



JOURNALING THROUGH THE SCRIPTURE

Wondrasch 'lives' in his journaling

By Connor Wondrasch

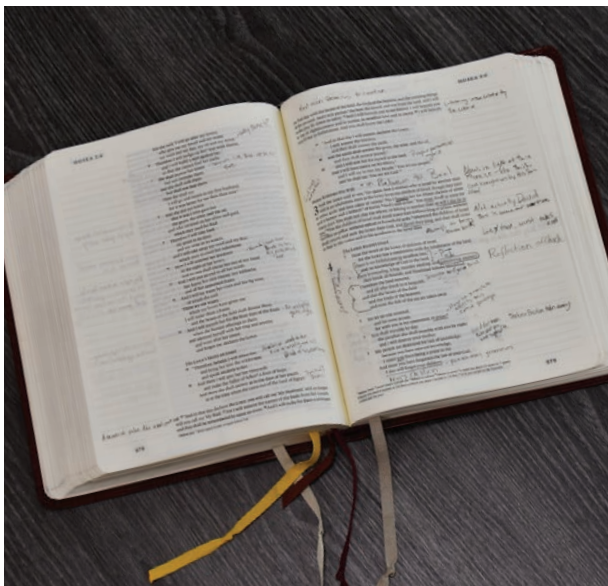
Orientation is a special time at Concordia Seminary. New students come to the Seminary and spend their first full week getting familiar with the campus, with their classmates and professors, and learning what their student years will look like. There are a couple of moments during that week where groups and organizations bless seminarians with gifts of gratitude and encouragement for their Seminary journey. One such gift is journaling Bibles. I received one from the Seminary Guild when I went through Orientation.

We were encouraged by our professors to lean into this great gift and make use of it whenever we were studying for classes, reading for personal devotion, or preparing to preach or teach. I took that advice to heart. The journaling Bible that I received in 2017 has been the Bible I use most often. It contains my notes from Seminary classes, preparation for Bible studies, personal devotions and reflections, and notes for preaching. You could say that I live in this Bible, and my hope is that through this process, it lives in me.

One of my favorite experiences is coming to a page in this Bible that has a lot of marks, where the page is no longer smooth and blank, but has notes and impressions. When I come upon those pages, I know that the opposite is also true. The Scriptures have made a deep impression on me. Whether I find a simple question mark on a verse

that didn't seem to make sense the last time I read it, or a great idea from a professor or friend, each mark in the journaling Bible leaves an impression that is not easily erased.

Connor Wondrasch earned a Master of Divinity in 2022 and is currently a Ph.D. student at Concordia Seminary.



Connor Wondrasch uses his journaling Bible from the Sem Guild frequently.

News Bits

Upcoming luncheon dates set

Mark your calendars for the 2023-24 luncheon dates:

- Sept. 8, 2023
- Oct. 6, 2023 (Brunch)
- Dec. 8, 2023
- Feb. 2, 2024
- March 15, 2024
- May 3, 2023

Registration information will be mailed to you at a later date.

Coming soon: Guild pins!

Great news! We have created a new Sem Guild pin that will be available this fall!

The 1-inch pins will be available for \$5 each beginning at our September luncheon.

Why wear the pin?

- You can show pride in supporting the Guild, its projects and our commitment to supporting the Seminary's mission and its students.
- Just by wearing the pin, you can encourage conversation with others as you explain what the Guild is and what it does. (Find the list of projects for this year on the back page.)

Journaling Bibles

Seminary Guild representatives were very happy to attend the Information Fair during Orientation in August. They staffed a table stacked with journaling Bibles. As new students entered the room filled with tables from various entities, the Sem Guild women greeted the students warmly and engaged them in conversation. Giving a friendly welcome, the women found each new student's name on a list and provided him or her with a leather-bound journaling Bible. Some students were quite surprised, even speechless, to be presented with this Bible, and all were very appreciative of receiving it as a gift from the Sem Guild.

Willing to Crawl

The Seminary Guild exists only to support Concordia Seminary and its students. The Guild invests its time and money into those individuals who will take the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into all parts of the globe — here and abroad. We consider Martin Luther's words about recruiting and training pastors: "A man ought to be willing to crawl on his hands and knees to the ends of the earth to be able to invest his money so gloriously well." Luther zealously described how highly honored and gloriously blessed is the vocation of a pastor that we should count ourselves fortunate to have an opportunity to participate in this support.

From the Guild President



"Sharing the Gospel—Sharing our Lives" is the theme for the Seminary's 2022-23 academic year. It's also the Seminary Guild's annual theme. Here are some recent examples of how I have experienced this theme:

- The bishop of the Lutheran Church in Ukraine visited our church on a Sunday morning to talk about pursuing further connections with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). In speaking to our Bible class, he expressed thankfulness to the LCMS for providing him with body armor to use while pursuing his ministry in Ukraine. It has already spared him from serious injury once.
- A member of the Concordia Seminary Guild Board was excited to show me a check for \$1,000 — the proceeds from her church's Christmas bazaar. They achieved their fundraising goal! She presented the Guild treasurer with the check for the project fund at our last Guild luncheon.
- My late husband, an LCMS clergy member (his funeral was the day of the Guild Advent candlelight luncheon), often said that he hoped to leave this world a little better than when he entered it. This he did through his published books, his professorial roles, and his preaching and speaking. He, in turn, was served by fellow clergy as his health declined through in-person and phone visits and support.

Through the generosity of Seminary Guild members to the project fund this year, two additional projects were added to the 2022-23 goal — \$800 for refreshments at the Seminary graduation reception and \$2,500 for needed improvements and renovations to the children's playground on campus that Seminary families use.

What's your experience? I'm certain that each of you has personal examples to share in keeping with this year's theme, "Sharing the Gospel—Sharing our Lives." Your participation in the Seminary Guild certainly demonstrates this!

Lord's blessings,
Carol Schmidt

FUN FACTS

Did you know?

Concordia Seminary has:

- 37 faculty members
- 91 staff members
- 601 students in the 2022-23 Academic Year
- 13,000+ alumni
- 13 endowed professorships
- 5 academic degrees offered

LWML dinner, presentation

Every year, the Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) hosts a dinner at each of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod seminaries for second-year students who will be going out on vicarages and internships the following school year. On March 6, 2023, with thanks and praise to our Lord, 90 students, faculty, special guests and LWML members dined at Koburg Hall on the beautiful Concordia Seminary campus.

Through these dinners, LWML takes the opportunity to thank the faculty and students for their dedication in service to our Lord and introduce them to LWML's programs. During a short video produced by the LWML Church Workers in Mission Committee, the students learned about the many free, doctrinally reviewed LWML resources they can use in their ministries. They also heard about the prayers, mission grants and donations LWML joyfully gives in support of the seminaries and students each year.

As the students arrived this year, they were greeted by LWML volunteers and presented with a gift bag that included information about LWML resources, gifts from the LWML store and a Concordia Publishing House (CPH) gift card. The faculty, students and guests enjoyed a short reception followed by a buffet dinner.

Vice President of Organizational Resources Marie Chow encouraged the students to check out the LWML website for resources. Closing out the evening, Public Relations Director Susan Donnelly gave away LWML products to students, including Deaconess Studies student Ashley



From left: LWML Missouri District President Marian Hoehner, LWML Public Relations Director Susan Donnelly and LWML Missouri District Recording Secretary Hannah Jackson.

Wangerin, who came closest to guessing the amount in the Mite Box.

Joining the LWML Board of Directors to welcome students were LWML Missouri District President Marian Hoehner and Missouri District Recording Secretary Hannah Jackson.

LWML Executive Director Vanessa Johnson and Marketing and Development Coordinator Patti Miller assisted in the event.

How you can support the Sem

By Courtney Sielfleisch



Your prayers and financial gifts are essential to the success of the Seminary's mission to prepare the church's future pastors, deaconesses, missionaries and teachers.

There are many ways to give and to create a lasting impact on the lives and ministries of our future church leaders. In addition to gifts of cash, I'd like to share a few other types of giving opportunities that may be of interest to you:

- Designating the Seminary in your will or trust
- Donating appreciated securities, including stocks or bonds
- Gifting part or all of your unused retirement assets such as a gift from your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), pension or other tax-deferred plan
- Donating a life insurance policy to the Seminary
- Recommending a grant from your donor-advised fund (DAF) to Concordia Seminary

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about ways to support the Sem, please contact me at 314-505-7352 or sielfleischc@cs1.edu. I also attend the luncheons and would love to meet you — please stop and say hi!

Courtney Sielfleisch is a senior gift officer at Concordia Seminary.

Project Update

One project that was part of our 2022-23 project fund was the playground located near the Woods married student apartments. The Guild added \$2,500 to the fund to update the playground.

The updates included replacing corroded steel connectors, platforms, and swing seats and chains. New mulch was added and several pieces of equipment also were repainted.

The improvements were long overdue as the last overhaul was completed a decade ago. The improvements, more of a refresh, were made to give the Seminary time to assess the play equipment needs for the campus.

Currently, more than 20 on-campus families with children use the playground. One of them is Mahli Alberson, daughter of second-year student Davin Alberson. "It is way better now," she said. "It's easier to climb on. It's way more fun than it used to be. I spend more time at the playground now."



Children play on the updated playground located in the Woods.



The refreshed play structure near the Woods married student apartments.

Meeting with concluding students

President Carol Schmidt, pictured below, spoke with the Seminary's concluding student class during a meeting held on campus April 18. She told the students about the Seminary Guild and the many ways its members support seminarians and the Seminary. She encouraged the students to share the Guild's mission with their new congregations.



Concluding students, bottom, learn more about the Seminary Guild from its president, Carol Schmidt, above.

Dominican Republic mission education trip

By *Tori Egger*

“From now on, for the rest of my life, when I tell a congregation that they are not alone and belong to a larger church body all over the world, I will have you in mind. The worldwide church will not be an unknown, faceless people. It will be you, whom the kingdom of God has come near. It’s another way that Jesus gives us peace. Amen.”

These words concluded a chapel sermon given by fourth-year seminarian Nick Palmer to brother Seminary students, sister deaconess students and fellow church workers at Concordia the Reformer Seminary in Santiago, Dominican Republic, near the end of a weeklong mission education trip in January 2023. Palmer was on a team that included eight seminarians, one deaconess student, five spouses of students and me.

The trip took us to two cities in the Dominican Republic: first Santo Domingo and then Santiago, the headquarters for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) missions in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Being the only fourth-year student on the team, Palmer was quickly voted the one to give sermons during the trip. In the weeks preceding the trip, other responsibilities were divided up as well. The focus was on what the team would do and how it would give. There were skits to write, songs in Spanish to learn, a costume to find and craft supplies to gather. But no one expected how much would be given to them in return. As students and spouses watched and participated in the Lord’s work on the ground throughout the week, each was greatly encouraged in their faith. Each experienced new things to try in ministry back at home. Some began to consider the possibility of serving the Lord in remote areas. All felt themselves stretching and growing, and all basked in the joy of Christian community. The entire team fell in love with the Dominican Republic and its people.

Erin Mackenzie, LCMS regional volunteer coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, planned a trip



Deaconess Studies student Karyn Naber, left, and Seminary wife, Tami Martin, center, play games with public school students after a Bible story presentation.

full of service and learning opportunities. On several occasions the team presented a Bible lesson in Spanish to children in public schools and private Lutheran schools. They hammed up the skits in these lessons, which were a hit among kids and staff alike.

The group visited a nearby psychiatric hospital and rehabilitation center and played baseball and bingo with the residents. It was here they learned how care has drastically improved for people who are disabled, a direct result of LCMS mercy work in the area. One afternoon, the team walked to a local baseball field to lead a devotion for a large group of boys, professional baseball hopefuls, and were invited back that evening to play ball. Another afternoon was spent in a pickup basketball game with neighborhood boys, many of whom have been brought from the court into the church. The group ate meals with missionaries and Concordia

the Reformer seminarians, either in their homes or at the seminary, providing opportunities for new relationships to grow. Some of the team made home visits with local pastors and seminarians. Others attended a Bible study on the sidewalk in front of a church member’s home. For all, there were presentations to learn about the mission and its work. And last but not least, the team worshiped with their Dominican brothers and sisters, using the newly released Spanish Lutheran hymnal. Gathering around Word and Sacrament was a highlight for each participant.

That blessed gathering will last to eternity. Concordia Seminary students and spouses will hold those faces dear until their next meeting. Thanks be to God for His endless mercies and for the blood of Jesus that unites His church.

Tori Egger is the first lady of Concordia Seminary.



Seminary wife Joanna Wescoatt, right, helps a Lutheran school student with a craft related to the day’s Bible lesson.



Seminary student Wesley Johnson, right, teaches young Lutheran students to fold paper boats after teaching a lesson about Jesus calming the storm.

Concordia Seminary Guild Annual Membership Dues/Project Fund Donations

Annual dues: \$15 per individual, \$25 per organization

A yearly Guild membership is from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. Have you paid your dues for 2023-24?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ zip _____

Phone (home) _____ (cell) _____

Email _____

Congregation affiliation _____

Individual membership (\$15) _____

Organization membership (\$25) _____

I would like to donate to the 2023-24 projects:

\$100 \$75 \$50 \$25

Other \$ _____

TOTAL: _____

Please make check payable to Concordia Seminary Guild and send to: *Mary Jane Autry, 1160 London Circle Lane, Apt. 206, Fenton, MO 63026*

Membership dues: Please make certain that your Guild membership is **up-to-date** so you’ll continue to receive the *Guild Lines*.

Project donations: Project donations will be used for any of the Guild projects unless they are specified for a particular project.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Greetings from our Adopt-A-Student seminarians

The Seminary Guild supports four students throughout their time at the Seminary through direct-to-student aid. Here is the latest from this year's students:

Meet our first-year seminarian, Tim Handrick



It has been seven months since our family moved to St. Louis and we certainly have been wrapped up and loved by so many people. The professors have gone above and beyond to mentor and provide support outside of class. The community of students on campus have bonded together and we are developing relationships that will carry through for a lifetime. Our wonderful field work congregation (St. John's in Arnold) has welcomed us in as part of their family and supported us graciously. We continue to cherish our time in St. Louis as this city is such a wonderful place for a family to explore. Ps. 133:1 reminds us "how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" This unity is evident in many ways as we center our lives around Jesus Christ revealed to us in Scripture and heard through the public proclamation of the Gospel. As I continue on in my journey toward the pastoral ministry, I am thankful for the unity I have with the sisters in Christ who make up the Seminary Guild. Your support is encouraging and allows our family to focus on the important things in life, rather than worrying about how we will take care of tuition expenses. Please keep our family in your prayers, that we would remain physically healthy, that we would continue growing closer relationally and that we would remain thankful every day for these formative years of our lives at the Seminary.

Rob Choate/second-year seminarian



My name is Rob Choate and I am in my second year at Seminary. I currently am enjoying a course load that includes Pastoral Care, History of the Reformation, Homiletics 2, and Church and World (systematics). My new wife, Alyssa, and I are enjoying the last few months before we receive a vicarage assignment. It is hard to remain focused with such exciting news on the horizon, but we are doing our best. Some things that we have enjoyed this year are the basketball team, Prof'n Steins and continuing to build friendships with other seminarians. While we will miss our friends and the life we have built here in St. Louis, we are looking forward to ministry wherever God places us. We are praying for the women of the Sem Guild, and we are so thankful for the contributions you make to the seminarians and to the Seminary. You truly embody what it means to share our lives and share the Gospel and we give thanks for you and your ministry.

thoughts. Interacting with each of them, including some non-Christians, is forming me into a better pastor and a better Christian as a whole. Living Savior has been able to provide me with many things, including opportunities to preach the Gospel, teach confirmation to youth who thirst for Christ, and learn more about the inner workings of a church and how it functions from day to day. Being originally from Seymour, Ind., I did not know anyone in Virginia when I made the move. Yet, I am happy to say that I have not only made friends here, but also many of my friends back home visited me and say "hi" (perhaps just using me for free lodging to go see D.C!). Regardless, I am enjoying my time out here immensely, and none of this would be possible if it was not for the Seminary Guild. Your financial support along with your prayers carries me along in my journey through vicarage and for this I am forever grateful! Thanks once again, and may the Lord be with you.

Luke Onken, vicar/third-year seminarian



Greetings again in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! My year on vicarage has continued in beautiful Fairfax Station, Va., at Living Savior Lutheran Church. I consider myself extremely blessed to be able to conduct ministry in such a unique setting, a suburb of Washington, D.C. Here in Fairfax Station, we have a variety of people coming from all walks of life, each with their own sets of ideas and

Jacob Moore/fourth-year seminarian



I was born and raised in St. Louis and grew up going to Abiding Savior Lutheran Church. My Bachelor of Arts was earned at Southeast Missouri State University in 2018 and then I began my studies at Concordia Seminary in the summer of 2019. My wife, Hope, and I were married in July 2021 and we are blessed with two children, Arthur (10 months), and one in utero. We are very excited to receive our call and serve Christ's church. My family and I are extremely grateful for the support and prayers of the Seminary Guild!

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Adopted service projects for the 2022-23 academic year:

Journaling Bibles for incoming students*	\$1,500
Adopt-A-Student*	4,000
Music arts*	2,000
After chapel coffee time	1,000
Campus landscaping*	4,000
Playground updates*	2,500
Student athletics and fitness center*	3,000
New student Orientation*	2,500
Commencement reception	800
Total	\$21,300

* Completed projects

For donations or dues, make checks payable to Concordia Seminary Guild and send to: Mary Jane Autry, 1160 London Circle Lane, Apt. 206, Fenton, MO 63026.

Want to donate, learn more or become a member?
Visit us online at csledu/semguild or on Facebook by searching Concordia Seminary Guild.



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