



THE TRINITY CONNECTION

Spring 2021, Issue 1, Volume 1
Print Edition



Celebrating the Stories of Students, Alumni, Neighbors, and Friends.

Celebrating Our Ongoing Work & Giving Thanks

Picture an average morning at the seminary. Students walk across Sheridan Avenue to class. The parking lot fills. Office doors open, and friendly chatter fills the hallways. Lecture and conversation fills classrooms, and students spread out in Hamma Library. Music fills the air as musicians prepare for morning worship. Everything from class to chapel is modified in some way this semester, because life in a pandemic has to be. But we are still together -- sometimes in person, sometimes remotely, and always in spirit!

The cumulative experience of seminary is transformative, and it is supposed to be! Learning introduces knowledge, and even more importantly it contributes to formation. Facts, stories, and ideas are read and heard, but they are not passively accumulated. They are internalized by individuals who are part of communities, and they are interpreted in light of our lived, bodily experiences. They are understood in the context of the church's history, mission, and purpose and the ongoing work of the Spirit among us. They are held up against the chaos, destruction, beauty, and life found in the world around us. They shape our prayers and our work. They mold our dreams, and they recast our visions.

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

IN THIS ISSUE

Student Spotlight:
Andrew Thompson
(M.Div. '23)

Donor Spotlight: Zion
Lutheran Church,
Waterville, OH

Introduction to the
Bible and other
summer **ONLINE**
courses

Register for 2021
Nelson W. Trout
Lectures

capital.edu/trinity/

Trinity's mission is "forming leaders for Christ's Church at work in the world," and every dimension of seminary life is oriented toward this purpose. Our students are educated and formed by Trinity's faculty and staff -- and also by our alumni, neighbors, and friends.

The Trinity Connection is a new online, quarterly newsletter of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University. In it, we will celebrate our community and the work of its many participants in advancing the mission of the seminary.

Looking All Over, Then Walking Across the Street

Student Spotlight: Andrew Thompson (M.Div. '23)

By Rev. Todd Mills, Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement

Andrew Thompson is a second-year Master of Divinity student at Trinity who came to seminary right after completing his undergraduate degree at Capital University. In retrospect, his transition to the seminary community seems obvious and natural, but in reality, it was a step taken after long periods of discernment, mentorship from his pastor, support from his community, and a hundred "little" conversations and interactions that helped him come to experience Trinity as **home**.

As a high school student looking at colleges, Andrew put "family atmosphere" on the "must have" list. After visiting several institutions, he felt drawn to Capital University, which is ultimately where Andrew earned his undergraduate degree in Religion and Philosophy with minors in both Worship Ministries and Youth Ministry and Christian Education.

Like many first-year students, when Andrew first arrived on Capital's campus, he leaned into friendships and student life. By the end of his first year, Andrew was volunteering as a musician in undergraduate chapel ministries. By his sophomore year, Andrew was leading worship.

College afforded Andrew ample opportunities to grow, expand, challenge, and build on the foundation of faith that was formed in his childhood. Andrew found Capital to be a safe place to ask big questions, encounter faith traditions that were both alike and dissimilar from his own United Methodist background, and listen earnestly. He processed what he learned and encountered through mentoring relationships with faculty and staff, especially University Pastor Drew Tucker. Through it all, vocation and faith began to blend, and pre-seminary activities became important sites of formation.

Discernment became a more formal process over time. Epiphany Lutheran Church in Pickerington, Ohio became Andrew's home congregation. At Epiphany, Andrew connected with the contemporary worship service, finding welcome and acceptance in the congregation and a mentor in Pastor Brad Gee (M.Div. '87).

When it became time to formally begin looking at seminaries, Trinity was always under consideration, but looking at other schools was a necessary step for Andrew. He felt he needed to know what was out there and how other institutions would be able to form him to serve the church. Andrew visited other schools, applied to other schools, and was accepted at other schools. He was offered generous scholarships, housing stipends, and living stipends at other outstanding institutions. Through his exploration of other schools, he encountered rich and diverse expressions of community.



Andrew Thompson is a second-year Master of Divinity student at Trinity

With an abundance of options, Andrew weighed the possibilities carefully, and ultimately his decision to choose Trinity had to do with both pragmatism and formation. While Trinity could not match the high living stipends offered by some other schools, our 2+2 program, which features two years on-campus and two years on internship, offered its own financial advantage. With housing provided, internship stipend, and scholarships to cover tuition expenses, most Trinity students on internship are in sustainable and comparably healthy financial positions. Secondly, Andrew had spoken with current students about the two-year internship at Trinity and heard, over and over again, about the growth and transition that happens when interns stay in place for a second year.

At the end of the day, Trinity embodied the “family atmosphere” that first brought Andrew to Bexley as an eighteen-year-old. He experienced Trinity as a hospitable community, one that cultivates belonging, and it was a place that he wanted to be.

And so, after a good and healthy discernment process, which necessarily involved looking all over, Andrew walked across College Avenue, from Capital to Trinity. He made these steps with the help of teachers, mentors, pastors, donors, and friends, and for them, he is deeply grateful.

At seminary, Andrew has been both challenged and supported. He has grown along the way, developing as a leader, becoming more and more the person God has called him to be. The transformation process is not complete, but it is underway, it is exciting, and it is something we celebrate.

Trinity embodied the “family atmosphere” that first brought Andrew to Bexley as an eighteen-year-old.



Intro to the Bible and Other Summer Classes

This summer, Trinity is excited to host three (online!) summer classes, which are open to everyone, including those discerning seminary, professionals, musicians, and clergy.

Among this summer’s course offerings are Introduction to the Bible, Educational Ministry, and Leading the Church’s Song. These dynamic learning opportunities may be taken for academic credit or may be audited for continuing education.

BL 1011 Introduction to the Bible

June 7 - 25, The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn, 3 credit hours

Covers the whole of the Bible. Students will experience the Bible deeply using music, art, plays, and hymns. This study will ground students in the arc of the biblical narrative, helping them to see the Bible as a Story that has a beginning, middle, and end.

MN 3041 Educational Ministry

June 6 - 11, Dr. Mary Hess, 3 credit hours

An examination of the theological and educational foundations and basic questions that shape the congregation’s ministry of education. Attention will be given to developing teaching skills and to the leadership dimensions of teaching. Includes in-class teaching experience.

MN 2174 Leading the Church’s Song

June 14 - 18, Prof. May Schwarz, 2 credit hours

Explores the impact of music on the mission of the Church. Students discover new ways of singing the psalms, identify criteria for hymn selection, and lead the Church’s song. Examine musician clergy partnership models and explore strategies for implementation. Recognize why and when the Church’s music ministry may be an arena for conflict. Develop your philosophy of Church music.

For more details, including registration information, check out the Summer Learning Opportunities at Trinity webpage, which is accessible from capital.edu/trinity/. Please reach out to A.J. Minney, Program Assistant for Academics and Contextual Education, with questions (aminney2@capital.edu, 614-236-6131)

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.



Receiving, Discerning, and Giving - Together

Donor Spotlight: Zion Lutheran Church in Waterville, Ohio

By Rev. Todd Mills, Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement

Katie Graf was an elementary school music teacher in Waterville, Ohio, and her husband, Doug, worked as a school custodian. Katie was the only child in a prominent local family and was cut off for marrying Doug, the son of a local blacksmith. She was compelled by love and chose it over wealth. The couple built their lives in Waterville and faithfully attended Zion Lutheran Church, which became their family.

By the early 2000s, Katie's mother had passed on, and per the family's investment policy, as next of kin, \$10M passed to Katie. At this point, Katie was 82 years old and receiving care for Alzheimer's disease in a residential facility. Out of love for his wife and with intentional discernment, Doug passed \$2.7M of the gift on to the community they considered their next of kin, their church.

While a gift like this does not come along every day, the challenges and trials of faithfully stewarding the church's resources are timeless. Our communities are called to "proclaim the good news," to "let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke," to share our "bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor" into our homes (Luke 4:18, Isaiah 58:6-7). This heavy call not only requires material resources, but also leadership; planning; prayer; and the quiet, long-term, faithful work required for transformation.

Zion's Senior Pastor, Steve Bauerle (M.Div. '82), was keenly aware of his community's need for wisdom, and he led the church and its leaders in a yearlong discernment process. They talked amongst themselves, with other churches, with leaders across the ELCA and beyond, but most importantly they listened.

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

Our communities are called to "proclaim the good news," to "let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke," to share our "bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor" into our homes.

LUKE 4:18, ISAIAH 58:6-7



Pastor Steve and Amy Bauerle



Pastor Steve 's Children's Sermom



“Be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The community felt called to what they called a “reverse tithe.”

ACTS 1:8

Pastor Steve says that Acts 1:8 became Zion’s guidepost. Jesus said, “Be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The community felt called to what they called a “reverse tithe.” They kept 10 percent and gave the 90 percent away.

With the help of a dedicated endowment board the congregation votes on 20 projects each year in several different areas, which they call ‘buckets’ for support:

- **Jerusalem:** Waterville and the surrounding community
- **Judea and Samaria:** Toledo and Northwest Ohio
- **Ends of the Earth:** Ministries in the Northwestern Ohio Synod, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, as well as a host of other domestic and international ministry and service organizations



According to Melissa Firestone, a former Trinity board chair, the seminary is one of Zion’s designated gift areas because they want to support “disciples making disciples, who make disciples...” The church has given away over \$1.5M since the endowment began.

Because of Zion’s 2021 gift, **every Trinity student taking their full-time, summer Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experience will have their fees covered 100%**. CPE is a powerful formational experience and a required component of our Master of Divinity students’ education. Historically CPE has been a source of financial strain for our students. When they pay the \$700 or so in program fees out-of-pocket, our students pull on their limited savings or borrow, which makes the summer more stressful and increases the need to borrow to cover living expenses in the fall semester. This year, thanks to the generosity and vision of one congregation, this expense has been fully covered.

In previous years, Zion’s gifts have supported the seminary summer sampler for high school students, travel immersion classes, and other strategic initiatives.

For our students, the \$227,000 that Zion has sent to Trinity over the years has made all the difference in the world. Because of the church’s gifts, students have found their way to seminary, have encountered powerful truths, have learned and grown, and have left equipped as servant-leaders for “Christ’s church at work in the world” in more ways than anyone could have anticipated!

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

2021 Nelson W. Trout Lectures

Do You Want to be Well? 'Cause Wholeness Ain't No Trifling Thing

This year's online event will take place on April 29 and 30th. The keynote speaker is the Rev. Dr. Beverly Wallace, womanist scholar and professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Additional speakers include Ms. Denise Rector (Ph.D. candidate at Lutheran Theological School of Chicago studying womanist theology, race, and history), the Rev. Kevin Vandiver (Ph.D. candidate at Princeton Theological Seminary studying Practical Theology), and Pastor Brian Foulks (Ph.D. candidate at Chicago Theological Seminary studying Black Religious Thought and Culture).

Also alongside this year's Trout event we are honored to host Discernment Conversations, open to persons of African Descent, which will be facilitated by our own Rev. Dr. Kevin Dudley and feature the Rev. Yehiel Curry (Bishop, Metropolitan Chicago Synod), the Rev. Orinda Hawkins (Pastor, St. Philip Lutheran Church, Columbus), the Rev. Brenda Smith (former director of the ELCA Book of Faith Initiative), and the Rev. Seth Gaiters (Ph.D. Student at OSU.)

Register and check out the full program details at capital.edu/trout-lectures/

Stay in Touch

Reach out to us!

web: capital.edu/trinity/

email: TrinityDean@capital.edu

phone: 614-236-6131

facebook: facebook.com/TrinityLutheranSeminary



Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University has adopted an affirmation of welcome to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and is recognized as Reconciling in Christ (RIC).

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

OTHER NEWS & NOTES

Trinity Sunday Service

Trinity Sunday is coming soon (May 30th), and the seminary is producing a shareable virtual service as a gift to the wider church.

This non-Eucharistic service will include a sermon by Dean Kleinhans, music, and a full Service of the Word.

Congregations are welcome to use all or any part of the service. Stay tuned for details!

Commencement

Trinity's 191st Commencement Ceremony will be in person this year.

The ceremony will occur on Saturday, May 22nd at 2:00pm



capital.edu/trinity/