



COMMENCEMENT

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIFTH YEAR
ACADEMIC EXERCISES

THE SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER
MAY 17, 2024 · 7 p.m.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS

Carillon Recital by John Klinger (Carillonneur)

PRE-COMMENCEMENT MUSIC

The Order of the Groups in the Processional

Candidates for the Residential Alternate Route Certificate
Candidates for the Degree of Master of Arts
Candidates for the Degree of Master of Divinity
Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry
Candidates for the Degree of Master of Sacred Theology
Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty and Staff
Board of Regents
Recipients of the *Christus Vivit* Award
Recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award
Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Divinity
Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Letters
Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Laws
Platform Officiants

A Note on Academic Dress

The hoods worn by faculty members, staff and candidates for degrees indicate the degree held, the subject in which it is held and the institution that conferred the degree. The colors of the silk lining the hood are the colors of the institution that granted the degree (e.g., the hood of Concordia Seminary is lined with myrtle green and gold). The color of the velvet edging of the hood, running forward around the throat, indicates the faculty or department in which the degree has been earned.

Scarlet: Theology
Violet: Law
White: Arts and Letters
Dark Blue: Philosophy
Light Blue: Education
Lemon: Library
Drab: Business
Pink: Music
Science Gold: Science

A gold bullion tassel on the cap indicates a doctoral degree.

THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

In nomine Jesu



*As the hymn is introduced,
please stand and face the processional cross.*

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Thy Strong Word (*LSB* 578)



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
 2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as
 3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
 4 From the cross Thy wis - dom shin - ing Break - eth



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed
 night and deep as death, Broke the light of
 Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
 forth in con - qu'ring might; From the cross for -



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
 Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.
 press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
 ev - er beam - eth All Thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>5 Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
 Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
 Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
 Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 May the light which Thou dost send
 Fill our songs with alleluias,
 Alleluias without end!</p> | <p>6 God the Father, light-creator,
 To Thee laud and honor be.
 To Thee, Light of Light begotten,
 Praise be sung eternally.
 Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
 Glory, glory be to Thee.
 Mortals, angels, now and ever
 Praise the holy Trinity!</p> |
|---|--|

THE INVOCATION

Rev. Prof. Thomas J. Egger, *M.Div., Ph.D.*

President

- L** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.
- L** Alleluia! Christ is risen!
C He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

THE READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 4:7–12

THE HYMN

No Saint on Earth Lives Life to Self Alone (*LSB 747*)

1 No saint on earth lives life to self a - lone Or dies a -
2 For to this end our Lord by death was slain, That to new

lone, for we with Christ are one. So if we live, for
life He might a - rise a - gain. Through sor - row on to

Christ a - lone we live, And if we die, to Christ our
tri - umph Christ has led, And reigns o'er all: the liv - ing

dy - ing give. In liv - ing and in dy - ing this con - fess:
and the dead. In liv - ing and in dy - ing, Him we bless;

We are the Lord's, safe in God's faith - ful - ness.
We are the Lord's, safe in God's faith - ful - ness.

THE ADDRESS

Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, *M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D.*
Executive Director of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations
St. Louis, Mo.

THE CONFERRING OF CERTIFICATES

The Presentation of the Residential Alternate Route Candidates
Rev. Prof. Timothy E. Saleska, *M.Div., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Ministerial Formation

THE CONFERRING OF EARNED DEGREES

The Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Master of Arts
Rev. Prof. Joel C. Elowsky, *M.Div., S.T.M., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Advanced Studies
Frank and Valerie Fuerst Professor of Historical Theology

The Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Master of Divinity
Rev. Prof. Timothy E. Saleska, *M.Div., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Ministerial Formation

The Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry
Rev. Prof. Joel C. Elowsky, *M.Div., S.T.M., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Advanced Studies
Frank and Valerie Fuerst Professor of Historical Theology

The Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Master of Sacred Theology
Rev. Prof. Joel C. Elowsky, *M.Div., S.T.M., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Advanced Studies
Frank and Valerie Fuerst Professor of Historical Theology

The Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Rev. Prof. Joel C. Elowsky, *M.Div., S.T.M., M.Phil., Ph.D.*
Dean of Advanced Studies
Frank and Valerie Fuerst Professor of Historical Theology

THE CONFERRING OF THE HONORARY AWARDS

The Presentation of the Recipients of the *Christus Vivit* Award

Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*

Dean of Faculty

The Presentation of the Recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award

Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*

Dean of Faculty

THE CONFERRING OF THE HONORARY DEGREES

The Presentation of the Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Divinity

Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*

Dean of Faculty

The Presentation of the Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Letters

Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*

Dean of Faculty

The Presentation of the Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Laws

Rev. Prof. David J. Peter, *M.Div., D.Min.*

Dean of Faculty

THE RECOGNITION OF A RETIRING PROFESSOR

Rev. Prof. Thomas J. Egger, *M.Div., Ph.D.*

President

THE CLOSING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Rev. Prof. Thomas J. Egger, *M.Div., Ph.D.*

President

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

*During the recessional hymn, please turn to face the cross as it passes you,
then face forward again when the cross reaches the back of the quadrangle.*

THE RECESSIONAL HYMN

O Day Full of Grace (LSB 503)



1 O day full of grace that now we see Ap - pear - ing on
2 O day full of grace, O bless - ed time, Our Lord on the
3 For Christ bore our sins, and not His own, When He on the
4 God came to us then at Pen - te - cost, His Spir - it new
5 When we on that fi - nal jour - ney go That Christ is for



earth's ho - ri - zon, Bring light from our God that we may be
earth ar - riv - ing; Then came to the world that light sub - lime,
cross was hang - ing; And then He a - rose and moved the stone
life re - veal - ing, That we might no more from Him be lost,
us pre - par - ing, We'll gath - er in song, our hearts a - glow,



Re - plete in His joy this sea - son. God, shine for us
Great joy for us all re - triev - ing; For Je - sus all
That we, un - to Him be - long - ing, Might join with an -
All dark - ness for us dis - pel - ling. His flame will the
All joy of the heav - ens shar - ing, And walk in the



now in this dark place; Your name on our hearts em - bla - zon.
mor - tals did em - brace, All dark - ness and shame re - mov - ing.
gel - ic hosts to raise Our voic - es in end - less sing - ing.
mark of sin ef - face And bring to us all His heal - ing.
light of God's own place, With an - gels His name a - dor - ing.

POST-COMMENCEMENT MUSIC

Soli Deo Gloria

THE MARSHALS

Rev. Prof. Joel Biermann, *M.Div., Ph.D.*
Rev. Prof. Peter Nafzger, *M.Div., Ph.D.*
Rev. Prof. Mark Rockenbach, *M.A., M.Div., Ph.D.*

THE MUSICIANS

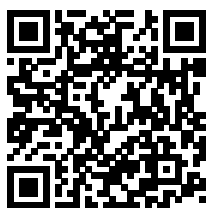
The Clarion Brass

Mary Weber, *Trumpet*
Jason Harris, *Trumpet*
Peter Ulfers, *French Horn*
George Manning, *Trombone*
Matt Kuebler, *Tuba*

Conductor

Cantor Phillip Magness, *Interim Associate of Music Arts*

*Everyone is invited to remain in the Main Quadrangle for a cookie reception,
sponsored by the Seminary Guild, following Commencement exercises.
(In the event of inclement weather, the reception will be held in Koburg Hall.)*



See yourself at the Sem!

Thank you for being here and for supporting our students during their preparations for serving God's church. Have you or someone you know ever considered serving as a pastor or deaconess? Please visit or share the link ask.csl.edu/register/Request-Information or scan the QR code. We would love to have a conversation about attending Concordia Seminary!

Acknowledgments

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CANDIDATES FOR THE ALTERNATE ROUTE CERTIFICATE

These students have completed academic residency and will be eligible for certification and ordination upon completion of a one-year vicarage.

Joseph James Bates
Timothy Paul Handrick
Timothy M. Reicks
Christopher David Shearman

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

^{1*} Albene Abreham Aba	¹ Philip Parboi Kuya
¹ Daniel Kofi Akoh	Andrew James Mastic
Christiana Dixon Gbeanquoi	[‡] Karyn Lee Naber
Timothy Paul Handrick	Jazmín Abigail Ramírez Contreras
[§] Rachel Nicole Heitshusen	¹ Elizabeth Virginia Taylor

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

Samuel Joseph Aizenberg	Paul Samuel Hammes	Luke William Onken
Ryan Eton Barnett	Joel Vang Her	Vincent J. Otto
Jonathan Matthew Bartels	Avery Edward Hjulberg	Drake M. Peterson
Alexander David Bjoraker	Samuel Ryan Hoag	Dante B. Pronsati
Justin Joseph Brockman	†Deon L. Hull	Adam L. Rouse
Bryce Allan Clayton	Graham Joseph Jenkins	Jonah Joel Arthur Schultz
Allen Samuel Dass	Brandon Raymond Johnson	Josiah Joel Arthur Schultz
Trey Richard Dille	David L. Keane	Anthony Christian Sedotto
James Matthew Doebler	Idonis Martin King Sr.	Kevin G. Sharp
Jonathan Arthur Dueker	Christopher Daniel Knepper	Alexander Lee Smith
Owen David Duncan	Jason Patrick Kohm	Christopher James Sturges
Kenneth Adam Estes	Aaron Richard Levenhagen	Adam L. Tanney
Case A. Farney	Matthew Stuart Lynch	Grant E. Thiel
Conner Edward Forbes	Gregory Cody MacMillin	Dillon Michael Weber
Peter A. Frank	Jedidiah Brinton McClellan	Caleb Joshua Frederick Wehling
Andrew Paul Frerichs	Timothy Levi Mehl	Michael Thomas Winckler
Morgan James Garrett	†Janis Christopher Mikits	†*Jonathan Ryan Zoch
Matthew Brennan Goltl	Kyle David Moellenhoff	
Jason James Groth	Nathan Robert Nelson	

* In absentia

† Pending completion of vicarage or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

¹ Degree granted Aug. 18, 2023

² Degree granted Dec. 15, 2023

³ Degree granted Jan. 19, 2024

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Aaron Lee Hutton

Major Applied Project

The Effects of Testimony in Seminars through Cinemeducation, Biblical Narratives, Live Personal Testimony, and Journaling at Christ Lincoln Among Young Adults Learning to Share Testimony

¹Jedidiah Timothy Maschke

Major Applied Project

A Companion Guide for the Discipleship to Missional Community (D²MC) Program

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

*¹George Arthur Denholm

*Alfonso James Espinosa

²Jaron Patric Melin

Jacob William Rhodes

¹David F. Shudy

³Kyle James Wright II

* In absentia

† Pending completion of vicarage or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

1 Degree granted Aug. 18, 2023

2 Degree granted Dec. 15, 2023

3 Degree granted Jan. 19, 2024

**CANDIDATES FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Martin B. Dressler

Dissertation

*The Beautiful Place: Understanding Perceiving, and Participating in Beauty According to the
Doctrine of the Two Kinds of Righteousness*

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. Kent Burreson

Carl Martin Hanson

Dissertation

*The Contextual Ecclesiology of Ding Guang Xun (Bishop K.H. Ting): The Universal Church as
Expressed Through Its Local Identity*

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. Kent Burreson

Phillip George Hooper

Dissertation

*The American Lutheranism of Georg Sverdrup (1848–1907): An Analysis of His View of the
Christian Life in Terms of Conversion, Congregation, and Community*

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. Gerhard Bode

Timothy Andrew Prince

Dissertation

Typological Reading of the Apocalyptic Vision of Daniel 7⁶–9

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. David Adams

Jared Mark Raebel

Dissertation

*The Journey Back to God: A Lutheran Pneumatological Assessment of Postconciliar Catholic
Soteriology through the Lens of Pneumatology and Spirit Christology*

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. Leopoldo A. Sánchez M.

²August Trevor Sutton

Dissertation

Put It on the Scales: Bringing Reflective Equilibrium to Digital Ecclesiology

Adviser: The Rev. Dr. Charles Arand

* In absentia

† Pending completion of vicarage or summer course work

‡ Deaconess certification pending completion of internship

§ Deaconess certification granted

1 Degree granted Aug. 18, 2023

2 Degree granted Dec. 15, 2023

3 Degree granted Jan. 19, 2024

THE CHRISTUS VIVIT AWARD

Chosen by the faculty – after consideration of personal knowledge and/or recommendations by others – the recipient of the Christus Vivit Award has demonstrated exemplary service to the church.

Dr. Allan and Carol Buckman

Dr. Allan and Carol Buckman are passionate in their service to the church, which includes mission work with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and their role in the founding of Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA), an LCMS ministry dedicated to working with immigrants and refugees in the greater St. Louis area.

Originally from Belfield, N.D., Allan attended Concordia College in Saint Paul, Minn. (now Concordia University, Saint Paul, Minn.). Following his graduation, he enrolled at Concordia Senior College, Fort Wayne, Ind. (now Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.), where he received a Bachelor of Arts in 1961. He earned a Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1965 followed by a Master of Arts in linguistics and anthropology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1968.

Carol grew up on Long Island, N.Y., and graduated from Wagner College in Staten Island, N.Y., with a Bachelor of Science. While teaching, she earned a Master of Arts from New York University. She enjoyed leading the high school youth group at her church, Trinity in Hicksville, Long Island, N.Y. During a youth event, she met Allan, who was serving as a vicar at the church's daughter congregation. She and Allan, who goes by Al, were married June 5, 1965, in St. Louis, Mo., at Atonement Lutheran Church and School, where Carol taught.

From 1965–77, the couple served as missionaries in Nigeria while raising their three children. Allan developed a program of direct evangelization among the Yala people and supervised the translation of the New Testament into the Yala language. Carol built friendships with the Yala women. She loved organizing Christian dramas in the villages of the Yala people, teaching Bible stories in cross-cultural ways. She also helped villagers to read. One of these villagers became a lay evangelist in the Lutheran Church of Nigeria.

The young family returned to the United States in the summer of 1976. In 1977, Allan accepted the call to serve with the LCMS Board for Mission Services (BFMS) as secretary for Africa, Europe and the Middle East. One year later, he earned a Doctor of Missiology from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

In 1989, Allan accepted the call to serve BFMS as director of world areas. In that position, he was responsible for the supervision and coordination of BFMS-sponsored mission work around the world. Carol taught in Lutheran schools until 1989 and then began a 20-year career in real estate, which would also prove helpful in laying the groundwork for CFNA.

In 1999, as the Buckmans were looking forward to retirement, something caught Carol's eye. She became aware that a group of refugees from an area of Nigeria where they had worked as LCMS missionaries had resettled in the St. Louis area. Feeling a burden to help these new Americans, Carol, along with a friend, began teaching computer classes in the basement

of Messiah Lutheran Church in St. Louis. Those modest origins marked the beginning of a venture into which the Buckmans would dedicate the next 24 years of their lives: the ministry of CFNA. Carol was elected as board chair in 2002. A full-time missionary was called to CFNA, and the organization moved to the Peace Center in the heart of the refugee resettlement.

In 2003, Allan retired but continued to serve part-time with LCMS World Mission as a consultant through 2007. He also served as an adjunct professor for the Ph.D. Missiology program at Concordia Theological Seminary (1996–2008) and as executive director of the Lutheran Society for Missiology (2004–10).

In 2004, Allan became the CFNA chairman, providing guidance and oversight to the organization. Carol has worked diligently to secure grants to support the work of CFNA, and ensures that grantors, supporters and volunteers are thanked and appreciated. She also taught adult ESL and started several programs. Today, her main service with CFNA is working to reach Muslim women with the message of Jesus. Her greatest joy is the sewing program in which she teaches Bible studies to Muslim women.

“Over the years, through the power of the Holy Spirit, CFNA has grown in many ways,” Carol said. “The challenge will always be to reach the hearts of people and share the Gospel effectively as ‘we love our neighbor as ourselves.’”

Allan and Carol are blessed with three adult children and 11 grandchildren.

THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

Awarded to a graduate of Concordia Seminary who has rendered exceptional service in at least one of the following areas: parish ministry, mission field, preparation of workers or LCMS service.

Dr. Joel Lehenbauer

Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer serves as executive director of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR). A graduate of Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., he earned a Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary (1984), along with the Hoerber-Hanser award for the highest GPA in his graduating class.

In 1991, Lehenbauer received a Master of Sacred Theology from Concordia Seminary. The late Professor Emeritus Dr. Norman Nagel supervised his thesis, which focused on the eschatology of the Lord's Supper. He also earned a Doctor of Philosophy (2004) from Concordia Seminary. His dissertation, supervised by President Emeritus Dr. John F. Johnson, explored the theology of Stanley Hauerwas.

Lehenbauer received his first call to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hillsdale, Mich., where he served as sole pastor (1985–90). In 1990, he accepted a call as assistant executive director of the CTCR. He became the associate executive director in 2004 and, since 2008, has served as the executive director. In this capacity, he guides and directs the multifaceted work of the CTCR. Lehenbauer serves as its chief spokesman; contributes to the drafting of multiple reports and opinions; participates in fellowship discussions with dozens of churches around the world leading to the recognition of church fellowship; and plans and organizes national and international theological and ecumenical conferences.

During his 33 years of service with the CTCR, Lehenbauer has provided theological and ecclesial counsel and assistance to five different LCMS presidents and countless other LCMS officers, leaders, pastors and church workers.

A sought-after speaker and presenter at LCMS conferences and gatherings, Lehenbauer also has served as theological adviser for multiple LCMS Youth Gatherings over the years.

His great-grandfather, Johann Konrad Christian Lehenbauer, was the first Lehenbauer to attend Concordia Seminary, and often worked as the buggy driver for Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the Seminary's and the LCMS' first president. Many of the Lehenbauer family church workers can be traced to Johann's son Conrad, Lehenbauer's grandfather. By birth or marriage, four generations of the Lehenbauer family have produced 24 pastors — more than half of whom attended Concordia Seminary.

Lehenbauer and his wife, Hope, live in Union, Mo., and have four adult children and four grandchildren.

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF DIVINITY

Awarded to clergy who have rendered outstanding service in church life.

*Rev. James Wiggins Sr.
Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa*

Rev. James Wiggins Sr. is a native of Camden, Ala. Raised in Lutheran grade schools, he earned a high school diploma from Alabama Lutheran Academy and College (Concordia College) in Selma, Ala. He then attended Immanuel Lutheran College in Greensboro, N.C., where he received a bachelor's degree in 1955.

In 1959, Wiggins graduated from Immanuel Lutheran Theological Seminary in Greensboro, N.C., and took further extension courses from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Ill. He also took graduate courses in the area of sociology at Miles College in Birmingham, Ala.

He has served as the pastor of several congregations in Alabama including St. James Lutheran Church in Buena Vista, Ala.; Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Hybert, Ala.; and St. Andrews Lutheran in Sedan, Ala. (Those three congregations merged into Immanuel Lutheran in Vredenburgh, Ala., in 1969.) He also served as the vacancy pastor at St. Paul Lutheran in Oak Hill, Ala. (1965–76); Zion Lutheran in Bessemer, Ala. (1976–83); and Trinity Lutheran in Montgomery, Ala. (1984–97). He retired in 1995 and in 1997 relocated to Pensacola, Fla., where he is a faithful member of St. Matthews Lutheran Church.

In addition to his pastoral calls, Wiggins has served in numerous Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod district-level positions including circuit counselor, circuit youth adviser, adjudication commission member and treasurer of the District Black Churchmen Conference. He currently serves as the chairman of the Rosebud Memorial Project, which is designed to celebrate and continue the legacy of Dr. Rosa J. Young, a pioneer Lutheran educator and missionary who helped plant dozens of historically black Lutheran schools and chapels in the American South.

Throughout his life, Wiggins has directly influenced more than 20 different Lutheran pastors and educators.

Wiggins and his late wife, Katie G. Wiggins, are the proud parents of four children. He has nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LETTERS

Dr. Darius Petkūnas
Doctor of Letters, honoris causa

Dr. Darius Petkūnas is a world-class scholar, researcher and writer on the history, theology and liturgy of Lutheran churches in the Baltics, Germany and the Russian Empire. He is a Lutheran pastor and member of the praesidium in the consistory of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania (ELCL).

In 1991, Petkūnas was ordained as the Soviet Union was disintegrating and Lithuania and the Baltics were experiencing a renaissance of religious freedom. As a theologian, historian and pastor, Petkūnas documented and published important historical accounts of church life under the communist regime. His research also focused on the church's struggle to preserve its confessional identity during the Second Reformation in Germany (1563–1618) and the eras of Pietism and Enlightenment. He is the author of nine monographs and 30 articles in peer-reviewed academic journals. His four-volume *opus magnum*, “Prussian Liturgies: From the Reformation to the Prussian Union,” is comprehensive and without peer.

After graduating from Kaunas Technological University in Kaunas, Lithuania, with a telemechanical engineering degree (1993), Petkūnas earned a Bachelor of Divinity at the Institute of Theology in Tallinn, Estonia (1994). He also earned a Master of Theology from the University of Tartu, Estonia (1998), and a Doctor of Theology (2004) and a Docent of Theology (2010) from the University of Helsinki in Finland. In 2013, he received the Habilitated Doctor, the highest degree possible at the University of Leipzig in Germany. He writes and publishes scholarly works in English and Lithuanian and has working knowledge of several other languages.

Petkūnas faithfully serves as pastor of the Lutheran parishes in Palanga and Kretinga, Lithuania (ELCL). He was instrumental in reclaiming church property in the Klaipėda Region in western Lithuania after the Soviet period and managed the construction of a magnificent sanctuary, fellowship hall, meeting spaces and guest apartments for visiting groups in Palanga. Since 1995, Petkūnas has served as a member of the consistory of the ELCL and has been chairman of the committee for the Lithuanian hymnal (2000–07) and chairman of the liturgical committee (since 2023).

Petkūnas has an extensive history of service in academia that includes more than 25 years at the University of Klaipėda (KU), Lithuania. At KU, he served as a lecturer in the Department of Theology (1996–2008), a senior research fellow at the Center for Baltic Studies (2010–16), a senior research fellow in the Department of Baltic Philology (2016–19) and, since 2019, has worked as a senior research fellow at the John Paul II Center for Christian Studies. His achievements are many, including:

- Actively participating in the establishment of the Center for Evangelical Theology at the University of Klaipėda (1992)
- Receiving a Letter of Gratitude from the Faculty of Humanities from the University of Klaipėda for good and sincere work with students (2000)

- Receiving a Letter of Gratitude from the Rector of the University of Klaipėda for Scholarly Publications (2012)
- Receiving a Letter of Honor for Authentic Works in the Field of Humanities (KLASCO) (2015)
- Being awarded the Guido Michellini Prize as the Most Productive Researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Klaipėda (2018–22, 2023)

Petkūnas and his wife, Inga Petkūnienė, have two adult children.

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LAWS

Director of Christian Education Mark Kempff
Doctor of Laws, honoris causa

Director of Christian Education Mark “Marcos” Kempff was born in Antigua, Guatemala, to pioneer missionaries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) to Latin America. The oldest of 10 siblings, Kempff is a Lutheran educator and fourth-generation missionary whose heart remains in Latin America.

Kempff holds a Bachelor of Science from Concordia University Nebraska, Seward (CUNE), formerly Concordia Teachers College (1974); a Bachelor of Arts with certification as a Director of Christian Education (DCE) from Concordia College (now CUNE), Seward, Neb. (1986); and a Master of Social Sciences in family life ministry from CUNE (1996).

Kempff served as an LCMS educational missionary in Latin America for 34 years: Venezuela (1974–2003) and Panamá (2003–08), and also as a DCE, theological education program developer, professor, church planter and theological education network facilitator. He dedicated his service to the theological formation of Latin American lay leaders and pastors in the mission field, especially in the areas of marriage and family, through the preparation and delivery of countless workshops, retreats, lectures, courses and written materials. His materials were used for institutions such as the *Instituto Teológico Juan de Frias of the Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela* (ILV) (the Lutheran Church of Venezuela) (1975–2003), where he served as its director (1997–2003), and as professor and director for *CoExtensión*, a Lutheran theological education by extension program (2003–08) throughout Latin America.

As a production manager for *Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones* (1986–93), the Lutheran Hour Ministries office in Venezuela, Kempff winsomely articulated the Lutheran faith to broader public audiences through media. He produced countless radio programs, authored more than 55 thematic evangelistic booklets and other resources for the region, and gave numerous presentations on marriage and family-related topics across Latin America — including presentations given in public venues at the invitation of the civil government in Venezuela.

In 2008, Kempff was called to Concordia Seminary, where he served as assistant to the director and an instructor in the Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS). For several years, he also served as assistant to the director for the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT). He dedicated his calling to the theological formation of U.S. Hispanic/Latino lay leaders, deaconesses and pastors for Hispanic ministries in the U.S. mission field, particularly in the areas of marriage and family, youth ministry, and church and mission administration, through the preparation and delivery of countless workshops, lectures, courses, retreats and written materials for the CHS formation programs and continuing education offerings. Kempff has curated numerous resources for Spanish-speaking audiences in collaboration with the Seminary’s library.

In partnership with Concordia Seminary’s Graduate School, Kempff supported and taught for the Master of Arts (M.A.) Program in Spanish, which is the first Spanish-language master’s -level program in theology offered by a confessional Lutheran seminary in the Americas. This program brings U.S. Hispanic and Latin American students together in online classrooms.

Kempff retired in 2022 but remains actively involved in the Seminary's continuing education courses. He continues to serve as a member of the editorial committee of "Lutheran Mission Matters," and collaborates as a writer for Lutheran Hour Ministries' Hispanic ministry, *Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones* and *Para el camino*.

His wife of almost 33 years, Ruth Rivero de Kempff, born in Wetecual, Venezuela, daughter of one of the first Venezuelan Lutheran pastors, died of cancer in March 2011. Kempff has two adult daughters and two grandchildren.

His favorite greeting: *Bendiciones de paz y gozo en Cristo* (Blessings of peace and joy in Christ).

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