentiate, and look forward to expanding. Our goal is that Licentiate grads will show the church the strengths and values of this contextual and practical approach to ministry training, working alongside the professional training model of the Master of Divinity.





STU STAFF FEATURE: ADITYA PRABHU



Who are you?

I am Aditya Prabhu, though I prefer to go by Adi. I am a third-year finance student at the Edwards School of Business, at the University of Saskatchewan. My life has been a journey across four countries – born in India,

I moved to Singapore for my middle and high school education, then lived in Dubai for a year before excitedly moving to Canada to start university.

What work are you doing in the STU?

I will be supporting the work of the development and set-up of the new STU Populi, creating initial STU documentation (handbooks, policies, procedures, marketing materials, etc.), and other work required to help support the STU. My position is being supported by a Lilly Endowment Pathways for Tomorrow grant.

What are your first impressions of working within this community?

This experience has given me invaluable insights into the complex and nuanced processes of academic administration and governance. I am excited about the opportunity to gain real-world experience and build meaningful connections.



NEXT STEPS IN THE STU: A MANAGER

Now that the Saskatoon Theological Union is incorporated, we will be concentrating shared operations in the common basket. To make this work, we need an organizational structure.

Our first step is to appoint a manager. We are pleased to announce that Deacon Dr. Richard Manley-Tannis will serve as the first Manager of the STU. The role will rotate among the heads of the three schools, likely changing every three years (our strategic planning process, currently underway, may adjust this somewhat).

This will be a developing role, as we move forward in imagining our life together. The Manager will support the STU in fulfilling the goals that we establish in the STU

strategic plan, presently being created. The Manager will provide support and direction to employees of the shared STU entity, such as library staff. At the same time, the Manager will foster collaboration between the academic and administrative aspects of the STU, ensuring that the three college partners are able to meet our shared goals through the new common body.

Dr. Manley-Tannis is eager to facilitate the growth and progress of the STU in this new role. Together, we look forward to progressing in our Covenant and upholding our steadfast commitment to ecumenical theological education.



A YEAR OF INTENTION: FINAL WEBINAR

Building on the momentum of our first three online webinars, the Saskatoon Theological Union continues our Year of Intention in 2024. This involves educating ourselves about sexual orientation and gender identity, and exploring new ways to be in solidarity and celebration with LGBTQIA2S communities in the church and beyond.

Our final webinar is scheduled for **Tuesday March 19, from 7:30-9pm (Sask time)**. It will be an online panel discussion featuring parents of transgender and non-binary youth, speaking from faith-based perspectives.

The zoomlink for this webinar is here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83025714114?pwd=hdb1xwpcyg7oXPXIKsSIldr9lpvzMZ.1>

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SAVE THE DATE!

LTS Conclusio Service | Convocation 2024

LTS's Conclusio Service and Convocation will be held May 10th, 2024 in Saskatoon. Please save the date! We look forward to your attendance, as you are able.

Conclusio Service

Resurrection Lutheran Church, 11am
Luncheon to follow

Convocation 2024

Knox United Church | 7pm | Refreshments to follow

Please note, the services will be livestreamed in case you are unable to attend and would like to watch the proceedings. Please check our website and Facebook pages for further details, closer to the date.

LTS Honorary Degrees

LTS regularly confers honorary degrees to celebrate individuals who have significantly contributed to the reputation and/or mission of LTS through exceptional achievements or exceptional service to the church, community, or society. For awards conferred at Convocation in 2025, the deadline for nominations is April 1 of this year.

LTS actively encourages the nominations of individuals who have been historically underrepresented in academic or church settings. Nomination forms can be found here, on our website:

<https://lutherantheological.ca/programs/lts-honorary-degrees>

Completed nominations are to be sent to Professor Kayko Driedger Hesslein, Dean of Studies: kayko.driedgerhesslein@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca

STU STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



“RIGHT WHERE GOD WANTS ME TO BE”: INTRODUCING SARAH PEYTON

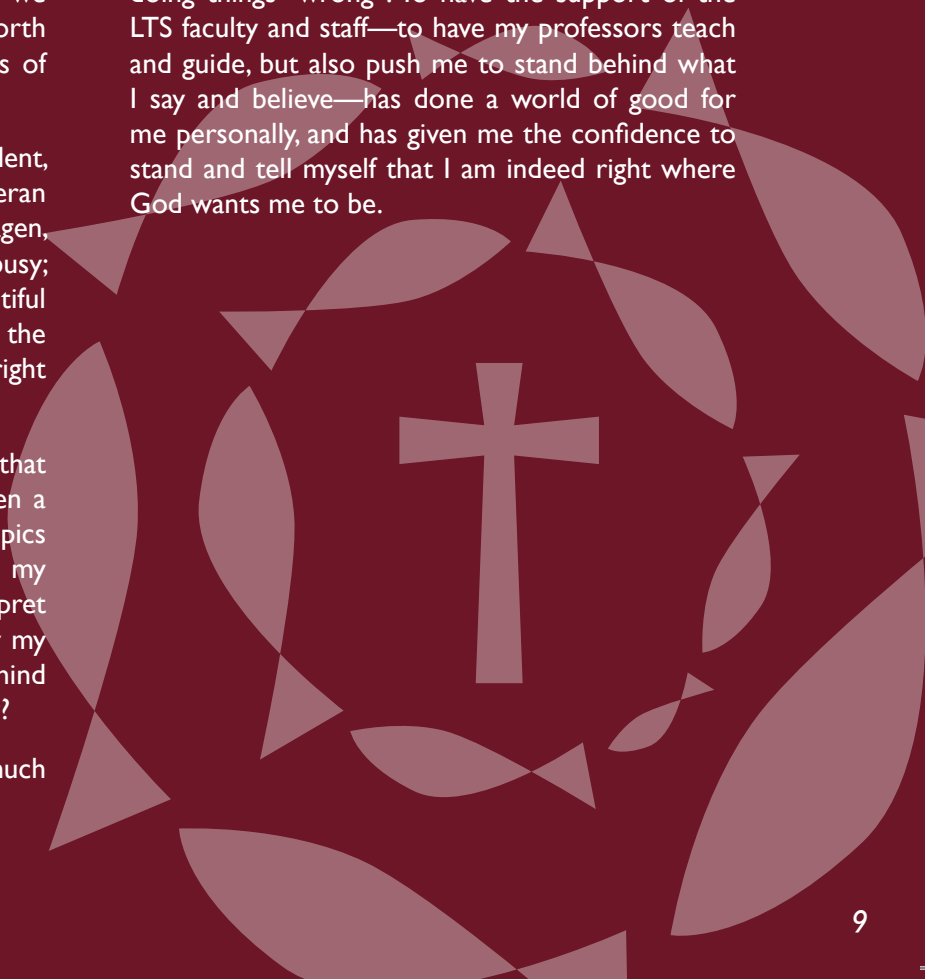
Hi, my name is Sarah and I’m currently in my first year of full-time studies with LTS, working toward my Master of Theological Studies degree. I am also a wife and partner with my wonderful husband Thomas; and together we have one child, our daughter Anna. We all live north of Saskatoon, on a farm halfway between the towns of Wakaw and Rosthern.

In addition to my roles as wife and mother, student, and farmer, I am also the lay pastor for Saron Lutheran Church—a small, rural church located outside of Hagen, SK. As one can imagine, this keeps me quite busy; however, I wouldn’t change any of it. One of the beautiful things about being in lay ministry and in school at the same time is that I can practice what I’m learning right away with my congregation next Sunday!

All kidding aside, however, I think the biggest thing that LTS has given me over the last few months has been a huge boost in confidence. Don’t get me wrong: the topics of study (the “meat and potatoes”, as it were) of my education have been hugely important in how I interpret scripture and have even helped to shape and solidify my own personal beliefs. But, the confidence to stand behind what I believe, and to preach that every other Sunday?

Well – I have a hard time putting into words how much that means to me.

Stepping into the role of lay pastor was one of the scariest things I’ve done, and there was always this nagging feeling in the back of my head that I was doing things “wrong”. To have the support of the LTS faculty and staff—to have my professors teach and guide, but also push me to stand behind what I say and believe—has done a world of good for me personally, and has given me the confidence to stand and tell myself that I am indeed right where God wants me to be.





Q+A WITH RYAN STRONG, COLLEGE OF EMMANUEL & ST. CHAD

What led you to pursue this academic work?

I originally began in the Master of Divinity program with the hope of ordination into the priesthood; however, over time I began to question which denomination I wanted to serve. I bounced around various churches trying to find where God was calling me. I am still on that journey; so, deciding not to rush the Divine, I changed programs and switched to my secondary goal of pursuing a Doctorate/PhD with the idea of teaching world religions at a university level.

How has that work contributed to your growth?

Theological education, much like any form of study, is a lifelong endeavour. My own growth stems primarily from learning about my unique style of understanding and interpreting the divine texts—applying it to how I view my relationship with God and the world around me. We each paint a different picture of the divine, even if we are a part of the same denominational background. Each painting and painter should be celebrated as they grow in faith and relationship.

What have been your key learnings thus far?

Taking a scholarly lens through sacred texts and traditions of the church illuminates the humanity of those who compose and write texts that we deem “divinely inspired”. This can be very powerful—both positively and negatively—as we try to understand what we know about our own faith and the traditions in which we are raised. We should always strive to improve ourselves and our relationship with God. Complacency leads to comfort, comfort leads to laziness, and laziness leads to neglect. Thus, we should always strive for improvement, both in learning and relationship with God. (I highly recommend that everyone learn church history.)

How has your location shaped your life and ministry?

I had the privilege of spending my first year on campus, in Saskatoon, SK, while now in my second year I am doing it all online from my home in Bonnyville, AB. Being “in-person” for my first year was valuable because I was able to experience community with the academic staff from each institute of the STU. This sense of community between the different denominational bodies creates an atmosphere of familiarity and comfort as we worked together to understand and appreciate one another. Although we had different practices and ways of doing things, it was very beneficial as a student to see each unique body of faith in practice—both in the classroom and in chapel. Now returning to my rural community I appreciate the flexibility that online learning allows; and enjoying time with loved ones while studying is truly a blessing.



ELLEN DUFFIELD

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

The opportunity to be a student in the Saskatoon Theological Union—as a Doctor of Ministry student—has proven to be an unexpected gift from God. Drawn by the words

“small footprint, big impact” and the unique flexibility of the cohort model, I have found the classes to balance well the academic challenge and the practical application.

My work supervisor laughs every time I tell him about a book I am reading or offer a model I have been reflecting

on, saying, “I love the way that what you are learning is informing your thinking and ministry.”

Whether exploring issues in theological education in Practical Theology, issues of power in the Gospel of Mark, or women’s experience of seminary in an independent study, this degree is providing lenses and provoking questions that I believe will strengthen the way we think about training Christian leaders in my ministry context. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity.



INTERVIEW WITH LINDA BUCHANAN

(ST. ANDREW’S COLLEGE)

*Lifelong Learning Pathway:
Leadership in the Faith
Community Certificate
Program*

What led you to pursuing this academic work?

I truly have a lifelong love of learning and I needed something to challenge my theology in preparing sermons week after week. I have been taking courses from every available source without taking any that lead to degrees or designations that would require my church to pay me on the UCC salary scale. This has led me to many interesting learning avenues, and this program is one of the most exciting because I am linked to other people and mentors.

How has that work contributed to your growth?

I have been led to interesting resources that I would never have found on my own—for example: Becca Whitla’s article, ‘Liturgy in a Decolonial Key’ and HyeRan Kim-Cragg’s article, ‘Invisibility of Whiteness’. Both helped me to question practices I have either adopted (or not) as an unordained woman, and as a white woman.

What have been your key learnings thus far?

I have set the following as my learning goal: to assist lay congregational members express the spirit of God within,

to manifest the theological strength to take charge of their church as God’s ‘ministers’. I feel encouraged when I see that congregations like Freshwater United Church in Newfoundland have people just rising from the pews because they don’t want their church to close. I have been breaking the rules for years for the same reason. As a Licensed Lay Worship Leader I am only ‘allowed’ to perform 10 services per year. Last year I did 51 – either delivering the services myself or writing them for someone else to deliver. Now it is getting to be my turn to pass the torch, so I want to learn ways by which small congregations can feel empowered. I also need to find the strength and emotional/spiritual support to let go of what I love to do, in sharing my faith and Godwinks with my peers as their LLWL.

How has your location shaped your life and ministry?

Technology has been the saving grace and this program is well laid out for chapel services, mentoring sessions, and links to my professors: perfect when I live in a small remote community (with a son who lives in Saskatoon as a bonus!).

THE ORDINATION OF REV. DR. KYLE SCHIEFELBEIN-GUERRERO

Saturday, January 13th, 2024
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, San Francisco



“We are blessed to welcome Rev. Dr. Kyle onto the roster of ordained ministers in the ELCIC, and even happier that he will join our pastors and deacons on the roster in MNO. Kyle brings so many gifts to the church, and I know that he will help us to discern and follow God’s path for the future of the church. I look forward to serving alongside Kyle and learning from him in the years to come.”

~ Rev. Jason Zinko, Bishop of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario



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