

For the **Life of the World**

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

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**The Seminary Library:
A Servant of Christ and His People** By Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

Forming Servants into the Future By Rev. Brian M. Mosemann

Reaching Out Via Technology By Rev. William S. Johnson

CONTENTS

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FEATURES

6 **The Seminary Library— A Servant of Christ and His People** By Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

One need not reflect very long to embrace and to support the treasure of good, even God-given blessings that a seminary library generously provides for its students and also for the entire Church. From commentaries on Sacred Scripture to exposition of the creeds and confessions to the most practical and concrete guides for the Christian life, the seminary library is a priceless source of knowledge.

12 **Forming Servants into the Future** By Rev. Brian M. Mosemann

Hands-on experience is a key part of forming servants at CTS. During formation students have access to a diverse range of practical placements, evangelistic opportunities and church settings to develop new skills and sharpen old ones. The residential context is an environment where collaborative service and teamwork are encouraged. As adult disciples learning together, we seek to share our experiences, skills and insights with each other, all the while speaking words of our Lord of peace, comfort and joy to one another.

14 **Reaching Out Via Technology** By Rev. William S. Johnson

The rapid cultural change that comes with the dynamic nature of technology can present significant challenges to the Church, but it can offer us exciting opportunities as well. The message of the Cross is as relevant today as it has always been. By faithfully using new technologies to communicate our timeless message to address eternal needs, we can continue to reflect the light of Christ to a world in search of hope.

Also in this issue:

- What Does This Mean?p. 9**
- Teaching Chapel Dedicatedp. 21**
- CTS Faculty Teach in South Africap. 21**
- Reaching Out to the Sudanp. 22**
- CTS Celebrates Wyneken's
200th Birthdayp. 24**
- Bringing the Mercy of Christ
to the War Zonep. 26**
- Bible Study—Your New Pastorp. 30**

Reaching Out Via Technology

By Rev. William S. Johnson

The rapid technological change of the last few decades has caused dramatic shifts in the ways we obtain information, communicate with each other and minister in our world. The seminary had a long tradition of being engaged on the now forgotten systems like Gopher, which were precursors to the Web itself, but in 1996 CTS took further steps into this brave new digital world with our first website.



The college graduating class of 2011 will be the first to have never known a day when the Web did not exist. For them, there will always have been .coms and .nets. They will always have interacted with the world using the Web as a part of their spectrum of communication.

As the Web has changed from a one-way transfer of information to a medium for interaction, the seminary has kept pace. The seminary home page has links to all of our social networking initiatives, including Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and more. Additionally, President Wenthe has produced regular podcasts with updates on life and ministry at CTS.

As the years have passed, the site has been revised and expanded to allow greater access to information about the seminary and to its vast theological resources. By 2001, the site had moved from a simple collection of links to library resources to a full-fledged

website with links to seminary news and events, academic programs, admission information and a much expanded list of resources available from Walther Library, including resources such as Project Wittenberg and Pro Bono Ecclesia.

Today the seminary website is a central hub for news and information about the seminary and other events from our

The development on library resources hasn't stopped either! In late 2010 the seminary introduced media.ctsfw.edu, our new media hub for articles, audio recordings and video materials. There one can search the full text of *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, *Concordia Theological Monthly* and other theological journals, find chapel sermons for the last several years, listen to past events and symposia, and even enjoy over 2,500 hours of video from courses created by the faculties of both seminaries.

Changes in technology have affected the very fabric of our wider culture as well. The college graduating class of 2011 will be the first to have never known a day when the Web did not exist. For them, there will *always* have been .coms and .nets. They will always have interacted with the world using the Web as a part of their spectrum of communication. Even more than those before them they will see the world as an ever-changing milieu of ideas and information in which nothing is certain and few things are stable.

As the Church, though, we know that not only does certainty exist and that some things really do last, but that some of those things, such as life itself, are *eternal*. The question then becomes a missionary one: how do we best use the language, story, music, customs and traditions of the digital native to enable


them to hear the Gospel message and come to know the eternal God of Israel? How do we step into a world of bits and bytes and reveal the cross of Christ?

The first step is to realize that there is no single solution. Getting a website for your church will not have your pews bustling with 18–30-year-olds any more than installing a telephone in the narthex 100 years ago would have done the same. The Web is simply one more way of communicating, though it is a large part of the spectrum of communication for many today. Congregations need to be on the Web, but it's not enough to assume that it begins and ends with a website.

More important than the communications format or tools is the message we share with them. For generations who have from the beginning of their life been fed the false gospel of tolerance and self-esteem above all, it becomes difficult to communicate to them our guilt before a holy God in terms of simple transgression or even traditional courtroom style language. It's simply too easy to take shelter in arguments of relative morality for the Law to take root in them.

Instead, consider changing the metaphor. As the world has grown more and more connected, digital natives have grown more and more lonely and conscious of the ways in which their own lives and relationships are fractured and broken. As they become unavoidably aware of their own sin-sick nature, it falls to us to bring them to the only place of healing we know or shall ever know: the cross of Christ.

As we seek to minister more and more in a web 2.0 world, it becomes essential to listen to those in our communities to know the places where their hearts and minds inevitably dwell. These are places for the Church to begin ministering to those in need around us. While we acknowledge that people will rarely, if ever, come to us and confess their true need, that of a Savior from their sins, they will nonetheless let us know in what ways we might feed them, clothe them and visit them to gain an opportunity to address the deeper, eternal needs.

The rapid cultural change that comes with the dynamic nature of technology can present significant challenges to the Church, but it can offer us exciting opportunities as well. The message of the Cross is as relevant today as it has always been. By faithfully using new technologies to communicate our timeless message to address eternal needs, we can continue to reflect the light of Christ to a world in search of hope. 



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Interested in learning more

about using web 2.0 in your church? Look for resources on our website at www.ctsfw.edu/web2.0. If you're interested in more hands on training, stop by the CTS booth at this year's synodical convention July 10-13, and we'll walk you through how to post your own podcast from the convention itself! Not only will we help you record and post a single podcast, but we'll help you learn the basics of how to get set up in your own parish to start using this exciting new medium to reach your parish and community. As a special opportunity for *For Life of the World* readers, if you'd like to reserve a 30-minute slot, e-mail me at Bill.Johnson@ctsfw.edu and we'll get you signed up even before the convention begins.

