



# 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.

## THE FUTURE IS NOW *By Rev. Dr. William Harrison*



These are challenging days for all of us. These are also exciting days for LTS.

We have moved into our new space at 1121 College Drive (St. Andrew's College building). In this newsletter, you'll find some pictures that will help you to visualize where we are. Our new location works really well for us, and is well-equipped to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 era. We aren't allowed to have students on campus. We can report that registration numbers, at 25 students, are strong and our Master of Theological Studies program is a growing part of that.

One effect of COVID is that we haven't been able to produce newsletters as often as we'd like. This issue is extra-long, so that we can cover many developments.

We celebrate our 2020 graduates: Erin Thomas, Kate Zaiser, and Sarah Urano. We are very pleased with their work and pray God's blessings on their continued work in God's church.

Classes continue online. The Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein, our Schmieder Fellow, writes about the experience of teaching in 2020. The world feels entirely different from this time last year; we are blessed to have the preparation and equipment to respond well.

We are fostering Lutheran scholarship. The Rev. Dr. Gordon Jensen tells us about his latest research into Martin Luther's 1534 Bible.

We are moving into a more integrated Saskatoon Theological Union (STU). The Rev. Dr. Iain Luke, Principal of The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, discusses some of the ways that the STU is developing.

The STU libraries, now sharing a common home, have signed up with the Digital Theological Library (DTL), an electronic library with impressive resources. Leif Steiestol tells us about the DTL.

Even with all the excitement, this is a difficult time for everyone. The pandemic has changed our lives. Lauren Wray, Chair of the Board, reminds us of the stresses and pressures of this time and invites us to a grace-filled response.

Monica Johnson joins us as Finance Manager. Returning to LTS after two years abroad, Hugh Williams reconnects with our community in his new role as Director of Communications and Development. Hugh will help us to organize our development work.

**Our immediate priority is to reinforce our commitment to Lutheran scholarship and teaching. Our future is in providing the Lutheran voice and Lutheran formation, as part of an ecumenical community of schools, and for that we are building the Grace Fund.**

We give thanks to God for the wonderful community of ELCIC people and others who support LTS constantly. We know that you are a gift of God's grace. Thank you for being part of our life!



President's Office



# LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, SASKATOON IS PLEASED TO INTRODUCE THE GRADUATES OF 2020

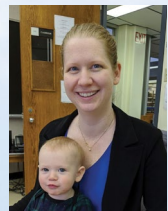
## Sarah Urano



Some words from Sarah, about herself. Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

Throughout the formational process of seminary, God called me to explore the concept of "identity": who I am as a future pastor, the church's identity, and our identity in Christ. As God speaks to the prophet Jeremiah: God knew our identities before we were conceived, named us, and gifted us with new life full of possibilities. God has revealed God's self to me through all your unique identities – all different yet sharing one identity in the Body of Christ. Without the support of God's people, my husband and three children, my "home away from home," countless family and friends, LTS faculty and staff, financial donors, and support from my internship congregation, I would not be the person I am today. All thanks be to God!

## Kate Zaiser



Some words from Kate, about herself. Kate was raised in Calgary, AB. After high school, she studied Mechanical Engineering at the University of Calgary, where she met her future husband. In 2015, she recognized that she was not called to engineering and began exploring a call to ministry. She began studying at LTS that

fall. Kate enjoys singing and playing clarinet, studying God's Word, and experiencing creation in the garden.

Kate gives thanks and praise to God for all the support that she has received along this journey: for the faculty, staff, and students at LTS; the Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Bishop Larry Kochendorfer and the Candidacy Committee; her internship congregation, Church of the Cross in Calgary; her home congregation, All Saints in Calgary; and most of all her family: parents, Beth and Dick, and husband, Brady. She would not be here without their support.

## Erin Thomas



Some words from Erin, about herself. My faith journey has taken me from emerging out of fundamentalism towards new life and new ways of being in the world. LTS offered me the space to develop my own theological and spiritual framework as I sought to integrate my own life's experiences with the training for formal ministry. I am deeply grateful for the support of all the staff and faculty, especially Drs. Gordon Jensen, Ann Salmon, and Kristine Ruffatto. I am also thankful for the support of Lord of Glory Lutheran Church in Lac La Biche; my internship site, Trinity Lutheran Church in Edmonton; the Candidacy Committee; Alberta and the Territories Synod; and Bishop Larry, for supporting my journey. I look forward to what life has to bring next.



# TEACHING IN THE TIME OF COVID: ADAPTING AND THE GOSPEL *Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein*



I came to LTS in August after experiencing the initial COVID shut-down as a congregational pastor. As soon as shut-downs were announced, my experience with teaching LTS's hybrid courses enabled the congregation immediately to pivot to "Zoom" church, and our Easter Sunday online attendance was the same as previous in-person Easter services. Online teaching with LTS taught me to be adaptable in this crisis, while still holding to the core Easter Gospel message that although we die, in Christ we live.

This year, as the Schmieder Fellow, I am continuing to practice, and teach, this message of adaptability. Although we all hope this pandemic will be over by next year, this is not the last time that the ELCIC and the seminary will need to adapt without losing the core message of the Gospel. That's why, in the *Leadership in the Parish* course that interns have taken in October and will continue in February, the two core texts we are using are Susan Beaumont's *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season* and Brené Brown's *Dare to Lead: Brave Work, Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts*. The first book is teaching students about letting the Holy Spirit lead congregations in times of uncertainty, while the second is helping students engage in the necessary work of leading with "empathy, connection, and courage." As we face an unforeseeable future, we are certainly realizing our need for all of these things.

God continues to call forth leaders for a church that is *In Mission for Others*. The future they are facing is uncertain, but I am grateful that LTS is equipping them with both adaptability and the Gospel, and I am humbled to have a (currently online) role in that.





## MEET OUR NEW FACULTY & STAFF

### Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein: Schmieder Fellow, 2020-21



The Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein is Schmieder Fellow for 2020-21. Dr. Driedger Hesslein is serving as Internship Coordinator for the year and is teaching courses, including “Leadership in the Parish” and “Queer Theologies.” The Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein received her PhD in Systematic Theology from the Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley), and has been ordained in the ELCIC since 2002. She is an active scholar in the field of contemporary Lutheran theology, bringing a postcolonial perspective to her work. She has eleven years of experience as a congregational pastor, including two calls in intentional interim ministry. Dr. Driedger Hesslein has taught theology for LTS for several years, while making her home in Calgary.

### Monica Johnson: Finance Manager



We are pleased to welcome Monica Johnson as Finance Manager. Monica is a CPA-CMA who worked in the business world for over 30 years and is now employed in the charitable not-for-profit sector. She recently completed a B.A. in Sociology at the U of S with a minor in Crime, Law, & Justice. In addition, she has volunteered on numerous boards and finance committees for Saskatoon charities and community organizations over the past three decades. Monica looks forward to supporting the Seminary to nurture and challenge people for Christ-centered leadership and witness for God’s mission in the world.

### Hugh Williams: Director of Communications and Development



We welcome back Hugh Williams, who was LTS Director of Donor Relations in 2017-18. In Hugh’s brief first tenure, LTS enjoyed one of its most successful fundraising periods in the decade. He moved to London (UK) in the spring of 2018 and enjoyed two successful years as Development and Partnerships Manager at the University of Roehampton. Hugh brings 15 years of professional experience in education to his work with us. He began his career as a Senior IB English Teacher but quickly discovered a passion for Higher Education communications and fundraising. He has a Masters in English Literature and devotes a large part of his spare time to Shakespeare scholarship.



## DIGITAL THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY *By Leif Steiestol*



For some time we have been looking for ways to improve the digital resources that we offer to students at a distance, and this year since all of our classes are online that is even more important to us. Excitingly, we now have access to an amazing wealth of digital resources that we can offer to our students instantly wherever they are. I am pleased to announce that we have joined the DTL (Digital Theological Library), which was initiated by the Claremont School of Theology in 2016. Currently there are over 40 member institutions who work together to provide their students with a vast collection of high-quality digital resources.

Some highlights of the digital resources available to our students as members of the DTL include:

Over 500,000 ebooks of which ~186,000 are from the last 10 years, and over 59,000 were published within the last 5 years.



Within these databases there are over 55,000,000 full-text, peer reviewed articles.

Access to more than 100,000 musical scores.



And the DTL’s Collection is ever expanding.

Subscriptions to over 33,000 journal titles through 167 different online databases.



Since everything in the DTL is online our students can access the resources they need instantly, wherever they are, without having to wait for items to be mailed or scanned.

If you are an LTS student, and you would like to access the DTL—or, if you have any questions about it or our other resources—please send Leif Steiestol an email at [leif.stulibrary@usask.ca](mailto:leif.stulibrary@usask.ca) and he will gladly do everything he can to assist you.



## GREETINGS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE *By Hugh Williams*

### Greetings and peace to all

At LTS, we are blessed to have faithful and generous supporters. A significant portion of the historical giving to the Seminary was devoted to the upkeep of an increasingly ageing building. While there is undoubtedly room to mourn the loss of that beautiful space, and while its history is to be cherished always, our transition from ownership to tenancy in a new building means that we can focus our resources more robustly upon the future.

This sharing of resources in a common building is a positive and hopeful thing for us all. But at the same time, while we navigate these helpful changes, the seminary nonetheless retains its core identity: a place of grace where Lutheran teaching, formation and scholarship prepare tomorrow's pastors in the ELCIC.

### Grace Fund for Faculty

Accordingly, our Grace Fund is the place we wish to encourage our donors' support. The Grace Fund will ensure that LTS continues to attract and even increase the number of world-leading theologians and educators who comprise our faculty. At its heart, support for this fund reinforces two foundation-stones for the future of the ELCIC: the robustness of a Lutheran theological education and the importance of Lutheran identity in an increasingly ecumenical world.

### Education

Now, more than ever, there is a need for our seminary to be highly sophisticated and prepared for what ministry requires today. All of it means that LTS is less and less a place where people gather in a semi-permanent kind of way; and, more and more, it is a place where they engage with the parish, the wider Christian community and the intellectual community. The 'good news' for today's seminary student is increasingly part of a new vision—one enhanced by technology, connectivity, and above all innovation. What this suggests is that the seminaries of today and tomorrow are to be drawn forward by a new sense of mission in our communities and in the world's wider way.

### Identity

One of the Grace Fund's central tenets is the importance of Lutheran formation through scholarship and training. The LTS of 2020 is both mission-drawn and necessity-driven. At LTS, this core piece hinges upon the presence of strong and gifted Lutheran faculty voices. When we wrestle with some of the big questions facing us, such as: 'What should ministry look like in a post-pandemic world?', we grasp all the more meaningfully the importance of the degree to which our faculty shape our students.

**This time of COVID has laid bare our collective fragilities and vulnerabilities. Pastoral preparation is not just about educating our students about the right thing to say; it is also rooted in teaching our future pastors how to be truly present to themselves and with others, as their theology shapes their practice.**

Thank you sincerely for your continued support of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon. I am always available for—these days—a video call, a phone conversation or an email exchange and certainly hope that you will feel free to reach out and say hello.



## LTS & ESC: Coming Together *By Rev. Dr. Iain Luke*



*Dayenu* is the one Hebrew word I remember from attending a Passover Seder: "It would have been enough." And it seems applicable to 2020, doesn't it! If we just had the pandemic to deal with... *Dayenu*. If we just had to move the college... *Dayenu*. But in order to face both at the same time, God gave us friends who were in the same boat.

After 14 years as a tenant in the LTS building, the Anglican College of Emmanuel & St. Chad joined our full communion partners in the summer move across campus to St. Andrew's. Ironically, we are now even closer together, occupying the same corridor, and no longer separated by five minutes of hallway, umpteen doors and several flights of stairs!

It is good to see colleagues every day, and great to be working together on so many new areas of potential collaboration, starting with a draft STU covenant that spells out principles underlying half a century of partnership. Our good intentions were, at first, frustrated by the impossibility of gathering everyone physically to enjoy our new home. But we have already established a new pattern of worship to sustain us, while other aspects of our common life come together. Twice a week, thirty or more smiling faces show up on a video conference, sharing the liturgical gifts of our own tradition with each of the others in turn.

**In these moments of common prayer and purpose, we see a glimpse of where God is leading us.**

Each college has something to offer, drawing on the diverse gifts and experiences of our faculty and students. Our classrooms are open to one another: ESC faculty teach pastoral care and New Testament studies to LTS students, and our students join LTS classes in a range of subjects. Beyond such concrete examples, we are also exploring what each college contributes from its ethos and culture. Current Anglican work on Indigenous self-governance, for example, provides fresh perspective for our joint STU efforts to embed decolonization and reconciliation in our curriculum and community.

As we think together about preparing people for ministry post-2020, we know we will need all the gifts God has given us to share. Whether it is Lutheran attention to being sent as apostles of God's good news; United Church passion for justice and inclusion; Anglican commitment to the well-being of the whole of society; discipleship in the next decades will be faithful to all these values, and more. I am glad we are here together, to see God's vision for us unfold.



## LUTHERAN IDENTITY AS A GIFT *By Rev. Dr. Gordon Jensen*



*In The Crucified God* (1974), Jürgen Moltmann noted that churches struggle to be relevant to society without losing their identity. This challenge is at the heart of

theological education. At LTS, leaders learn the Gospel (identity) in order to speak to society in meaningful ways (relevance). Learning our Gospel identity, however, is challenging, simply because humans tend to focus on themselves, rather than on God and God's grace. A Gospel-formed starting point looks at our world from God's perspective. This approach, however, contradicts our self centered tendency to begin with ourselves and our attempts to breathe the life of the Spirit into ourselves. But that's impossible. Only God can breathe life into us and all creation. That is a difficult lesson to learn, though. It takes practice.

Developing a Lutheran perspective and voice requires disciplined study, practice, and teachers shaped and formed in the same way. It is not easy.

It's like learning a new language—nothing seems natural at first, from the different sounds, word orders, vocabulary and perhaps even a different alphabet. But learning another language allows us to better understand other cultures, and to think differently or more inclusively. The predominant North American faith language says people are in control of their faith, while Lutheran language insists that faith is God's gift to us. This new language, this Lutheran voice or identity, does not come naturally.

With LTS now in the same building as our Saskatoon Theological Union (STU) partners, the unique Lutheran 'Gospel' view of the Bible, history, theology, the church, and our world is still important for the whole church. A strong Lutheran voice is not a denominational detriment to ecumenical partnerships, but a rich and unique gift, meant for sharing. After all, the *Augsburg Confession* of 1530 is not just a Lutheran identity document, it is an ecumenical voice. We study it, along with Scripture, because of its focus on what God does to give life and breath to us and our world. In a world where

the COVID-19 pandemic attacks our lungs and tries to squeeze life out of people, and where some people cannot breathe because of racism or injustice, we desperately need to hear, see and experience God breathing life into people. The need for Lutheran-grounded voices is important for everyone, just as we also need to hear God's voice through other traditions. We desperately need a rich, diverse Christianity, not a watered-down generic brand.

In my six-month sabbatical beginning in January, I will follow this theme by working on a book on Martin Luther's 1534 Bible, and how he highlighted this gospel message within its pages. The Wittenberg reformers wanted to pass their gospel-identity message on to the world, a message they found within the pages of this living Word of life. By keeping up to date with the scholarship in the field of Lutheran studies, I can more effectively pass this good news identity we have on to our students and the world. After all, scholarship is for sharing!

## A TIME FOR GRACE *By Lauren Wray*



We are living in the time of COVID-19. Everywhere, people are stressed and feeling psychologically and physically pressured. Our world is messier than usual. We can't connect with people in the ways that we usually would. We face doubts about the future. This is the kind of moment when we, as Christians, turn to God and God's people for grace and support. At this time, we at LTS pray for all of you, that you will know God's gracious presence.

LTS faces the challenges that you encounter. We are concerned about loved ones, older and younger, who are at risk. We feel the lack of face-to-face connection with students and with the larger community of supporters and stakeholders across Western Canada and elsewhere. We see the difficulties that businesses, governments, and universities encounter, and are aware that these create financial and other risks for us. We ask that you pray for us and continue to be with us. This is a time when we all need to seek grace for ourselves and offer grace to each other.



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