2011-12 Academic Year Brings Over 30 New Students to the Graduate School!

The beginning of the 2011-12 Academic Year saw the enrollment of over 30 new graduate students! Combined the Master of Arts, the Master of Sacred Theology, and the Doctor of Philosophy programs have almost 120 students, and more prospective students are inquiring all the time. The new option of beginning PhD or STM work with two-week short courses in January and in the summer is proving to fill a need for parish pastors who desire to continue their ministry while at the same time pursuing an advanced degree as well as for many of our international friends for whom presents a number of residential graduate education hardships.

The student population of the Graduate School is diverse, as you can see in these photos. Some are experienced parish pastors who have come back to the Seminary to pursue an advanced theological education. Others are recent Master of Divinity graduates who have decided to defer their first call to stay on at the Seminary to earn an STM or PhD. Some are students in the Seminary’s Deaconess Program who will be earning an academic MA concurrently with deaconess certification. Others are students from LCMS international partner churches who will return to their home countries equipped with the best in theological education which they will use to serve as church leaders and seminary professors. Still others are students from a variety of Christian denominations who look to Concordia Seminary’s Graduate School to provide the best available graduate theological education in the Lutheran tradition.
Publications by Graduates…

From David J. Zehnder, PhD (2011)

A Theology of Religious Change: What the Social Science of Conversion Means for the Gospel

A Theology of Religious Change asks a simple question with a complicated answer: Why do people change religious faiths? The study invites its readers on a trek through sociological and psychological literature that suggests many causes of religious change. Moving beyond a mere catalogue of motives for conversion, the author explores how a theological account of conversion and the doctrine of election can be broadened, strengthened, and reformulated in light of the complexity of faith's human side. This book seeks to guide pastors, church workers, and theologians in their task of communicating the message of good news effectively by drawing attention to the diverse factors influencing religious change. Available from Wipf and Stock.


A Hammer for God: Bo Giertz

This “Giertz reader” is the most comprehensive volume ever published on Bo Giertz (1905-1998). The American Giertz revolution, which began shortly before his centennial, continues with an increasing number of works by and about Giertz being made available in English. Indeed, had he written and worked primarily in English, and not in Swedish, the bishop would have long ago taken his rightful place alongside such 20th century luminaries as C.S. Lewis and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Through essays by such scholars as Robert Kolb, Gene Veith, Hans Andræ, Eric Andræ, Bror Erickson, Alex Klages, Charles Henrickson, Naomichi Masaki, and John Pless, as well as original translations from Giertz’s work, this volume is the leading U.S. contribution in giving his life and theology the hearing it demands. This book is an indispensable aid to those who wish to dig deeper into his confession to understand the faith of the author of the acclaimed and beloved The Hammer of God, which this year and with this anthology celebrates the 50th anniversary of the novel’s first English edition.

Bo Giertz (1905-1998) served as a rural parish pastor, occasional preacher to the royal court, bishop of the Gothenburg diocese in the Church of Sweden, Vice President of the Lutheran World
Federation, and prolific Christian author on every subject imaginable. His books include The Hammer of God, Preaching from the Whole Bible, To Live with Christ, and Christ’s Church.

Eric R. Andræ, a native of Sweden, is the general editor of this volume, as well as the founder and president of the International Giertz Society (English Language Section). Having spent a semester as a research scholar at Uppsala University, he received his S.T.M. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 2003 with his thesis on Giertz’s use of the Order of Grace. He has translated many articles by Giertz and is now working on his Kyrkofromhet [Church Piety]. Available from Lutheran Legacy.

From Jeffrey E. Brickle, PhD (2010)

**Aural Design and Coherence in the Prologue of First John**

Unlike literature in the modern western world, ancient documents were typically crafted for the ear rather than the eye. This new investigation of the structure of 1 John’s Prologue analyzes the oral patterning and resulting soundscape reflected in this key New Testament passage.

After discussing contemporary techniques of sound analysis and establishing the study’s methodological approach, Brickle examines the Prologue’s aural profile. Here we begin to explore, describe, and depict graphically the patterns of sound that emerge as the text is read aloud. Brickle uses the approaches to Greek pronunciation and orality advocated in the recent New Testament research to determine the impact on the Prologue’s soundscape, followed by an analysis employing the principles for beautiful and effective composition elucidated by the ancient teacher of rhetoric, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his treatise, On Literary Composition. A final section draws together the results and implications of the study before suggesting further ways to apply research in orality, performance, and memory to the Prologue and other ancient texts. Available from T & T Clark International.

From David S. Hasselbrook, PhD (2010)

**Studies in New Testament Lexicography: Advancing toward a Full Diachronic Approach with the Greek Language**

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, scholars begin to publish works recognizing and demonstrating the early beginnings of Modern Greek, finding features in Greek writings of the first century and earlier that continue to exist in the modern language. Despite such research, New Testament lexicographers fail to systematically consult this later stage of the language when analyzing word meanings. After establishing an important unity of the New Testament with Modern Greek and a deficiency in New Testament lexicons in exploiting this unity, David S. Hasselbrook
makes use of insights gained from the modern phase of the language to advance the understanding of general word senses, the construction of definitions, and the presentation of lexical entries.

**Papers and Presentations …**

**Michael Zeigler** (PhD student) represented the Concordia Seminary Graduate School at the 7th Annual Religion, Literature, and the Arts Conference hosted by the University of Iowa's Religious Studies Department. The conference theme was "Uncanny Homecomings." Michael presented a paper titled "At Home in God or the World: Homecomings in Moltmann, Gerhard, and Plotinus." An abstract of the paper follows.

Christianity of modern times was often criticized as other-worldly and irrelevant. Present concern to reverse the degradation of our ecological home continues to see heavenly-minded Christianity as no earthly good. Jürgen Moltmann has taken pains to theologically address both Modernity’s sense of homelessness and Christianity’s perceived irrelevance. He argues that the messianic narrative of the Old and New Testaments drives toward a final homecoming here in this world. The aim of Christian hope is not a home in the eternity of the beyond, but in the future of this earth eschatologically renewed in the crucified, risen, and returning Messiah Jesus. Moltmann has explicitly contrasted his vision of homecoming against that of John Gerhard, the central figure of 17th Century Lutheran Orthodoxy. By teaching the ultimate annihilation of this present universe, Gerhard’s heavenward narrative makes his vision insignificant for embodied, communal, ecologically-minded life.

This paper examines how Gerhard’s and Moltmann’s visions of hope shape their respective narratives. Whereas the former seeks a home in God instead the world, the latter insists the two are not antithetical—ultimate homecoming in God is a homecoming in the world and vice versa. My primary means for critically comparing these two narratives is a third homecoming narrative—that of the Neo-Platonist philosopher Plotinus, the last great philosopher of the ancient world. As the prominent figure of the Neo-Platonism that interacted with the early Christian Church, Plotinus and his vision of the emanation and return of all things to “the One” is important for this dialogue. Although Gerhard and Moltmann narrate contradicting Christian homecomings, both were indirectly shaped by Plotinus—Gerhard through the mysticism of Augustine, and Moltmann through the panentheism of Hegel. This study is important in that it shows how religious narratives can be shaped by multiple traditions and lead to conflicting accounts of reality and hope with their corresponding socio-ecological ethical practices. It has implications for those who have found their identity, security, and meaning in a particular narrative and aim to better understand and critically evaluate its sources.
David Coe, PhD (2011) presented a paper entitled "Rediscovering Luther's Art of Preaching Anfechtung: Using Bible Characters to Prepare Hearers for the Fight of Faith" at Concordia Seminary's Theological Symposium in September.

David will also have an article in 2011's Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook, published by De Gruyter. The article is entitled "Kierkegaard's Forking for Extracts from Extracts of Luther's Sermons: Reviewing Kierkegaard's Laud and Lance of Luther."

**Dates and Deadlines …**

**MA Thesis**
- If the student wishes to participate in the commencement exercises of a given academic year, a completed penultimate copy of the thesis must be submitted both to the Graduate School and to the advisor (for distribution to the readers) by February 1.
- The advisor and readers then sign together the original thesis form, indicating their formal approval (none may sign until all are prepared to do so). “Sign-off” must take place no later than March 1 and must include the offering of all final recommendations for corrections both to the Graduate School and to the student.
- The student must then make all corrections recommended by the advisor and the readers and submit the corrected semi-final draft to the Graduate School no later than April 1.
- The student must submit the final form of the thesis, incorporating corrections indicated by the thesis secretary no later than May 1.

**STM Thesis**
- If the student wishes to participate in the commencement exercises of a given academic year, a completed penultimate copy of the thesis must be submitted both to the Graduate School and to the advisor (for distribution to the readers) by January 15.
- The advisor and readers then sign together the original thesis form, indicating their formal approval (none may sign until all are prepared to do so). “Sign-off” must take place no later than February 15 and must include the offering of all final recommendations for corrections both to the Graduate School and to the student.
- The student must then make all corrections recommended by the advisor and the readers and submit the corrected semi-final draft to the Graduate School no later than March 15.
- The student must submit the final form of the thesis, incorporating corrections indicated by the thesis secretary no later than April 15.
Comprehensive Exams for MA and STM

• Please check with the Graduate School early in the Spring Quarter to find out the last date for comprehensive exams for students who intend to participate in commencement.

PhD Dissertation

• If the student wishes to participate in the commencement exercises of a given academic year, a completed penultimate copy of the entire dissertation (bibliography included) must be submitted both to the Graduate School and to the Dissertation Supervisor (for distribution to the readers) by December 15. NB: the body of the dissertation may not be fewer than 200 nor more than 300 pages in length.

• The Dissertation Supervisor and readers then sign together the PhD Dissertation Final Approval Form, indicating their formal approval (none may sign until all are prepared to do so). This satisfies the “sign-off” requirement on the Notification of Intention to Graduate form. “Sign-off” must take place no later than January 15 and must include the offering of all final recommendations for corrections both to the Graduate School and to the student.

• The student must then make (if necessary) all corrections recommended by the Dissertation Supervisor and the readers and submit the corrected semi-final draft to the Graduate School no later than February 15.

• The student must submit the final form of the dissertation, incorporating corrections indicated by the Dissertation Secretary, no later than April 1.