

CONTENTS

Volume Twenty-Five, Number Three

FEATURES

4 The Future of Bioethics

By Dr. Gifford A. Grobien

Christians believe and confess that our bodies will not be free of infirmity in this natural life, this side of the resurrection. If bioethics is viewed only as a discipline for making good decisions about health, we will eventually find ourselves in despair at our inability to overcome sickness, debilitation, and death. Along the way, we will find ourselves tempted to take actions regarding human health and life far beyond the faithful and good stewardship delegated to us by God.

7 The Future of Higher Education

By Dr. Russel P. Dawn

By recognizing Truth, recovering it in our institutions, and maintaining it by intergenerational resolve, higher education can be harnessed for cultural renewal. Through all the changes in higher education that occupy our daily concerns—demographic shifts, online modality, demand for new programs—it’s the transcendent Truth that must define our future.

10 The Future of Parish Ministry

By Rev. Sean R. Kilgo

Many pastors in the last two years have found themselves doing things they never thought they’d have to do. But is this possibly all a distraction from what the future of parish ministry actually has in store for us? Perhaps, in order to get a picture of what the future of parish ministry will look like, we need to first turn our gaze backward to the Scriptures, and see what our Lord has instituted for the work of the ministry.

Also in this Issue:

What Does This Mean?	13
176th Academic Year Begins at CTSFW	14
CTSFW Events	16
Called to Serve	18
Faculty and Staff Updates	20
Alumni Focus: Rev. Gino Marchetti	21
The Future of Philanthropy	22
Profiles in Giving	24
Military Project	26
Beginning the Conversation	28
In the Word Bible Study	30



For the Life of the World

PUBLISHER

Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President

PUBLISHER ASSISTANT

Carrie M. O'Donnell

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Colleen M. Bartzsch

EDITOR

Rebecca S. Ahlersmeyer

COPY EDITOR

Trudy E. Behning

ART DIRECTOR

Steve J. Blakey

For the Life of the World is published by Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without the consent of the Editor of *For the Life of the World* by email at SeminaryRelations@ctsfw.edu or (260) 452-2150. Copyright 2021. Printed in the United States. Postage paid at Berne, Indiana.

For the Life of the World is mailed to all pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the United States and Canada and to anyone interested in the work of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Future of Par



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Our Lord has given certain tasks to His Church. She is to baptize all nations, teach all things, preach sound doctrine, proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins, absolve the penitent, and administer His body and blood to the saints of God. She is to hold herself captive to every word which proceeds from the mouth of God.

Try to imagine life in the year 2046. It's rather hard to do. If we've learned anything from the science fiction novels, movies, and shows of the past, there isn't a single one of us who can imagine what such a world will look like. After all, 25 years ago, no one would have imagined the amount of power one wields within the palm of their hand in a smart phone. Fifty years ago, no one would have imagined that the globe would be connected by a World Wide Web of information. And 100 years ago, no one would have imagined electric cars becoming not only a reality but also more and more commonplace.

ish Ministry

Sean R. Kilgo

It's hard enough to imagine what the world will look like in 25 years; how much more difficult is it to imagine what the future of parish ministry will look like? After all, many pastors, in the last two years, have found themselves doing things they never thought they'd have to do. But is this possibly all a distraction from what the future of parish ministry actually has in store for us? Perhaps, in order to get a picture of what the future of parish ministry will look like, we need to first turn our gaze backward to the Scriptures, and see what our Lord has instituted for the work of the ministry.

Our Lord has given certain tasks to His Church. She is to baptize all nations, teach all things, preach sound doctrine, proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins, absolve the penitent, and administer His body and blood to the saints of God. She is to hold herself captive to every word which proceeds from the mouth of God. She is to be a holy ark, floating through this world of sin and decay and death, preserving the faithful and bringing them into the eternity of the resurrection.

That's what our Lord gives us to do. And, God be praised, it is a task which is timeless. It doesn't matter whether the year is 146, 1046, or 2046, we are given to preach the same words, teach the same doctrine, and give the same gifts, for they come from the Lord who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We confess this truth in the preface of the Large Catechism, that the Lord continues to serve us day by day with the same gifts and same words: "For inasmuch as God Himself is not ashamed to teach these things daily, as knowing nothing better to teach, and always keeps teaching the same thing, and does not take up anything new or different, and all the saints know nothing better

or different to learn, and cannot finish learning this, are we not the finest of all fellows to imagine, if we have once read or heard it, that we know it all, and have no further need to read and learn, but can finish learning in one hour what God Himself cannot finish teaching, although He is engaged in teaching it from the beginning to the end of the world, and all prophets, together with all saints, have been occupied with learning it, and have ever remained pupils, and must continue to be such?" (LC Preface 16).

And while there will possibly be a myriad of external changes to what the Church's gathering looks like, and while there will possibly be changes in the administrative functions within the Church, we rejoice that the substance and form of the Church's worship remains unchanged as it has for thousands of years.

It is as the Church sings: "Change and decay in all around I see, O thou who changest not, abide with me." And because of the Lord's promise to us He does just that. He has not left us nor forsaken us. He will never abandon His beloved bride, the Church.

So, what will the future of parish ministry be? At its core it will be exactly as it has been in the past. Perhaps we will check in with our shut-ins via video chats, but we will still go to them with the Lord's Word and the Holy Sacrament. Maybe we'll have a direct line into hospitals to see how our sick or injured member is doing, and yet we will still go and visit them, pray with them and their family, and bring them the Sacrament.

We may get instant notices any time someone in our church has a child, and yet we will still bring that child in our arms to the font and clothe them



Photo: Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

So, what will the future of parish ministry be? At its core it will be exactly as it has been in the past. Perhaps we will check in with our shut-ins via video chats, but we will still go to them with the Lord's Word and the Holy Sacrament. Maybe we'll have a direct line into hospitals to see how our sick or injured member is doing, and yet we will still go and visit them, pray with them and their family, and bring them the Sacrament.



The heavens and earth will pass away, the grass will wither and the flower will fade, fads in the world will come and go, technologies will arise and disappear in our usages, but the Lord's Word and His gifts will never fade, will never change, will never be taken from us, and will never cease to be our chief aim in ministering to the saints of God. Even if the world should begin attacking the Church, and they were to "take our life, goods, fame, child, and wife," even if we are jailed, persecuted, or even killed, our ministry stays the same. Because our Jesus stays the same, and through that ministry the kingdom remains ours, no matter the date or circumstance.

in the blood of Christ with the waters of Holy Baptism. Confirmation may utilize various online learning formats, but we will still gather these children of God around the hearing and praying of the Scriptures and eventually to the altar to begin a lifetime of receiving the medicine of immortality. People may come up with new and novel ways of sinning, and yet we will still bring the proclamation of the Law and the comfort of the absolution to bear on that sin, regardless of its name.

Who knows, pastors might be driving hover cars with special "pastor" emergency lights to let them get to where they're going in a timely manner (one can dream). And yet, the reason for wherever they're going will be the same as the reason we go today, and the reason the Church has always gone: to bring the Word and gifts of Christ to the saints of God in order to comfort their consciences and bring them into everlasting life.

Luther reminds us of this wonderful reality in the Large Catechism where he notes: "Everything, therefore, in the Christian Church is ordered to the end that we shall daily obtain there nothing but the forgiveness of sin through the Word and signs, to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live here" (LC III 55).

And there's certainly things that none of us can imagine which await us as we journey forward. Yet, in the midst of it all, we know exactly what we will be doing in 25 years, in 50 years, in 100 years, indeed, in every year until our Lord's glorious return.

We will be baptizing, teaching, preaching, absolving, feeding, caring, and rejoicing. We will continue to float through the world in the safety of the Lord's ark. We will continue to be brought to faith and sustained in that faith by the work of the Holy Spirit. We will continue to be joined to Christ in a wonderfully mysterious way. And none of that will stop until the new heavens and the new earth are brought about in the Lord's return.

The heavens and earth will pass away, the grass will wither and the flower will fade, fads in the world will come and go, technologies will arise and disappear in our usages, but the Lord's Word and His gifts will never fade, will never change, will never be taken from us, and will never cease to be our chief aim in ministering to the saints of God. Even if the world should begin attacking the Church, and they were to "take our life, goods, fame, child, and wife," even if we are jailed, persecuted, or even killed, our ministry stays the same. Because our Jesus stays the same, and through that ministry the kingdom remains ours, no matter the date or circumstance.

So, whatever the world may hold in store for us in 25 years, we can face it boldly and without fear, for we have the same gifts, the same Lord, the same Spirit, the same Word, and the same faith, all of which will take us through those gray and later days and into the golden evening brightening in the west. 🏰

*The Rev. Sean R. Kilgo
(kilgoSr@gmail.com) serves as
pastor of Redeemer Lutheran
Church in Lawrence, Kansas.*

