

# ***CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS***

## **Strategic Plan 2022-26**



**Concordia  
Seminary**  
ST. LOUIS



# PREAMBLE REGARDING CONCORDIA SEMINARY'S MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

*Radically changing times call for deliberate reflection upon, articulation of and re-dedication to the core identity and mission of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.*

*The distinct mission of Concordia Seminary flows from our Lutheran confession of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This Gospel is distinct, true and necessary. "It illumines and magnifies the honor of Christ and brings to pious consciences the abundant consolation that they need. ... One can easily see how necessary it is to understand this faith, for through it alone we recognize Christ's work and receive his blessings, and it alone provides a sure and firm consolation for devout minds" (Apol IV:2, 118). The Seminary is named Concordia in the hope that this school will always stand firm and unified in this confessional teaching. As the Preface to the Book of Concord states, "By God's help, we will retain this Confession to our last breath, when we shall go forth from this life to the heavenly fatherland, to appear with a joyful, undaunted mind and a pure conscience before the court of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Preface, 16). Our forefathers did not take for granted that this life-giving Gospel confession would be preserved among us without great diligence and care.*

*The Seminary's motto, "Light From Above," emphasizes that this Gospel, in all its articles, comes to us by gracious divine revelation — in Jesus, who is the Light of the world, and in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which cannot be broken. In this conviction, C.F.W. Walther declared, at the dedication of a new Concordia Seminary campus in 1883: "In this house, neither the word of man nor the wit and wisdom of man, but rather the Word of God and the entire Word of God, and that which serves the elucidation and application of that Word, shall be studied with unwearied diligence, day after day, from the first rays of the morning until late after nightfall." Concordia Seminary exists to further the proper understanding and promulgation of heavenly, scriptural doctrine, so full of Christ.*

*Founded by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), and funded largely by LCMS donors, Concordia Seminary carries out this service of the Gospel not for the sake of advancing the Seminary as an institution for its own sake, but in collaboration and harmony with the LCMS and its other institutions, and toward the furtherance of the LCMS' stated objectives. In particular, we prepare and examine men for the Office of the Holy Ministry and women for diaconal service in the LCMS, and we provide advanced studies for those who may serve in teaching and leadership roles. The Seminary also provides ongoing theological guidance and resources for the church through continuing education and publications. Concordia Seminary is uniquely poised at this time in history to exchange confessional Lutheran resources and mutual encouragement with sister Lutheran church bodies and seminaries around the world, in coordination with the LCMS.*

*The Strategic Plan that follows certainly cannot and should not try to express every important thing that the Seminary intends to do. Instead, the plan highlights areas of special priority and focus for the sake of reporting and accountability.*

*We are grateful for the many people whose time and insights have contributed to the shaping of this plan. We pray for God's continued guidance, grace and blessing as we carry out the tasks He has placed before us, to the glory of His Son and for the comfort of troubled sinners!*

**"BY GOD'S HELP, WE WILL RETAIN THIS  
CONFESSION TO OUR LAST BREATH, WHEN  
WE SHALL GO FORTH FROM THIS LIFE TO  
THE HEAVENLY FATHERLAND, TO APPEAR  
WITH A JOYFUL, UNDAUNTED MIND AND A  
PURE CONSCIENCE BEFORE THE COURT  
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."**

**BOOK OF CONCORD (PREFACE, 16)**



### **SOURCES OF INPUT FOR A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN**

- ❶ President Egger's 20-year vision for Concordia Seminary
- ❷ President Egger's August 2021 Inaugural Address
- ❸ Concordia Seminary's Strategic Plan 2018–20
- ❹ Concordia Seminary's Transitional Strategic Plan 2021–22
- ❺ Board of Regent's discussion of mission, vision and strategic priorities (August 2021, May 2022 and August 2022, with board committee drafting in June 2022)
- ❻ Broad survey of Seminary constituencies: faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, LCMS district presidents and LCMS officials (January 2022; 1,066 invited; 323 responded)
- ❼ Priorities and initiatives proposed by key Seminary administrators, especially in the areas of recruitment, formation, graduate studies, theological resources and continuing education
- ❽ Lilly Endowment Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative collaborative goals, in partnership with Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW)
- ❾ Objectives and strategic plans of the LCMS and our sister seminary CTSFW
- ❿ Focus group discussions with faculty (August 2022), donors (September 2022) and alumni (September 2022)





### GUIDING OBJECTIVES

**The following goals undergird the plan and are stated succinctly here.**

- ❶ Keep God's written Word at the center of ministerial formation.
- ❷ Continue to add quality faculty. It is the faculty who execute our mission and determine our impact.
- ❸ Creatively strengthen our short-term and long-term efforts in student recruitment.
- ❹ Instill in our students a fervent *both-and* commitment to Lutheran teaching and outreach to the lost.
- ❺ Make the case to the broader church for the distinct value of residential theological formation in community, even as we seek to be realistic and responsive to the church's varied situations and needs.
- ❻ Cultivate shared forms of piety and form a praying ministerium through the centrality of daily chapel in our Seminary life.
- ❼ Cultivate a *community* of theological learning, hospitality and mutual service.
- ❽ Maintain strong collaborative and respectful relationships within the LCMS at all levels.
- ❾ Resource international Lutheranism with clear biblical and confessional Lutheran teaching.





## CONCORDIA SEMINARY VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS AND CORE VALUES

### VISION

*Abiding in Christ and His Word, Concordia Seminary will be a world leader in confessional Lutheran ministerial formation, scholarship and theological resources.*

### MISSION

*Concordia Seminary serves church and world by providing theological education and leadership centered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for the formation of pastors, missionaries, deaconesses, scholars and leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.*

### CORE VALUES

- *Faithfulness to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions*
- *Servanthood to Christ and His church*
- *Responsiveness to a changing world*
- *Excellence in all our endeavors*

## FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

- ① *Faithful and full-person formation*
- ② *Commitment to community and collaboration*
- ③ *Strong recruitment and enrollment*
- ④ *Lutheran resources and reach*





PRIORITY NO. 1:

# ***Faithful and Full-Person Formation***



## **CENTRALITY OF DAILY CHAPEL WORSHIP**

- 1 Assess the schedule of weekly classes and meetings and its impact on chapel attendance, especially the weekly Divine Service.
- 2 Encourage consistent attendance at chapel worship to form a habitus of prayer and love of God's Word as we encourage one another and our students to find mercy, joy and purpose in our Savior Jesus, who comes to us through His Word and Sacraments.
- 3 Complete the design and secure funding for chapel refurbishments.

## **MINISTERIAL FORMATION**

- 1 Review assessment data and feedback regarding the new M.Div. curriculum and plan adjustments to be implemented in fall 2024 with particular attention to (a) strengthening the study of Scripture and church history; (b) preparing students for ministry in an increasingly post-church, secular society; and (c) the optimal use of the entire 52-week calendar year for student formation.
- 2 Strive for excellence by strengthening our continual improvement processes in both residential and distance/hybrid formation programs, gathering appropriate data.
- 3 Make the case to the church regarding the value of full-time ministerial formation in community for a lifetime of ministry in the LCMS.
- 4 Cultivate a mission heart in our students, utilizing course work, formation labs and Resident Field Education. Connect more extensively with urban and cross-cultural ministries in St. Louis and elsewhere, and collaborate with LCMS districts and the LCMS Office of International Mission to sponsor regular on-campus visits by missionaries and mission recruiters.
- 5 Secure funding to partially subsidize every residential ministerial formation student for one travel-study experience in Israel, Wittenberg or a location of significant LCMS mission and mercy involvement.



## **INTENTIONAL CULTIVATION OF FUTURE FACULTY**

- 1 Prepare a five-year staffing plan to prepare proactively for future faculty and administrative needs.
- 2 Prioritize student formation in decisions regarding future faculty, seeking bright, personable, productive, pastoral, collegial, solidly scriptural and Lutheran faculty.
- 3 Inspire gifted students to consider career paths preparing them to become future scholars and leaders of the church through opportunities including faculty mentoring, student worker service with faculty and conferences for LCMS graduate students.
- 4 Establish a regular program of funding for select students who show promise for future faculty roles to study with our Graduate School or other appropriate graduate schools. Specifically, fund at least one new student per year with a four-year renewable stipend.





PRIORITY NO. 2:

# *Commitment to Community and Collaboration*





## FOSTERING COMMUNITY

- 1 Make morning chapel central to the life and rhythm of the Seminary. Use the chapel grounds as a locus for social and “quick business” time among students and faculty after services.
- 2 Pursue multiple initiatives to (a) cultivate community life among students in all programs and between faculty, staff and students; (b) foster a welcoming and supportive campus experience for international students; and (c) cultivate a community of theologians and friends among the faculty.
- 3 Launch a new major capital campaign, prioritizing campus physical improvements and new construction, including improved married and single student housing.

## HOSPITALITY

- 1 Conduct a thorough review of our Seminary’s hospitality program, assessing and optimizing our staff roles and our facilities’ capacity for events and guest housing so that every guest feels welcomed. Consider the addition of a “hospitality planner.”
- 2 Offer targeted events for the local Lutheran community, aiming to be hospitable, edifying and inspiring. Invite all of our Resident Field Education pastors and spouses, at least annually, to a major Seminary event such as Oktoberfest, Springfest, etc.
- 3 Define a plan for providing overnight rooms to accommodate prospective students and campus guests, expanding our capacity to host groups and conferences.



## COLLABORATION WITH SISTER SEMINARY AND THROUGHOUT THE LCMS

- 1 Collaborate with CTSFW to implement a faculty exchange program, an annual faculty retreat between Concordia Seminary and CTSFW, and a plan for increasing interaction between Concordia Seminary and CTSFW students.
- 2 Use our campus hospitality in general and the President’s House in particular to welcome a broad range of LCMS leaders and to bring them together with one another and with members of our faculty.
- 3 Explore the co-location of LCMS organizations on campus.
- 4 Develop a formal program of direct connections between the Seminary and congregations in order to encourage pastors, fundraise and recruit students.





PRIORITY NO. 3:

# ***Strong Recruitment and Enrollment***





## **PRAYER TO THE LORD OF THE HARVEST**

- 1 Pray regularly in our Seminary chapel for more harvest workers and encourage the LCMS Director of Worship to include a monthly prayer for more workers in the weekly congregational prayers prepared by the LCMS.
- 2 Refurbish the Chapel of the Holy Apostles (Mission Chapel) and dedicate its space specifically for prayer for current pastors, deaconesses and missionaries; for more harvest workers; and for the lost.

## **INCREASED ENROLLMENT**

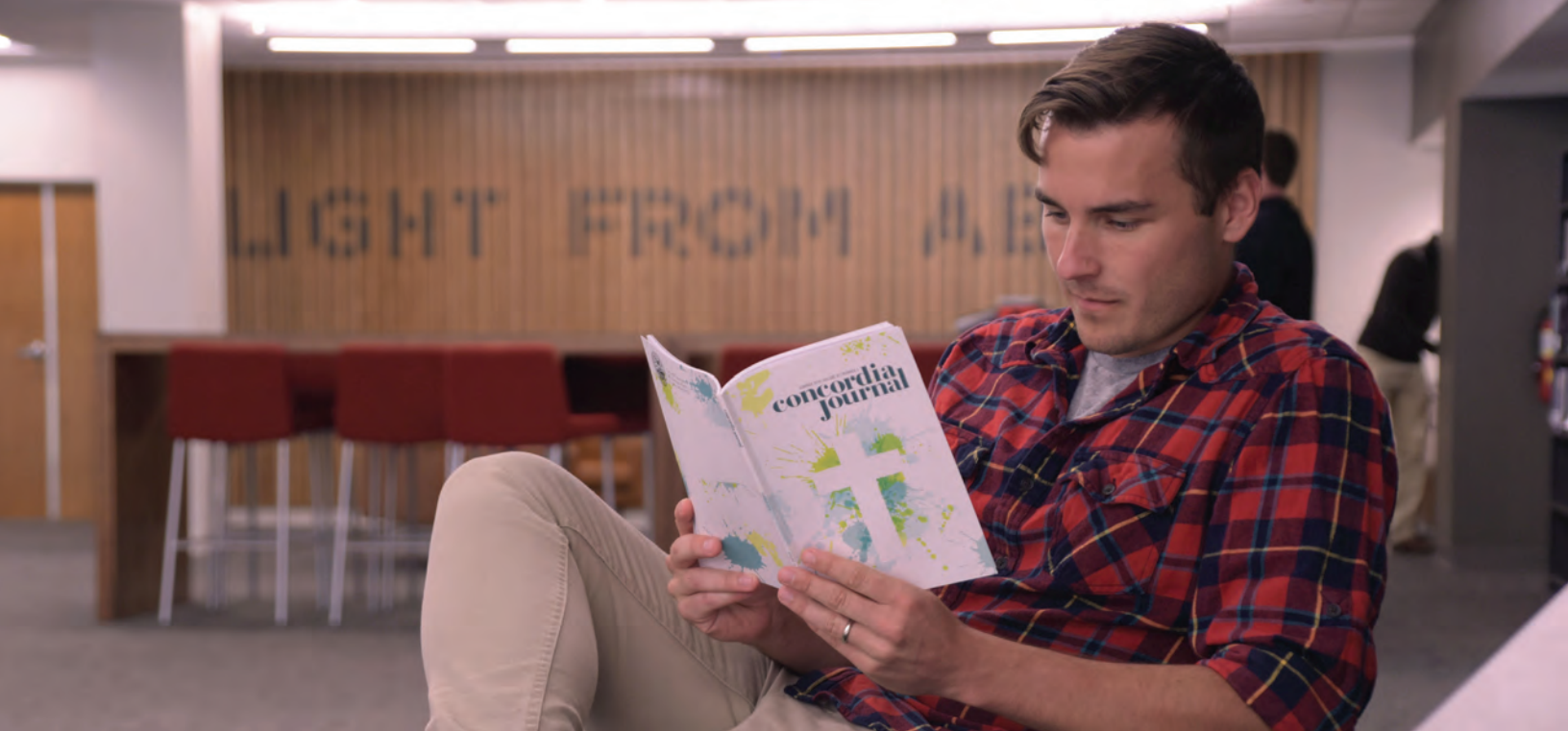
- 1 Establish long-term enrollment goals in consultation with CTSFW and other LCMS entities to determine an optimal target number for annual enrollment across our ministerial formation programs.
- 2 Collaborate with CTSFW to increase enrollment in ministerial formation programs by developing a marketing/communications strategy, including co-branded messages in video, social media and print, and by joint attendance at various LCMS events to connect cooperatively with prospective students.
- 3 Create and manage pathways to the Seminary by recruiting college students for ministry from beyond the Concordia University System (CUS) pre-seminary programs and by exploring the creation of a “gap year” program for inquiring students as well as a year-long pre-seminary self-study curriculum.
- 4 Strengthen the viability and affordability of CUS pre-seminary programs by exploring various collaborative possibilities at a program level, including a possible 3+1 bachelor’s degree completed with dual credit during the first year of Seminary.

- 5 Review, improve and explore summer event offerings for young people, including *Vocatio* and other summer study opportunities for prospective students, and leverage for recruitment our other on-campus events for Lutheran laity.
- 6 Increase student success and retention by focusing efforts on academic, financial, spiritual and collegial concerns.



## **WELL-PREPARED MINISTERIUM FROM “ALL NATIONS”**

- 1 Work intentionally with our Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS), Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) and Cross-cultural Ministry (CMC) students and the ethnic worshipping communities where they serve to recruit second-generation immigrant students for our residential M.Div. Program, and train our vicarage visitation staff to carry out recruitment efforts on site.
- 2 Collaborate with CTSFW and CUS schools to offer our campuses as venues for events supporting ministry among various ethnic groups.
- 3 Collaborate and network with LCMS ministry leaders at all levels to find best ways to encourage people of varied ethnic backgrounds to consider ministry.



PRIORITY NO. 4

# ***Lutheran Resources and Reach***





## **COMPREHENSIVE CONTINUING EDUCATION STRATEGY**

- ① Articulate a comprehensive strategy for continuing education, defining the scope and purpose for all Seminary symposia and lectures, supported with improved technology to make these resources broadly available beyond campus.
- ② Negotiate and establish a consistent post-seminary continuing education route, delivered through the seminaries with support from other LCMS institutions, to provide pastoral leadership and parish administration training beyond the core ministerial formation curriculum.
- ③ Coordinate with CUS and CTSFW to provide continuing education resources for commissioned ministers, especially for the commissioned minister colloquy process.

## **QUALITY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

- ① Articulate a comprehensive strategy for theological resources, with defined scope and purpose for each Seminary publication and platform, enhancing biblical, confessional Lutheran content and providing accessible and consistent delivery.
- ② Build a culture of writing that prioritizes material designed for pastors and laity as an important service of the Seminary to the church at large.
- ③ Develop and fund a comprehensive strategy for resourcing and encouraging faculty research and writing, including expanding the student assistant (faculty helper) program.

## **LUTHERAN REACH AND WORLDWIDE IMPACT**

- ① Articulate a comprehensive strategy, in partnership with LCMS Church Relations, the LCMS Office of International Mission and CTSFW, for our faculty's and Graduate School's work with partner churches and seminaries.
- ② Build a culture of engagement with worldwide confessional Lutheranism, recognizing international Lutherans both as target audiences for, and contributors to, scholarly work and publications of the Seminary.
- ③ Fund and implement the components of the worldwide impact strategy, including support of students and faculty in cooperative international opportunities, engagement with leaders of international confessional Lutheran church bodies and production of scholarly resources for worldwide use.





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