



FALL 2022

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY SPOTLIGHT

ENROLLMENT

In answer to the prayers of his people for workers in his harvest, the Lord has granted an increase in enrollment. The school year began with 148 students enrolled at the seminary, the highest enrollment since the fall of 2010. The on-campus enrollment of 120 students is the highest since the fall of 2007. The incoming junior class, with 49 students, is the largest junior class since the fall of 2006.

CALLS

The seminary's governing board, in conjunction with WELS Joint Mission Council, is in the process of calling a new director of the Pastoral Studies Institute, to replace Prof. Jon Bare, who accepted the Lord's call to serve as president of Asia Lutheran Seminary. The governing board, in its February meeting, will be extending a call for a new professor. That will address a vacancy resulting from Prof. Paul Wendland's decision to retire at the end of the 2022-23 school year. By the end of the school year, he will have served 22 years at WLS, with 15 of those years as president.

MASTER SITE PLAN

During the past year, a committee worked with HGA to develop a master site plan. A primary feature of that plan is an educational center that will provide six new classrooms. The plans also call for a new gathering space attached to the auditorium/gymnasium. The old classrooms would then be converted into faculty offices, to facilitate collaboration between professors and encourage more regular interaction between students and faculty. Lord willing, the seminary will, in consultation and cooperation with the Synodical Council, conduct a feasibility study sometime during this school year to determine if, and when, a building project might be undertaken.

ACCREDITATION

The seminary faculty is actively working on a self-study as part of the process of seeking accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). The accrediting agency does not insist that institutions have certain policies, procedures, or practices in place. They have established standards that individual schools can fulfill in different ways, depending on the institution's mission. The self-study provides an opportunity to consider how the seminary can better carry out its mission of forming pastors to proclaim God's praise.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

God's people generously support the students at the seminary as they prepare for the high calling of pastoral ministry. Students receive assistance from their home congregations, from Salem Foundation, from other groups, and from the seminary's financial aid funds. On average, students receive support that exceeds the cost of tuition for the year. Students must still provide for their living expenses, whether in the dorm or in an apartment or home, but the generosity of God's people has been a great blessing to the seminary students preparing for pastoral ministry.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 19-27	Thanksgiving Break
December 11	Christmas Concert
January 9-20	Winterim
January 23	Second Semester begins
February 7-9	Mission and Ministry
March 2-3	Midterm Break
April 6-April 18	Easter Break
May 25	Call Day
May 26	Graduation

Over the past ten years, Pastor Partners has served recently graduated pastors by pairing them with a mentor pastor within their district. In order to equip the mentors, Grow in Grace provides training to mentor pastors in key areas where mentees can benefit the most, including time management/family, which was the primary focus for 2022.

Pastor Jeremiah Gumm, who has been part of Pastor Partners since 2012 and has served on the Mentor Leadership Team since its founding in 2013, shared his thoughts on the topic chosen for this year's training. "The reason we're focusing on these particular areas is the significance that a pastor's time management has in all of his other God-given callings. This is especially true for younger pastors, who are determining the importance of how they manage their ministry time to also allow for adequate time for those other callings. If the Lord has blessed them with a bride, they need to nurture their marriage. If the Lord has blessed them with a family, they need to lead their family. No matter their family callings, each pastor must attend to their physical and emotional well-being. For every pastor, the most important use of their time is with Jesus through a regular devotional life. In balancing these other callings, the Lord provides them with spiritual, physical, and emotional resiliency that strengthens their ability to carry out the work of ministry entrusted to them."



Pastor Partner Mentor Training takes place on campus each year following the seminary's symposium in September.

The Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is looking to train more native Spanish-speakers for pastoral ministry. Recently the WELS One Latin America (1LA) Team has developed a promising strategy for identifying good candidates.

The strategy is called Christ Academy (*Academia Cristo* in Spanish). It begins with a mobile app that offers four self-led courses at the Bible Information Class level of study. Over 500,000 people in Central and South America have downloaded the mobile app. The last course in this tier focuses on training students to share what they've learned with others. Students must complete all four courses before they are able to sign up for live classes.

Over 1,300 people have signed up for live classes where students work through thirteen Bible Institute level classes that are taught live online by a WELS missionary or national partner. At this level, a strong emphasis is placed on gathering a group of people to share the gospel message. Over 400 people have completed at least one of the live classes, and about seventy-five men have indicated that they have gathered a group.

The PSI Team is working with the 1LA Team to develop a seminary program for those seventy-five men and those who will follow them in the program. The WELS Joint Mission Council asked the 1LA Team to devise a pilot project using the Christ Academy app in existing WELS congregations in North America. We are pleased that Pastor Carl Leyrer, a veteran in the Christ Academy work, has accepted the call to be director of the pilot project and is beginning his work. Pastor Leyrer is assembling a network of twenty-four WELS pastor lieutenants who will help him introduce the Christ Academy mobile app in North America.

At the same time, we will not neglect recruitment from the existing WELS Spanish-speaking members in over 100 congregations. Almost twenty have regular services in Spanish and twelve more have Spanish Bible classes every week. There is so much activity in this area that the Board for Home Missions has a full-time Hispanic Outreach Consultant, Pastor Timothy Flunker. He has plenty to do, including the goal of assisting at least ten new congregations each year to reach out to Hispanic people in their communities.

We ask God's blessings on the work of Pastors Flunker and Leyrer. "A la verdad la mies es mucha, pero los obreros pocos. Rogad, pues, al Señor de la mies, que envíe obreros a su mies" (Matthew 9:37-38).

