



FALL 2020

## WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY SPOTLIGHT

### FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES BEGIN

We are thankful for a successful in-person start to the school year. Our current enrollment is 37 juniors, 41 middlers, 28 seniors, and 28 vicars serving throughout North America.

To accommodate government recommendations, six classrooms have been set up that allow for social distancing and chapel has been moved to the auditorium. All students, staff members, and professors are required to take their temperatures and conduct a health screening each day via the Campus Clear app.

At the start of the school year, Governor Evers' face covering order required that students, staff, and faculty wear face coverings whenever they are in a room or enclosed space when others are present. Everyone using the library is required to wear a face covering.

"We trust the Lord and we do what we can to be safe. It's not one or the other, but both. We know that the Lord is guiding all of this for his good purposes. The one who chose us in eternity to be his own and brought us to faith in Jesus in time will use this to bless us," said President Earle Treptow.

### HOLY LAND DIG PLANNED

The seminary is offering a 13-day archaeological study tour to the Holy Land from May 29 to June 10, 2021. Participants will work for a week at Kh. 'Auja el-Foqa, just north of Jericho. They'll also tour multiple locations in the Holy Land.

Though this tour is particularly arranged for WELS/ELS called workers and spouses, students at ministerial education schools, and Wisconsin Lutheran College students, lay people are also invited to participate.

Learn more at [www.wisluthsem.org](http://www.wisluthsem.org).

### FOUR PROFESSORS INSTALLED

In what just might be a seminary record, four faculty members were installed at the opening worship service on Aug. 24. Rev. David Bivens, a 2003 seminary grad, accepted the call to serve as professor of New Testament and Homiletics. Rev. Aaron Christie, WLS class of 1997, will serve as a Worship and Homiletics professor and Dean of Chapel. Rev. Nathan Ericson, a 2002 graduate of the seminary, was installed as Director of the Library and Educational Technology. Rev. Jonathan Micheel, WLS class of 1998, was installed as a professor of Homiletics and Church History.



Professor David Bivens



Professor Aaron Christie



Professor Nathan Ericson



Professor Jonathan Micheel



# PASTORAL STUDIES INSTITUTE

a partnership of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and WELS Joint Missions

Twenty-seven pastors from Kenya, Malawi, and Zambia answered test questions all morning. Professor Bradley Wordell and I scoured their answers, scored them, and ranked who did best.

What was this 12-page intake test about? Those who took it had applied to join our new cohort of pastors in a partnership Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) has with One Africa Team.

Partly we plan, as with two past cohorts, to grant Bachelor's degrees in Divinity (B.Div.) to pastors in our African fellowship. Degrees will come after the top twenty applicants take two more courses each in the Bible, church history and how it applies today, Bible doctrine, and practical shepherding under Christ. Professors from Martin Luther College and the seminary will teach many such classes.

Picture men with English Bibles open, taking the B.Div. intake test. They rode mini-buses to reach their country's testing location. Some traveled two days.

They love God's Word. They wrote this repeatedly. For example, the first test question: "What was your favorite class when you were training to be a pastor? Why?"

One pastor wrote, "Homiletics, because that is what I would be doing in my entire ministry as a pastor, preaching the Word of God in truth and after deep study."

Second question: "Looking back, what do you wish you had learned more when you trained to become a pastor? Why?"

The same pastor wrote, "Apologetics: Because in the field I meet with different people of different faiths more especially in Malawi. Many of them are the enemies of the gospel—e.g. Muslims and Jehovah's Witnesses who most of the time try to twist the truth of the Word of God."

Why do you want to be part of this program?

- "To advance my skills of studying the Word of God deeply."
- "To learn new approaches of sharing the gospel to different people of different ages since in this program there will be friends from other parts of Africa . . ."
- "To be a faithful and mature pastor in the Word of God so that I continue teaching and preaching even writing good sermons for my members, stick to the plain meaning of the Scripture all the time and be able to equip some members to be Sunday school and confirmation class teachers and good laymen so that we become many in the field for the gospel."

One of the last questions: "Give an example of one attack or affliction you have faced recently which, as Luther writes elsewhere, has made you 'experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how mighty, how comforting God's Word is, wisdom beyond all wisdom.'"

A Kenyan brother: "A major attack that godly pastors face is economical. Usually the lives of the pastors rest in the hands of Christians. At times the pastors are hard hit, but the encouragement we receive from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ gives strong comfort which surpasses the challenges, because in him we have everything, and if we miss some things here on earth he has promised us a good home with everything, as can be read from John 14."



## A DOUBLE SAN ANTONIO RETREAT CELEBRATION IN 2021

For nearly ten years Grow in Grace has been inviting pastors, along with their wives, to San Antonio to celebrate key ministry milestones. Unfortunately, we were unable to gather as a group this past spring. So, we are looking forward to 2021 as a year unlike any other when it comes to the Celebration retreats. In 2021, we will invite not only those who were scheduled to come in 2021, but also those classes who would have come in 2020.

**GROW IN  
GRACE**  
PARTNERING  
WITH PASTORS

The 2021 Celebration of Ministry retreats will take place in San Antonio from April 7 to 9 for the graduating classes of 1985, 1986, 1995, 1996, 2010, 2011, 2017, and 2018.

God alone knows if our plans will come to fruition. Should he allow them to, it will be a joyous celebration!

