

Report to the Synods
From
Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon

Mark 8:17-21 ¹⁷ And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?" ¹⁸ Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." ²⁰ "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." ²¹ Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

The markets have turned down and LTS, like many institutions of higher learning in Canada, has taken a significant loss. Like those same institutions, we look at ways to save and think creatively. Amidst the panic in the financial world, however, this text reminds us that it is Jesus who fills our baskets. With Jesus there is always enough and with Jesus we will always succeed at what God purposes. So, not the least disheartened, we are happy to report to you the following.

Capital Campaign: The Board of Governors of LTS has authorized a Capital Campaign for \$2.5 million to support faculty chairs in the areas of Old Testament and Pastoral Care & Counselling as well as to make much needed renovations on the buildings. Included in the latter is a retrofit of the buildings to make them handicapped accessible. Legally, LTS has been 'grandfathered' on this for some time but we know we are limiting access to very qualified persons. Over the years, LTS has been extremely responsible in maintaining balanced budgets. This has meant the erosion of two faculty positions. Were it not for the help of the Saskatoon Theological Union, we would be seriously handicapped in offering the full range of courses. This capital campaign will help LTS move forward with a strong program. More details will be forthcoming. All four supporting synods have recently approved the campaign on their territories with slightly different timelines.

Faculty: LTS is enjoying a year without any sabbaticals and, therefore, a full faculty complement. *Dr. Christian Eberhart* received a grant that freed him from his normal teaching responsibilities. He is working on a book in the area of Sacrifice and Atonement for Augsburg Fortress. *Dr. Cameron Harder* has been working hard at establishing the Centre for Rural, Community, Leadership and Ministry (CiRCLeM) and is working on a book for the Alban Institute on using Appreciative Inquiry in the parish. He helped recruit one of the largest entering classes for the Master's of Sacred Theology program in recent history and continues to work ecumenically to build the Centre. *Dr. Eddie Kwok* has taken over the reigns as Director of Contextual Education and Internships. He recently served as LTS' representative to a successful faculty search at St. Andrew's College. *Dr Jann Boyd* continues to serve as Dean of Chapel and has taken on the role of Director of the Cross-cultural Program. She is freshly back from a year long sabbatical in which she taught for 6 months at the Lutheran Graduate School of Theology in Madagascar and delivered a paper in Scotland. *Dr. Gordon Jensen* continues to serve as

Dean of Studies. He has been instrumental in securing agreements with his counterparts in the ELCA which enable our students and theirs to cross-register for J-Term classes, especially our cross-cultural programs. This greatly expands the calendar of our offerings.

Students: This academic year saw a sharp decline in the number of entering students. LTS had been enjoying a regular incoming class of 10 to 15. This year the entering class was 3. Enrolment affects tuition and so LTS is forced to run a deficit budget this year. Every effort has been made to minimize the deficit. Numbers also affect the 'community of learning.' Teaching and learning in classes this small is difficult. One misses the give and take of student debate. That said, we have enjoyed a wonderful year of very committed and community oriented students. The seminary's community life is positive.

Recruitment: LTS strives to work closely with the synods and their CTCLs to increase the number of students preparing for careers in the church and for those who just want to increase their knowledge of Theology. A reminder to all ordained persons serving in the ELCIC: in your letter of call is an obligation to be about recruiting individuals for Gospel Ministry! However we may help you in that obligation, you have our undivided attention!

Cross-cultural program: CLWR has continued to support our program of cross cultural awareness and ethical thinking in a globalized world. This year we delayed our trip from January to May in hopes of taking advantage of our smaller number of students, to expand some of our contacts in Madagascar and Africa and to expand student contextual learning projects in country during the summer break. Then political unrest in Madagascar forced us to post-pone the trip until next year. Your prayers for the Malagasy Lutheran Church and its leadership are coveted as they were greatly disappointed not to receive the visit.

Strategic planning: The Board of Governors has embarked on a strategic planning process. Some progress has already been made and we look forward to more coming out of a retreat scheduled for April. We have also been engaging our constituency informally as we move ahead.

Accreditation: Every ten years the Association of Theological Schools visits their members and reviews the school for the purposes of accreditation. The first part of the review is a self-study done by the institution which the visitors will read prior to arrival. The self-study with the visitors' report goes to the Commission on Accreditation thereafter. For the past year LTS has been busily writing the self-study supported by enormously time intensive studies and research. It will receive final approval by the board in April for submission to the Commission. Our visitors will arrive in the fall. The process of self-study has been extremely helpful as we look to our strategic plan and the future of our school and its work on behalf of the ELCIC.

Finances: A summary of the seminary's fiscal year ending June 30th, 2008 is presented below. We had an excellent year. Depreciation causes the loss. This is primarily an

accounting issue, meaning that in ‘dollars in the bank’, LTS finished the year in the black. Over the past two years we have been able to eliminate almost all of our accumulated budgetary deficits. LTS has not had to make significant use of its line of credit. All this is, of course, good news! As noted above, however, the economic situation of the world is not without its effects here. The endowment has lost about 24% of its value in the current market. This will limit income from that sector in 2009-2010. One of our supporting synods has also indicated that they may need to cut their annual grant by \$40,000. Our operation, already bare-boned, will have to be even more thoroughly trimmed.

In December, LTS contracted with a catering company to provide food service. Until now, LTS has run its own kitchen. Kitchen staff were let go at the end of December though given the good economic climate in Saskatoon in general and the effort of the administration, all were offered new positions elsewhere or were hired by the caterers.

Seminary Financial Status as of June 30, 2008

REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Synod Grants	354,200	Instruction	601,427
Provincial Grant	172,000	Administration	274,112
Tuition Fees	230,414	Operations	78,729
Annual Fund	187,909	Development	114,095
Trust & Endowment	127,742	Library	98,894
Miscellaneous	135,714	Governing Board Expenses	19,358
Auxiliary Services	<u>394,279</u>	Auxiliary Services	<u>407,824</u>
	1,602,258		1,594,439
	TOTAL REVENUE		\$1,602,258
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,594,439
	EXCESS REVENUE BEFORE DEPRECIATION		7,819
	DEPRECIATION		(13,082)
	EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES		\$(5,263)

LTS is deeply grateful to the four western synods, their bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers and members, who support Theological Education with their prayers, their gifts and their energy! While LTS may have challenges ahead, we are often recognized as one of the strongest theological schools in Canada. Thank you!

And *solī deo gloria* - to God alone the glory!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kevin A. Ogilvie, President