

Report of Colleges and Seminaries

REPORT OF THE EASTERN CLUSTER OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES TO THE SYNODS OF REGIONS 7, 8 AND 9

Since its founding in 1995, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS) has fostered strong collaboration between the three eastern schools and other partners, enhancing our common task of theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners. In these challenging times when all seminaries seek new approaches to forming leaders for the Church, we are also engaged with the other ELCA seminary clusters, our regional synods and additional partners in the search for financial sustainability. Efficiencies are being realized by working together and sharing strategies.

A separately incorporated entity, the Cluster is governed by a Board of Directors made up of board chairs and other officers from each of the three schools. One of the three seminary presidents serves in rotation as Cluster executive director. With only modest core funding from the seminaries, the Cluster has been blessed to receive over \$6 million in grants from foundations to support common projects and subsidize seminary budgets.

Current Collaborative Programs

- The Cluster's *One Library Under Three Roofs* links the collections at Gettysburg, Philadelphia and Columbia, providing students, faculty and other borrowers with access to a vast array of books, periodicals and e-resources.
- Through the Cluster-sponsored *Project Connect*, hundreds of young persons have been invited to "consider their callings" over the past half-dozen years. The project has fostered multiple vocational discernment arenas, and developed a broad network of "discernment advocates" equipped to support those in their late teens and early twenties as they seek to follow God's call and claim on their lives. With the ending of large-scale funding by the Lilly Endowment this past year, full-time director Don Johnson has concluded his work. A more modest Lilly grant helps sustain key components of *Project Connect*, now under the direction of the three seminaries' Admissions officers.
- Given the geographical proximity of the two Pennsylvania seminaries, Gettysburg and Philadelphia have joined forces in field education, combining placement and supervision of CPE and internship under the direction of Profs. Rick Carlson and Leonard Hummel. Other faculty sharing opportunities continue to be explored.

Future Cluster Directions: Following the merger of LTSS with Lenoir Rhyne University, the Cluster is exploring new directions for the coming years. A generous planned gift by the late Dr. Dorothy Marple offers financial resources to the Cluster and member schools for expanded courses and other offerings in the area of ecumenics.

With Appreciation: The Cluster is grateful for support to theological education and our seminaries from our partner synods and churchwide organization. Special appreciation is expressed to AIM Donald Johnson for his seven years of service with *Project Connect*.
Rev. John Richter, Cluster Board Chair Rev. Michael Cooper-White, Ex. Director

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

2014 Report to the Synods

Gettysburg Seminary offers the Church an *unprecedented and increasing access to its educational* resources, creating an *award*

winning museum with faith-based content for the public, one of the most *generous student scholarship assistance* offers, expanding thought-provoking theological resources *access to all members* of the Church.



Gettysburg stewards its mission with particular care for those students the church sends our way, through an extraordinary faculty, in an historic place. We remain thankful for the steadfastness of the Synods of Region 8 in seminary financial support; and that more individuals and congregations are giving generously, joining *leadership giving circles* to undergird theological education and ministerial formation.

For the Nation: Seminary Ridge Museum opened July 1: Educating the nation about a pivotal struggle with the end of slavery and the role faith played in this great struggle, the Seminary Ridge Museum opened with LEED certification and national, regional and international recognitions and awards. Grand opening with thousands present launched this great offer to the nation, and especially to those who are engaging in the growing interest in historical and religious tourism. The Seminary Ridge Museum offers a unique focus on religious convictions that fueled the battle over slavery, the building's role as a field hospital and as strategic military lookout that adds up to the historic sacrifices for the sake of the nation, its unity and equality.

Extraordinary Learning Environment, Finest Teachers, Accessible Resources: As theological education is reimaged, Gettysburg Seminary is working on the front lines of creative solutions, preparing (thanks to a grant from the Lilly Endowment) a competency based curriculum to reduce time to degree and easier access to degree work, with Dean Robin Steinke co-chairing the ELCA's TEAC (Theological Education Advisory Cte), through collaborative sharing across seminary campuses, and public recognition of teaching and scholarship skills. In addition, Gettysburg received a green light from accreditors to expand its online and hybrid course offerings to make courses even more accessible.

GETTYSBURG SEMINARY OFFERS NEW LEVELS OF ACCESS:

First Mini MOOC Gettysburg was the first U.S. Seminary to offer a *Massive Open Online Course* this past year taught by Mark Vitalis Hoffman – one that will be repeated this early fall and its open to you! Watch for Survey of the *Lands of the Bible* this coming September at www.LTSG.EDU.

Academies for Spring and Fall: The faculty created a newly expanded experience around Spring Convocation and Luther Colloquy (fall) that offers a stimulating week long experience for students, seekers, congregation groups, interested lay persons, rostered leaders and prospective students. This fall, October 27-31, we invite you to join us for the Fall Academy: "**Reforming! From Conflict To Communion And Reconciliation.**"

Gettysburg's "Seminary Explores" radio show is now available to everyone through podcast!

In its first months, you can tap 20 minute interviews exploring the origins of Christmas, Apocalyptic dynamics in the New Testament and American History, Women's Civil Rights, Conversation with one of America's best Civil War artists, Ecology, Martin Luther King, and the list goes on: www.LTSG.edu/SeminaryExplores

“Every time we think of you” (which is often), all who have responded generously, all who continue supporting the Seminary’s mission with your encouragement of prospective students, your prayers, critical financial support, **we “give thanks to God!”**

*The Rev. Michael L. Cooper-White, President
Board*

*Dr. James Lakso, Chairman of the
Board*

The Report of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia 2014 Report

150th Anniversary Celebration

The Seminary will officially celebrate its 150th Anniversary on the evening of October 16, 2014 at the Ballroom at the Ben on Franklin Square in Center City Philadelphia. We will hold a gala banquet with Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as the keynote speaker. Other events in this anniversary year will include a celebratory opening of the academic year in September and special events held on campus around October 16. Stay tuned.

150th Commencement

Former Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson will be the commencement speaker at the 150th commencement on Tuesday, May 20 at 3:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, PA. He will be honored by the seminary with an honorary doctorate for excellence in public leadership.

150th Comprehensive Campaign

The seminary is approaching the completion of its \$16,500,000 150th Anniversary Campaign and is asking all its friends, alums and supporters to contribute to a \$1,500,000 150th anniversary fund to give the school the capacity to be flexible and adaptable into the next era. This anniversary fund will put the campaign over the top. The key to the campaign has been a \$10,000,000 endowment for student aid, the completion of the master plan of the campus with the Timothy Breidegam Library Connector and unrestricted endowment. The school will now have thirteen full and partial scholarships for entering students especially through the student sponsorship program, which invites donors to cover the tuition for incoming students through their matriculation at LTSP.

The Cooperative M.Div.

With a generous grant from Thrivent for Lutherans LTSP will launch a cooperative M.Div. program in the fall in which students will work in a parish for their contextual education requirements while taking courses at the same time to reduce the cost of their theological education.

The Lilly Grant

With the Eastern Lutheran Cluster LTSP has received a grant from the Lilly Endowment to address student indebtedness. LTSP’s part of the grant makes possible a student financial advising center at LTSP, an accelerated M.Div. degree, and resources to provide more distance education courses.

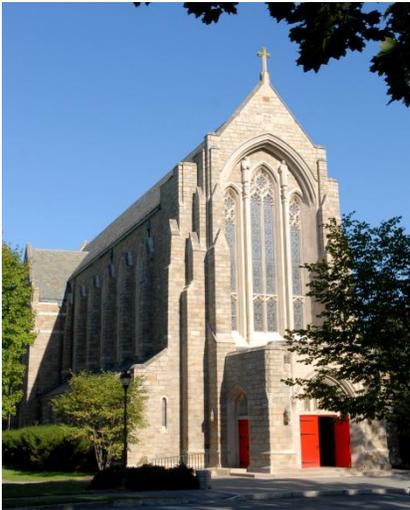
Conversations with Gettysburg

The officers of LTSP and LTSG have been in conversation about efficiencies and collaboration to be good stewards of the resources that the Church provides for theological education. We have already merged the internship programs of the two schools and have engaged in a creative program of faculty sharing as vacancies occur. Each school is covering for the other's faculty needs as they arise.

The Rev. Dr. Philip D. Krey
President
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

www.muhlenberg.edu



Muhlenberg College is wrapping up another strong year. In the fall of 2012, Hurricane Sandy caused a lot of tree damage on campus, but largely the campus emerged unscathed. Several surrounding areas, including many students and faculty, were without power for a few days, but nothing like our parents and alumni in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

For the seventh year in a row, Muhlenberg was named one of the 10 theatre programs in the nation. Kiplinger's also continues to rank the College among the "best values" in higher education. While hundreds of colleges were getting bad news from the bond ratings agencies, the College had its A1 and A+ rating affirmed by Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The College has balanced its budget for nearly 60 years. Strong admissions and fundraising numbers fueled the affirmation. The admissions success continues as the College has exceeded its record of over 5,000 applications from a year ago. The College has also enrolled its most diverse classes in the past three years, exceeding 10% students of color in the Classes of 2014, 2015 and 2016.

In the fall, the Mules advanced to the ECAC Southwest Bowl in football, and senior Cody Antonio was a second team All-American. On the academic front, Jake Glass completed an amazing academic feat, winning a Truman Scholarship and Udall Award.

On the construction front, the College has decided to renovate and put a small edition on East Hall, a historic residence hall that was constructed in 1903.

The College continues to do excellent community engagement work throughout the Lehigh Valley. This year, Air Products, a Fortune 500 Company, partnered with the College to form the Air Products Community Internship Program. The program provides \$1000 stipends to five Muhlenberg College students, who are paired with five non-profit agencies in the region.

Nearly 50 students spent Spring Break 2013 with Alternative Spring Break programs. They traveled to Memphis, New Orleans, North Carolina, and Washington D.C., and one group of students remained in Allentown for local community service. The groups worked with children affected by HIV/AIDS, assisted with Hurricane Katrina rebuilding efforts, and built the walls of a Habitat for Humanity house.

Dr. Peyton R. Helm, President