

# IN FOCUS

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

SPRING 2018

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# It's All About Grace



By President **Mark Zarling**

*An excerpt from the December 2017 Commencement Address*

Imagine this scene: A group of adults kneeling, perhaps on a beach or a dock. The seashore city is Miletus. A man is giving sad news: *Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. And then, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him.*

As you now step forward on the journey of Christian discipleship, Paul's tearful goodbye brings words of eternal comfort. They are here in the verse you've chosen: *I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace* (Acts 20:24).

Did you hear it? Grace. It's all about grace! Grace forges a proper perspective on life. It did for Paul. It does for us.

Consider Paul's perspective on life. Paul understood, and so do you, that our mortal life is but a quick solo prelude to the unending symphony that is eternal life to come. Life is a time of grace to constantly immerse myself in the profound wonder that is the Christ of God, my Brother and Savior. Life is a time of grace to ponder the depth of Christ's suffering for my sin, each sin, all sin, and—yes—the sins I gloss over as not really so bad. Life is a time of grace in which Jesus uses me to interrupt the lives of others with the reality of Christ's love in my words and actions and motives. Take away Jesus Christ from an understanding of your personal pilgrimage, and what's left? Nothing but rubbish. My good deeds become arrogant acts of personal idolatry. My possessions become burdens and not blessings. Life gets frightening at the hospital door. But in Jesus, life is a living sermon that we aren't even aware we are preaching. It's all about grace.

What does grace look like in your life? Think beyond lessons or devotions. But what does grace look like in you as a Christian spouse? What does grace look like in your parenting? What does grace look like when you deal with a member broken down by sinful choices and crushed by an anvil of guilt? It's all about grace.

What does grace look like in you? In me? *Lord, for the sake of your Son, forgive. And pour out the Spirit's omnipotence to change us.*

And you *are* changed, dear graduates. Changed by the Spirit through the Word. You go forth as God's instruments to reveal the profound grace of God in Christ. Life will bring some tearful goodbyes, but you and I know the eternal reality. It's all about grace.

**On our cover: Philip Waldschmidt** (St. Jacobi-Greenfield WI) is a senior preseminary student planning to attend Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary next fall.

MLC *InFocus* is published by Martin Luther College Mission Advancement Office and is distributed free of charge to students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and friends. Comments are welcomed and should be directed to [gaugerlf@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:gaugerlf@mlc-wels.edu) or Laurie Gauger, MLC *InFocus*, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm MN 56073.

The mission of MLC is to train a corps of Christian witnesses who are qualified to meet the ministry needs of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.



All *InFocus* magazines are online at [mlc-wels.edu/publications](http://mlc-wels.edu/publications). If you'd like to receive your magazine electronically ONLY, please let us know. Contact Tami at [boardtl@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:boardtl@mlc-wels.edu).

The alumni photos at the bottom of the pages are from the anniversary classes of MLC, NWC, and DMLC: '38, '43, '48, '53, '58, '63, '68, '73, '78, '83, '88, '93, '98, '03, '08, and '13. Thanks to Alumni Director Steve Balza DMLC '93, who provided this random selection of alumni.



**Rachel Sellnow**  
MLC 2013  
Wyoming MI



**Daniel Schaller**  
NWC 1973  
Manitowoc WI



**Todd Goldschmidt**  
NWC 1983  
Sitka AK



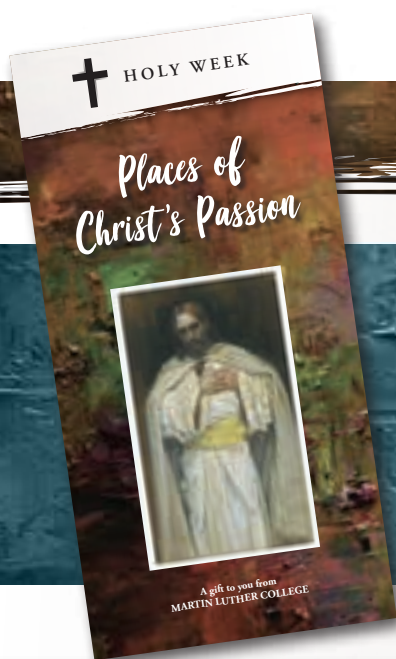


## Congratulations to MLC Midyear Graduates

Thirteen students earned their diplomas at the December 14, 2017, commencement service. President Mark Zarling preached on Acts 20:24: *I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.*

**Dr. Jeff Wiechman** DMLC '92, vice president for academics, conferred the degrees. *Front row:* **Abigail Braun** (Prince of Peace-Yankton SD) early childhood ed; **Stephanie Johnson** (Pilgrim-Minneapolis) elementary ed; **Hannah Uher** (Grace-Milwaukee) secondary chemistry/life science ed; **Jonathan Witte** (Faith-Fond du Lac WI) K-12 music ed; **Alanna Habben** (Mt. Calvary-Waukesha WI) elementary ed; *back row:* **Raine Vrable** (Trinity-Bay City MI) elementary ed; **Rachel Frost** (Mount Olive-Appleton WI) elementary ed/early childhood ed; **Elizabeth Henning** (St. Lucas-Kewaskum WI) secondary math ed; **Angela Bode** (St. John-Sleepy Eye MN) elementary ed; **Eric Uher** (Mt. Calvary-Waukesha WI) elementary ed/secondary social studies ed; **Elizabeth Bergemann** (Faith-Sussex WI) early childhood ed; **Allison Bovee** (St. John-New Ulm MN) elementary ed. *Not pictured:* **Mary Meyer** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN) elementary ed.

Two assignments were also made at midyear: **Mackenzie Rothfuss** '17 (Bay City MI) to Divine Savior Academy-Doral FL (gr 6-8, departmentalized; six-month assignment) and **Sarah Mose** '15 (Madison WI) to Peace-Sun Prairie WI (K4; one-year assignment).



## Places of Christ's Passion *Our Newest Devotional for You*

**Places of Christ's Passion** is MLC's newest devotion book created for you. The eight devotions for Holy Week, Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday, are accompanied by the paintings of James Tissot. The booklet will be available for ordering and online viewing after **March 10** at [mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions](http://mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions). You may also sign up for daily delivery of the devotions to your email inbox.



**Beth Schuppe**  
DMLC 1983  
Memphis



**Roger Kuerth**  
NWC 1973  
Juneau WI



**Michael Geiger**  
NWC 1993  
Belmont CA



**Candice Choate**  
MLC 2003  
Citrus Heights CA





## Brenner Speaks on Reformation-Era Pastoral Training

In the second of the three lectures in MLC's Reformation 500 Lecture Series, Dr. John Brenner (*pictured*) presented "Educating Pastors at the Time of the Lutheran Reformation." His February 11 lecture explored how the Lutheran Reformation changed the way students were trained for pastoral ministry and how these changes have been a blessing to pastoral training in our college and seminary down to this very day.

The series includes two other lectures as well. On November 1, 2017, Pastor Paul Prange read Professor Arnold Koelpin's essay, "Educating Youth at the Time of the Lutheran Reformation." (Professor Koelpin passed away a few days later, on November 13.)

And on April 15, 2018, Dr. Gottfried Hermann (of the Evangelisch Lutherische Freikirche of Germany) will present "Educating Society at the Time of the Lutheran Reformation."

The Reformation 500 Lecture Series was coordinated by MLC Professor James Danell WLS '90.



## Christmas at MLC

Hundreds attended as MLC presented their annual Christmas concert in Chapel of the Christ. "Being part of the Christmas Concert is one of my favorite things here at MLC," says **Josephine Avery** (St. John-Burlington WI). "To have four choirs, the Wind Symphony, the orchestra, and the Handbell Choir all in one concert is simply magical."

*Pictured:* As is tradition, all four choirs surrounded the chapel and sang "O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is" a cappella, this year directed by Professor **Adrian Smith** '03.



**Mark Ehlke**  
MLC 2003  
Watertown WI



**Nicolas Kiessling**  
NWC 1958  
Watertown WI



**Noelle Blumer**  
MLC 2003  
Orlando FL



**James Braun**  
DMLC 1988  
Prairie du Chien WI



## Forum Stages *Camelot*

MLC Knights traded in backpacks for swords and joined King Arthur at the Round Table. The 27-member cast, along with dozens of other students, donated hours of time to perfect the set, costumes, lighting, and more—making this show a huge success. *Pictured: Queen Guinevere and King Arthur: **Hannah Heyer** (Immanuel-Greenville WI) and **Will DeMarce** (Grace-Oskaloosa IA).*



## Evangelism Day *Encourages Students*

More than 40 speakers from all over the country, including **David Gartner** DMLC '92, '10 (St. John-Redwood Falls MN), came to campus January 10 to encourage these future called workers with tips for Christ-centered ministry through the power of the gospel. "So many awesome presenters shared their experiences and stories with us," said sophomore **Anna Hemmelman** (Trinity-Goodview MN). "Evangelism Day puts all of our time and studies here at MLC into perspective. It realigned my focus and got me excited about ministry!"



## Winter Carnival

D/MLC students have been creating campus snow sculptures for more than a century. These three—**Ryan Gurgel** (Christ Alone-Thiensville WI), **Silas Dose** (St. John-New Ulm MN), and **Josiah Eaker** (St. Mark-Watertown WI)—made a giant seal (the animal) with a monk's tonsure. Result: The Luther Seal! Other Winter Carnival events in January included broomball, Iron Chef, Mr. Concord contest, UMOG contest, and a talent show.



**Alice  
Konetchy**  
DMLC 1943  
La Crosse WI



**Jon  
Cox**  
NWC 1998  
Wauwatosa WI



**Carla  
Hoenecke**  
DMLC 1963  
New Ulm MN



**Bradley  
Ragner**  
NWC 1983  
Des Moines IA



here on the

hill



## International Education Week

Caribbean steelpan music beautified chapel on a Monday night in November—starting off a week that introduced MLC students to cultures throughout the world. International Education Week featured special suppers, a trivia night, an international fair, and talks by students with cross-cultural experiences. “I loved showing the student body how worship is different in the Caribbean,” says Tassia Channel-Clement. “Throughout the world, Christians use different instruments, clapping, and dancing in worship—all to glorify the same God.”

*Pictured: Tassia Channel-Clement (Trinity-Castries, St. Lucia) and Jordan Massiah (Hope-Toronto ON).*

## SAMS Brings World-Class Music to Campus

At its second concert of the 2017-18 season, Summit Avenue Music Series (SAMS) hosted the Bekesh Trio (*pictured*) as they performed Rachmaninoff, Mendelssohn, and Schumann in Chapel of the Christ on February 18. The final concert of the year will feature pianist Ralph Votapek on April 8. SAMS is led by MLC instructors Dr. Bethel Balge and **Professor Grace Hennig DMLC '89**. Tickets may be purchased at the door or online at [SummitAvenueMusic.com](http://SummitAvenueMusic.com).



## Award-Winning Author on Campus

Avi, the Newbery Award-winning children's author of more than 75 books, is coming to our campus April 4. We've invited hundreds of grade school children in the area to come for one of two presentations. He will also present to MLC students during the day and to the public that evening at 7:00 pm.



**Paul Steinberg**  
NWC 1993  
New London WI



**Dora Wiese**  
DMLC 1978  
Rock Island IL



**Gerald Geiger**  
NWC 1963  
Buffalo MN



**Janelle Kerkow**  
MLC 2003  
Brisbane, Australia



## Interim Director Concludes Service



We thank Professor Erin Meissner (pictured) for her three semesters of service as interim director of instrumental music while Professor Miles Wurster pursued his graduate studies. Here's an excerpt of Professor Meissner's departure letter:

*"Within the rehearsal setting, concert performances, and interactions with one another, I witnessed firsthand the transformative power of music—as an edifying aesthetic expression and unifying force, certainly, but more significantly as a vehicle for the expression and profession of sincere faith. At several points during the course of my three semesters at MLC I have remarked to my students about the privilege of teaching in an environment where all students share the same faith. We can speak it, sing it, play it, and pray our faith corporately. It is an awesome and profound blessing. . . . I marvel at the young men and women the Lord is raising up to serve his people and at the talented and dedicated faculty and staff called to teach, direct, guide, and support them. I shall forever consider it a blessing to have served among you."*

## Wind Symphony Announces Tour



The Wind Symphony, under the direction of Professor Miles Wurster, will share their music and represent their school in Wisconsin May 13-18. They will accompany worship, perform full concerts in the evenings, and provide a fun introduction to MLC and wind band at grade school demonstration concerts during the day. Plan to attend a concert near you!

### SUN, MAY 13

8:00/10:30 am Christ-Zumbrota MN (worship ensembles)  
8:30/10:30 am St. John-Mazeppa MN (worship ensembles)  
7:00 pm Lakeside LHS (full concert)

### MON, MAY 14

11:00 am Mt. Calvary-Waukesha WI (demo concert)  
7:00 pm Bethlehem-Germantown WI (full concert)

### TUE, MAY 15

11:00 am St. Paul-Howards Grove WI (demo concert)  
7:00 pm Manitowoc LHS (full concert)

### WED, MAY 16

1:00 pm Immanuel-Greenville WI (demo concert)  
7:00 pm Winnebago Luth. Academy (full concert)

### THU, MAY 17

1:00 pm St. Stephen-Beaver Dam WI (demo concert)

### FRI, MAY 18

1:00 pm St. Paul-Tomah WI (demo concert)



**Arnold Koelpin**  
NWC 1953  
Caledonia WI



**Kelley Mitzner**  
DMLC 1983  
Balaton MN



**Hernandez Daylo**  
MLC 1998  
Tomah WI



**Seth Meyer**  
MLC 2013  
Green Bay WI



# Studying Marine Ecosystem in Jamaica

Frigid temperatures and howling winds froze New Ulm to 20, 30, even 40 below over Christmas break. But students from MLC, Wisconsin Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran College didn't mind, as they'd escaped to 85-degree Jamaica to take a one-of-a-kind marine ecology course.

At a marine laboratory in the small town of Discovery Bay, students snorkeled through coral reefs and collected creatures to study. "It was incredible seeing so many different creatures living in the same ecosystem," says **Madison Ott** (Faith-Sussex WI, pictured underwater). "Pictures of coral reefs just don't do them justice."

They also ventured into the lagoon at night. "I saw octopus, barracuda, jellyfish, eels, and stingray," says **Mykenna Schneider** (Faith-Fond du Lac WI). "At first it was unsettling to swim in the dark, but seeing all the creatures was amazing!"

The people that MLC students met along the way also made the experience exceptional. "As Christians, there was an immediate bond among the students from the different colleges," says **Micah Otto** (St. John-Baraboo WI). "By the end of the trip, it was hard to believe we'd only known each other for ten days!"

Pictured: WLC students along with MLC students **Micah Otto**, **Mykenna Schneider**, **Markus Klingenschmitt** (Bethlehem-Lakeville MN), and **Andrew Mantz** (Good Shepherd-West Bend WI).



## Call for *Thalassa* Submissions

Martin Luther College is accepting submissions for the 12<sup>th</sup> annual *Thalassa* Prize. This \$1000 prize is awarded to the best photo-and-essay submission from an MLC student or graduate who has served in an international ministry.

PAST WINNERS: [mlc-wels.edu/thalassa](http://mlc-wels.edu/thalassa)

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: [mlc-wels.edu/thalassa](http://mlc-wels.edu/thalassa)

DEADLINE: April 15, 2018

**2017 WINNER: REBECCA WENDLAND**

*"A Place of Honor" - Malawi*





# Students Study Abroad

"It's been quite a week for this Minnesota girl."

So begins the January 15, 2018, blog of MLC student **Abby Enstad** (*Cross of Christ-Coon Rapids MN*), who is studying in Galway, Ireland, this semester.

"As I dream about what this semester has in store for me," she continues, "I find reassurance in God's Word. 'If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast' (Psalm 139:9-10). Although I may be 3,697 miles away from my home and my friends, God is never far away. . . . Keep checking this blog [[blogs.mlc-wels.edu/study-abroad](http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/study-abroad)] if you want to see where Ireland takes me each week."

MLC students can study abroad anywhere in the world they wish, choosing courses that fit into their MLC ministerial training program. MLC's International Services Office partners with several internationally known study-abroad providers to facilitate the trips.

After a summer or semester abroad, students return with a broader worldview, a new appreciation for other cultures, and a renewed zeal to share the gospel with all the world.

*Pictured: Abby Enstad (left) is studying in Galway this semester. Crystal Carmichael (Bloomington-Bloomington MN, center) and Erin Feddersen (Shepherd of the Bay-Lusby MD, right) studied in Limerick, Ireland, last semester.*



## Send Me to the Seminary



MLC preseminary juniors hopped on a bus Sunday, February 4, and traveled six hours to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to discover what will be in store for them in a few short years.

On Monday they visited classes, hung out with sem students, and soaked up the feeling of unity that saturated the campus. "The message of the hymn 'We All Are One in Mission,'" says **Andrew Stoner** (*Resurrection-Chesapeake VA*), "is shown clearly in all the work that happens here."

On Tuesday they joined WLS students at the Mission and Ministry conference, where they got a close-up look at foreign missions. A visit to Grace Lutheran Church in Milwaukee and to the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry in Waukesha rounded out the trip. On Wednesday they were back at MLC and the Greek and Hebrew homework that awaited—but with a renewed focus on their future and stronger relationships with their brothers.

"It was great getting closer to our brothers from MLC and from the seminary," says **Erik Lund** (*Parkland-Tacoma WA*). "Joining together around God's Word was a blessing."

*Pictured: Seminary visitors Donovan Williams (Loving Shepherd-Milwaukee) and Hugo Ugalde-Bemer (Good Shepherd-Cedar Rapids IA)*

# Focus On *Sports*

## Grace Schultz Finishes Record-Breaking Career

**Grace Schultz** (*First-Lake Geneva WI*) admits that scoring wasn't always her thing. During her high school basketball career at Fox Valley LHS, her main role was defense. But that didn't stop her from setting high goals for her college career.

One of those goals was reached on December 4, when Schultz became the third player in MLC women's basketball program history to score at least 1,000 career points. Schultz joined **Erica Babinec '12** and **Emma Babinec '06** as the only players to reach that milestone.

Schultz says that was one of several goals she set before her debut season in 2014, and the feeling of accomplishment after reaching that goal was special.

"I sat in the locker room and just absorbed all that had just happened," she said. "It took me a little while to register that I had actually accomplished a big goal of mine. Sitting there, I couldn't help but think of all the teammates and coaches that had challenged me to improve in practice and games throughout my life, knowing that none of my personal successes would be possible without them."

Schultz hasn't allowed the other aspects of her game to suffer as her scoring role increased. This season, Schultz set a new MLC single-season record with 97 steals, and finished second in program history with 265 career steals. She also finished second in program history with 666 career rebounds, and ranks sixth with 210 career assists. She finished her career with 1,299 career points, and ranks third in both career field goals and free throws.

While she has established herself as one of the premier athletes in the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) during her career, Schultz credits her coach, Professor **Dan Gawrisch '08**, and teammates for helping her game develop.

"I remember having conversations with Coach Gawrisch about what my role was on the team in every preseason meeting and how scoring became an important factor of my role," she said. "Knowing his expectations and my own, along with hard work and a lot of shots in the gym, I have grown as a basketball player, and I give that credit to my coaches and teammates."

Basketball is only part of Schultz's athletic career at MLC. This fall Schultz finished her four-year career as a right-side hitter for the volleyball team, where she was a two-year captain and finished with 436 career kills. During her career on both the basketball and volleyball teams, Schultz has helped her team qualify for the UMAC Postseason Tournament in all seven tries.

One of the things that made her athletic career special is sharing her experiences with friends and classmates. **Jade St. Germaine** (*St. Mark-Watertown WI*), **Kira Grev** (*Divinity-St. Paul*), **Taylor Weber** (*Bethlehem-Germantown WI*), **Heidi Moldenhauer** (*St. John-Manitowoc WI*), **Jenna Miller** (*Riverview-Appleton WI*), and **Rylee Weisensel** (*St. John-New Ulm MN*) were part of a seven-player senior class on the volleyball team, while St. Germaine and high school classmate **Hailey Johnson** (*St. Paul-Green Bay WI*) played all four years with Schultz on the basketball team.

"As my eligibility decreased, my love for sports turned into a love for family, the family that was created through these sports," Schultz said.

"I still enjoy sports, but what I enjoy more are the memories and friendships that have been created. The special thing about MLC, besides training for a lifetime of public ministry, is that you realize how blessed you are to be surrounded by God-fearing friends and future colleagues every single day."







## MEN'S HOOPS:

**Ian Paulsen's** (*St. Matthew-Oconomowoc WI*) versatility was on display during his sophomore season as he led the team in points, rebounds, blocks, steals, and assists per game. Paulsen was the only player in the UMAC to lead his team in all five categories, and finished the season first in the UMAC in blocks per game.

## Fall UMAC Honors

### MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

**Ben Bitter** (*St. John-Milwaukee*) – First Team

**Ryan Gurgel** (*Christ Alone-Thiensville WI*) – First Team & First Team All-Region

**Justin Wilkens** (*Bethlehem-Manassas VA*) – First Team

### WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

**Leah Miller** (*Shepherd of the Hills-Knoxville TN*) – Second Team

### MEN'S SOCCER

**Nate Graumann** (*Bethany-Fort Atkinson WI*) – First Team

**Joe Graumann** (*Bethany-Fort Atkinson WI*) – Second Team

**Elijah Kroll** (*St. John-Lake City MN*) – Second Team

**Luke Meihack** (*Redeemer-Fond du Lac WI*) – Hon. Mention

**Ethan Schultz** (*Trinity-Waukesha WI*) – Hon. Mention

### WOMEN'S SOCCER

**Sarah Kell** (*Christ-Zumbrota MN*) – First Team

**Emily Muir** (*Trinity-Watertown WI*) – Second Team

**Lydia Bitter** (*St. Mark-Bemidji MN*) – Hon. Mention

**Erin Feddersen** (*Shepherd of the Bay-Lusby MD*) – Hon. Mention

**Morgan Hill** (*Abiding Word-Houston*) – Hon. Mention

### VOLLEYBALL

**Kira Grev** (*Divinity-St. Paul*) – First Team

**Jade St. Germaine** (*St. Mark-Watertown WI*) – First Team

**Taylor Weber** (*Bethlehem-Germantown WI*) – Hon. Mention

### FOOTBALL

**Josh Arndt** (*Good Shepherd-Burnsville MN*) – Second Team

**Josh Frailing** (*Riverview-Appleton WI*) – Second Team

**Joe Herrewig** (*Redeemer-Fond du Lac WI*) – Second Team

**Tristan Pankow** (*Trinity-Bay City MI*) – Second Team



**Coach Mark Stein**  
was selected

**UMAC Football**  
*Coach of the Year*

by his peers.

## KNIGHTS LEAD UMAC WITH 85 ACADEMIC HONOREES

Martin Luther College led all Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) schools with 85 fall semester student-athletes named Academic All-UMAC, including 21 from the women's soccer team alone. These student-athletes finished their semester of competition with a GPA of 3.5 or better.

The Knights also finished with the highest team GPA in four of the eight fall semester sports: volleyball (3.82), women's cross country (3.78), women's soccer (3.73), and men's soccer (3.35). The three women's teams—volleyball, cross country, and soccer—notched the top three team GPAs among all programs in the conference.

# ONLY-AT-MLC *Moments*

## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

... you spell the Hebrew word shofar with balloons.

MLC preseminary students—often called SPAMmers because they're enrolled in Studies in Pastoral Ministry (SPaM)—meet regularly for fun and mutual encouragement at SPaM gatherings.

**Isaac Hayes** (pictured far left) explains: "The purpose of these gatherings is the brotherhood and fellowship with our fellow brothers who are on the pastor track—not just among the students, but the professors as well. We gather together not only to have a good time, enjoying entertainment and good food, but to encourage each other with the Word and assure each other of Christ's promises to us."

See the beverage on the table? That would be orange drink. "The orange drink is the sacred elixir reserved for our SPaM gatherings," Isaac says.

Isaac is now at the seminary. On a more serious note, he adds, "Here at the seminary, we are praying that our brothers at MLC may come here after their college graduation and continue to share in our brotherhood and in the joy we have in Christ!"

Pictured from left are MLC 2017 graduates and first-year seminary students **Isaac Hayes** (ALA / Emmanuel-Tempe AZ), **Philip Schroeder** (LPS / St. Peter-Modesto CA), **Dan Schmidt** (LPS / St. Matthew-Oconomowoc WI), and **Yaffet Gabayehu** (LPS / Shepherd of Peace-Powell OH). The hands holding the last letter belong to **Jake Shepherd** (LPS / Christ Our Redeemer-Aurora CO).



From  
**KNIGHTWATCH**



Some moments cannot be reproduced at other colleges. There's something one-of-a-kind about the Martin Luther College campus and culture. Our students have great respect and reverence for God's Word, and our history of confessional Lutheranism grounds everything we do here. In fact, as these pages demonstrate, even students' fun and games are often tinged with Lutheran humor.



## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

... you play predawn Reformation hymns from the roof.

**Christian Willick** (LPS / St. John-Wauwatosa WI) and **Jacob Klug** (Lakeside / St. John-Juneau WI) organized the ensemble that braved freezing temperatures to wake up the campus with Reformation hymns for the campus Reformation 500 festival. They played on the Luther Student Center roof.



## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

... you take selfies with Martin Luther.

The "Back to the Luther" Homecoming theme sent these students scrambling across campus to take pictures with MLC icons, including the Luther bust in the library: (from left) **Donovan Williams** (Loving Shepherd-Milwaukee), **Grant Hagen** (Immanuel-Greenville WI), **Christian Willick** (St. John-Wauwatosa WI), **Sam Lor** (Grace-Kansas City KS), and **Lucy Matteucci** (Living Hope-Wildomar CA).

These four pages of "Only-at-MLC Moments" are adapted from the Spring 2018 issue of *KnightWatch*, our recruitment magazine. To see all 54 "MLC Moments," please check out the entire magazine at [mlc-wels.edu/publications/knightwatch](http://mlc-wels.edu/publications/knightwatch). And then be sure to share it with a high school student who might like to learn more about preparing for the public ministry at Martin Luther College.

# ONLY-AT-MLC *Moments*

## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

**... you impersonate Martin Luther and no one gives you a second look.**

**Grant Hagen** (FVL / Immanuel-Greenville WI, pictured) won the UMOC (Ugliest Man on Campus) award for his Luther impersonation during Winter Carnival 2017. The 2018 winner is **Jacob Schlomer** (LPS / St. Matthew-Oconomowoc WI).

What's UMOC? An old college tradition where one sophomore, junior, and senior guy compete all week to win campus hearts through their creative and hilarious antics.

Oh, and don't be thrown off by "ugliest." This is a coveted award. Being voted UMOC carries lifelong prestige.



## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

**... the organ drops out at chapel and the congregation becomes a four-part a cappella chorus of angels.**

Most first-time worshipers at MLC chapel are blown away by the music—from the choirs and the instrumentalists, yes—but also from the congregation itself. When the organ occasionally drops out around stanza three and the campus family spontaneously breaks out in confident four-part a cappella, you feel just a little closer to heaven.

MLC students worship at Chapel of the Christ every morning and evening, Monday through Friday—as well as at 10 pm Monday Compline services. The Compline services have been variously described as peaceful, reflective, strengthening, and “the best part of Monday.” But really, all campus worship is an incredible blessing, where God speaks to us and strengthens our faith through his life-saving good news.







## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

... you realize that, like Luther, you nailed it.

MLC's own Reformation 500 contest winners were **Raquel Freese** (*Klein Collins HS-TX / Abiding Word-Houston TX*), who wrote "We Marvel," the award-winning Reformation hymn sung by the student body in chapel; **Kylah Schroeder** (*LPS / St. Peter-Modesto CA*), who won the art contest; and **Hannah Midthun Uher** (*WISCO / Grace-Milwaukee*), who won the T-shirt design contest. Hannah's T-shirt features Luther posed in front of the Wittenberg Castle Church door and says, "HAMMERTIME."



## THAT MOMENT WHEN...

... you add your thumbprint to a Luther's Seal mural.

As part of the Reformation 500 celebration, students contributed their thumbprints to a Luther's Seal mural outside Wittenberg Auditorium. AIM, the Art in Ministry club at MLC, facilitated this project. For one week in October 2017, students like **Eric Dorn** (*Illinois LHS / Trinity-Crete IL, pictured*) lined up after morning chapel, dipped their fingers in paint, and made their mark.



# *Let the Children Come!*

## MLC PREPARES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Early childhood ministries (ECMs) are growing fast in our WELS congregations, and for good reason: These WELS preschools and early learning centers are greenhouses for the gospel, where the Spirit is shining on the tender little hearts of children and growing them up in the faith. Often they carry their stories of Jesus home to their parents as well, with the result that whole families meet Jesus for the first time.

In this issue, we share a professional article, “The Importance of Play in the Preschool Classroom” by **Professor Jennifer Mehlberg** '07, and two features on thriving early childhood

ministries: St. John Lutheran Preschool in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, led by **Catherine St. John** '13, and Crown of Life-Fort Myers, Florida, led by **Rebecca Rixe** '08.

For more stories, please see the Fall 2017 issue of *InFocus* ([mlc-wels.edu/publications/infocus](http://mlc-wels.edu/publications/infocus)), which features a professional article by **Professor Cheryl Loomis** '77, “Eight Indicators of High-Quality Early Childhood Ministries,” and two other thriving ECE ministries: Beautiful Savior-Las Vegas, led by **Erin Stob** '16, and Trinity-St. Lucia, led by **Evodia Cassius-Noel** '16.

At the MLC Early Childhood Learning Center, college students learn ECE pedagogy under the supervision of expert professors and lead teachers. The center enrolls children birth to age 5, offering them the Word of God, a research-based whole-child curriculum, and a state-of-the-art facility.





# LET'S PLAY!

## *The Importance of Play in the Preschool Classroom*



By Professor Jennifer Mehlberg '07

A visitor walks into a preschool classroom one morning and sees several children playing in the block area. They're working together on a large structure resembling a zoo. They've used a variety of blocks and other building materials to construct individual pens for different animals and several buildings, some of which have roofs on top. A path of milk bottle caps weaves between the pens. The children's hands

academic learning are internalized by children in the activity that is most meaningful to them—their own play scenarios.

Zooming in on the children playing restaurant, we see high-level play and learning as well. With the help of their teacher, each child coordinated their plans and assumed a role necessary for a restaurant to run smoothly. Taking on a

*Preschool children's play may be cute, but there's so much more going on.*

and bodies are busy, and they converse with each other as they organize, direct, modify, and extend their play plan.

In another area of the classroom, the visitor notices a teacher working with a group of children near a kitchen set and dramatic play area. As she gets closer, she hears a child ask the teacher for her "order." The teacher asks what the specials of the day are and chooses one. The child writes down this order on a notepad and hands it off to another child who's dressed in a chef hat and apron. He quickly works to gather and prepare the food. A third child promptly brings out several plates heaped with an eclectic mixture of colorful plastic food.

After taking in these play scenes, the visitor says to the teacher, "How cute! It must be so much fun to be an early childhood teacher."

The teacher smiles and nods. It may be cute, and she certainly is having a good time. But there's so much more going on than what might be obvious at first glance.

Let's focus more closely on the preschoolers constructing their zoo. They first had to plan out what they were going to work on collectively. They visualized what they wanted to create and then verbalized their intentions to their peers. They demonstrated communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills as their play plan began to take form. The children then had many mathematical decisions to make. They asked themselves, "How many blocks do I need for the zebra pen? How do I get the blocks to fit on top of these walls to form a roof? How tall should I make the fence around the giraffes so they don't escape?" Authentic math experiences abound in an active early childhood environment. These deep, critical building blocks of

role and following the "rules" assigned to that role is an important part of a child's mature play. They're developing their brain's executive functions. The child who played the role of waitress recalled phrases she heard a waitress use when she was out to eat with her family. She knew to grab a pencil and a pad of paper to write the meals her customers ordered. Similarly, the chef listened intently while the waitress handed him the slip of paper and nodded as she read him the food to prepare. He busied himself by turning knobs, stirring pots, and plating the food. As the children explored the roles they were playing, they developed many skills related to the areas of speaking, listening, writing, and social problem-solving.

Throughout these intricate dramatic play scenarios, the children's teachers intentionally supported and extended their role-playing. The teachers structured the environment to allow children to take initiative, make choices, manipulate materials, and share their thoughts. And they deepened the children's learning through intentional interactions tailored to each child's needs.

Children learn best through play. When asked to sit and listen to information passively, their understanding of the subject is much shallower than when they're actively participating in their learning experience.

As the visitor said, early childhood education can indeed be cute and fun. But, much more important, children's play provides the most effective platform to foster physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development. High-quality early childhood educators understand this and create an environment that fosters high-level play throughout the day.



## *Crown of Life – Fort Myers, Florida* FROM PRESCHOOL TO ACADEMY, IT'S ALL ABOUT FAMILY



In the seven years **Rebecca Rixe '08** has served Crown of Life in Fort Myers, Florida, the school has seen incredible growth. An initial enrollment of two preschoolers in 2006 has now grown to 85 students: 60 in the preschool and 25 more in the academy, which includes kindergarten through grade 5—and next year, grade 6.

Miss Rixe is one of the 4K teachers and the director of the entire campus, the preschool and academy. She says she is incredibly blessed to serve with her team of four teachers and four teacher assistants, and they work together to make Crown of Life not just a high-quality school, but a loving family.

“As director,” she says, “I want our school to be a family for everyone who walks in the door. I want them to know we aren’t just here to help their children grow, but we’re partners with them.”

How does she do this? “I try to be available every day when the parents pick up the children so I can communicate about how their child’s day went. I keep my director’s door open so they know I’m there for them at any time. We send home a weekly newsletter—with pictures—and hold parent-teacher conferences.

“I have such a passion for being there for the families as well as the kids, and I love being a listening ear for them, praying with them and for them, and doing what I can to help their family with anything they may be going through.”

Working with families is just one facet of Becca’s ministry. Let’s take a look at her many roles:

**Teacher:** The preschool is open 7:30-5:30 every day. Miss Rixe teaches 4K Monday through Thursday, 8:30-12:45. Like all teachers, she does curriculum planning, daily prep, and plenty of observation and assessment.

**Academy Director:** She attends Board of Education meetings and represents the school to the congregation. She meets every week with her staff, supervises instruction, and tries to “just be there for them. I feel it’s important for us to remain a team and do all we can for Jesus’ little lambs.”

She looks over their lesson plans to be sure they’re developmentally appropriate and offers help if needed. “All teachers have a different teaching style,” she says, “so I want them to plan their lessons accordingly.”

**Administration:** With the assistance of the administrative assistant, she completes paperwork, meets licensure requirements, and follows the guidelines for Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten Education program, which is government-funded PreK for all 4- and 5-year-olds in Florida.

**Marketing:** Becca feels blessed to have a marketer who helps her communicate her school’s mission to the Fort Myers community, including a Facebook page, top-notch website, brochures and flyers, and big banners outside the facility. “The banners are huge for us. Many families see them and either call or just drop in,” she says. “I want people to know who we are so we can reach out to as many little lambs as possible.”

**Family Fun:** She has facilitated game nights, movie nights, Parents’ Night Out, and a huge fall festival—a kind of school Homecoming where current families and alumni families get together.





The result of all this work is a thriving campus where more and more children and families are becoming acquainted with their Savior.

Like the Hindu boy who came to school knowing nothing about Jesus and didn't seem to be picking up much either, but then surprised her one day by saying, "Guess what, Miss Rixe? Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins so we can one day be with him in heaven!"

Or the new family she accompanied to Bible Information Class so she could grow right along with them until they became members.

Or the two 3-year-old girls who went home and taught their families the Bible stories they were learning, led mealtime prayers, and asked their parents if they could go to church. The little girls were eventually baptized and now continue at Crown of Life as third graders.

"It gives me goose bumps each time," Becca says, "knowing that these little children came to understand our Savior's grace!"

**The Gospel Every Day:** As in all WELS early childhood ministries, the children have daily Bible story time and prayers. They also present a Christmas program to share the gospel with over 350 friends and family, and Pastor Martin Luchterhand gives a weekly chapel service. Becca also appreciates the opportunity to share law and gospel with the schoolchildren in her discipline. "I love talking to them about their sin and then telling them God forgave them of their sin, praying with them every time, and helping them know that God loves them."

In her 4K classroom, she teaches intercessory prayer—even for strangers. When they hear an ambulance, they stop whatever they're doing and pray, asking God to be with the person hurt, the doctors, and the family. And when her 4-year-olds graduate, they each get a Bible from congregation members, so that if they don't continue at Crown of Life, they will still have the Word. "This is just one sign of the congregation's full support of Christian education," she says, "support I'm so grateful for!"

Mostly, Becca is grateful to her Savior for this ministry he's given her. "It's amazing how every day may be a bit different. It keeps me incredibly busy to be both teacher and director, but I'm blessed to teach his little lambs and to be there for the families."

## Becca's Message to Those Considering Early Childhood Ministry

"Reaching out to Jesus' little lambs is challenging but so incredibly rewarding! To be in these children's lives and—for some—to provide stability, to care for them, guide them, and see them grow . . . To teach them God's Word and see their eyes just light up when they learn a Bible story for the first time . . . To hear them belt out "Jesus loves me" . . . To be a listening ear for their families and continue to connect with them for years on end . . . To watch little ones soak up everything we teach like little sponges . . . It's all so rewarding!

"Yes, it can be tiring, and patience is most definitely necessary. And sometimes God puts challenges in front of us, not because he wants us to fail, but because he wants to mold us into who he wants us to be as we serve him here on earth.

"But it's still a blessing and a joy that God uses me, a weak and lowly servant, to tell others about his Word. I am humbled each and every day that God has called me to do this work, and I pray that others can see this as their passion too."



Miss St. John and her students release a monarch butterfly as they talk about God's creation.



## *St. John Lutheran Preschool-Mukwonago, Wisconsin* **GOD'S WORD AT WORK**



When **Catherine St. John** '13 was in second grade, her parents enrolled her in a WELS school. They weren't church-goers. They simply wanted a better school.

Catherine distinctly remembers many firsts: sitting in a WELS church for the first time, attending Sunday School

for the first time, and learning the Lord's Prayer and Luther's Morning Prayer.

By third grade, the Holy Spirit had worked through the gospel shared by her pastor and teachers to create faith in little Catherine's heart—and in the hearts of the rest of her family too.

Now Catherine is the teacher sharing the gospel with little hearts. "As an early childhood called worker," she says, "I get to work with many families like my own family, ones not connected to the WELS—at least not yet."

### **Director and Lead Teacher**

Catherine graduated from MLC in 2013 with a double major in elementary ed and early childhood ed. She was called to St. John Lutheran Preschool in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, where she is director and lead teacher. With the assistance of two part-time aides and several volunteers, she teaches 38 children age 3, 4, and 5.

"There is always so much happening and yet so much more to be done," she says. "I'm both the teacher and the director.

I'm responsible for all the teaching in the preschool room and the various duties that accompany this. As the director, I'm responsible for the administration of all early childhood programs, along with outreach and future planning.

"Sometimes the days can be long or tiring," she admits, "but a hug from a child, a connection made with a family, or seeing a preschooler in church makes the long hours worth it."

### **A Vibrant Family Ministry**

Seeing a new preschooler in church is not a rare event. St. John's, a growing church about a half-hour southwest of Milwaukee, has added about 100 members every year for the last three years. They've also added another pastor and a vicar.

Beginning in fall 2018, they'll have an expanded preschool as well. They applied for and received a \$30,000 grant from the Antioch Foundation to convert an existing classroom and restroom into a second preschool room, complete with new furniture, materials, and curriculum resources.

The preschool is an important link in a whole chain of vibrant family ministries at St. John's. The Mornings with Mommy program includes nonmembers and unchurched families. This year, six children moved up from Mornings with Mommy to the church preschool, and two families have started membership classes. And graduating preschoolers often become kindergartners in the elementary school.

Catherine is humbled to be a part of this gospel ministry. "It's always been amazing to me that God uses us, sinful and weak human beings, to spread his holy, precious, saving Word,"





she says. “Think about that for a moment. God could have spread the message of salvation any way he wanted, but he chose to work through us. Crazy. Mind-blowing. Amazing.”

### The Gospel at Home and School

Catherine and her staff share the gospel with the students in many ways: “The gospel message is a daily part of our school day,” she says, “emphasizing Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin. We study Bible stories, sing Bible songs, pray to God, and learn about God’s marvelous creation.”

The first book the little ones receive at preschool is a Bible. “When I hand these Bibles out, I talk with parents about the importance of reading to a child daily. In my weekly newsletters, I include the Bible lesson we learned in preschool and the page numbers of the children’s Bible that correspond with our lesson. I love hearing from parents that their little one asks to read this Bible before bedtime.”

### The Word Works

Catherine remembers her own childhood conversion as she says, “The Holy Spirit works in the hearts of these little ones as they hear God’s Word. He also is working through these little ones as they witness to their families through their Bible songs and words.

“God’s Word works when and how he chooses,” she continues. “It will not return to him empty, but will accomplish what he desires and achieve the purpose for which he sent it (Isaiah 55:11).

“At St. John’s, we get to lay God’s Word on the ears and hearts of 38 little preschoolers this year. God be praised for this.”

*Just before publication, InFocus learned that Catherine accepted a call to our own Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center, where she will serve as a lead teacher.*

## Catherine’s Message to Those Considering Early Childhood Ministry

**What’s great about ECE:** As early childhood teachers, we lay the framework—colors, shapes, letters—but, more important, we are able to instill in children a love for learning and a hunger for knowledge, and build all of this on the foundation of Christ.

**What will make your day as an ECE teacher:** I enjoy taking time to understand children and engage them in deeper conversations, I absolutely love when they express a thought or wonder about something that I hadn’t even thought of before!

**What you can do even now:** If you aren’t sure about teaching, give yourself time and immerse yourself in teaching experiences. During my summers at MLC, I had the opportunity to work with children and congregations across the United States. These experiences really helped me in my teaching ministry.



## PRODUCING HOME-GROWN PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

**Erin Smolinski** (*Jerusalem-Morton Grove IL*) is one of a growing number of preschool teachers who gained valuable training for her ministry without ever leaving her hometown.

Erin completed the 11 short courses in MLC's Early Childhood Educator Series and then applied for and received her Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

While it's always best that teachers have their college degree in early childhood education, the Early Childhood Educator courses are an excellent first step for those who do not have a degree. And while some may opt for a community college's courses, we boldly assert that MLC's courses are better. "Our courses are more comprehensive than those offered at community college," says **Dr. John Meyer** DMLC '87, director of graduate studies and continuing education, "and they do much more than prepare you to teach. They also prepare you to share the gospel in your classroom."

MLC has also earned the prestigious CDA Gold Standard from the Council for Professional Recognition. The Gold Standard was given to a small handful of institutions across the country, signifying that their programs provide the highest quality instruction to prepare students for their CDA exam and their teaching careers.

In addition to its high quality, this series of courses checks off three important boxes for participants: It's convenient, practical, and affordable.

**CONVENIENT:** Of the 11 courses in the series, almost all of which are 1-credit, seven are offered *online*, and the

other four are offered *on location*. All you need to do is invite us to come, and we will send an MLC professor to your school or congregation to conduct the courses for you—just as we did for Jerusalem-Morton Grove.

**PRACTICAL:** Erin instantly appreciated the practicality of the courses. "I've been able to add new ideas and lessons to my classroom repertoire immediately—including hearing from other teachers about how to incorporate Bible lessons into everything in the classroom." Telling Bible stories happens to be her favorite part of teaching, especially since many students are from non-member families.

**AFFORDABLE:** MLC's undergrad per-credit rate is only \$310, and when you apply to take the 11 courses of the Early Educator Series, we send you the two textbooks for the series free of charge. As always, our goal is not to make money. It's to make teachers. And that means keeping our rates as low as possible.

Erin understands that her continuing education doesn't benefit her alone—or even her students. It sends an important message to the parents as well. "The ability to let parents know I've taken all these classes and have this credential will show them how much we care about their preschoolers," she says. "Many parents in this area are looking for professional training and the utmost in care for their children, and I believe the MLC Educator Series has helped me achieve that."





## A PASSION FOR LEADERSHIP IN ECE



The children at the WELS preschool in Raleigh, North Carolina, would never guess that Mrs. Kiecker, the teacher they love so much, never planned on teaching preschool. But early childhood education (ECE)—and becoming a *leader* in ECE—is now her passion.

**As a student, Julianna (Meyer '11)**

**Kiecker** (pictured) couldn't wait to teach Spanish. She'd double-majored in elementary ed and Spanish, even teaching a while in the Dominican Republic. When she graduated, so did her new seminary-trained husband, Phil Kiecker, and he was assigned as pastor to Gethsemane-Raleigh NC. Julianna received a call too—to the congregation's preschool.

"I was terrified. What was God thinking!?" she said. "I was supposed to be doing ministry using Spanish."

Gethsemane's preschool, Precious Lambs Early Learning Center, had been a thriving ministry, but calls and pregnancies had depleted its staff, enrollment had fallen from 29 to 9, and the center was on the brink of closure. Unless they got a new director. So Julianna said yes. "Even though I didn't understand God's plans, he was calling me to this ministry. I felt I should at least try."

**"We have this treasure in jars of clay** to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us." That passage from 2 Corinthians 4 summarizes the beginning of her ministry, Julianna says. It was difficult, and she felt unqualified. But she put herself and the Precious Lambs ministry into God's hands, and he did his work. Enrollment rose. Financially they got back in the black. WELS teachers were found—not an easy task in that area. And state officials gave the center a five-star rating.

Most important, children and families heard the gospel. When a new student asked, "Who's Jesus?" during Julianna's first year, she knew how much this ministry mattered. "It blew me away that a child in 'Christian' America could have lived four years without ever hearing who Jesus is! There's nothing as exciting

and humbling as being the first person to tell someone about their Savior Jesus, who loves them so much!"

With classrooms filling up and parents requesting infant and toddler care, congregation members started to say the exciting words, "new building." Though it's only half-finished today, 70 of 74 available student spots are already spoken for.

**"God also worked his power in me,"** Julianna said, "turning preschool education into something I felt passionately about." She decided it was time to look into master's programs so she could be the best director possible.

The University of North Carolina would have given her a free ride for the entire program, and she considered it. "But every time I looked at their courses," she said, "I felt underwhelmed." They focused on political issues, preparing their graduates to be ECE activists. "That didn't match up with my goals. I wanted courses in how to be a leader, a mentor to teachers, and an expert in ECE."

**MLC's new MA in Educational Administration** was a perfect fit. "I was excited to see that every single course would be relevant to our ministry, and the professors and students would be approaching the issues from a ministry point of view. I struggled for a bit with the fact that I'd be paying for the program when I could complete a similar degree for free. In the end, though, I felt the degree itself was less important than the knowledge and skills I would get out of it. In this respect, the two programs were not equal."

With financial assistance from her congregation, she's now in her fourth semester of MLC's program. "Every single course has been extremely helpful! The insight from professors and peers who understand the unique challenges of ministry is invaluable."

**Julianna says she's still a jar of clay**, totally dependent on the power of God, but as Precious Lambs opens their expanded center, MLC's courses are giving her the extra confidence she needs. "I'm so glad I made the decision to enroll. I know that what I have learned so far has already influenced me as a leader, director, and teacher."

## Looking back...

### 100 Years Ago

1918 – Under the direction of **Professor Fritz Reuter** (pictured), the choirs sang hymns and anthems for the 400th anniversary of the Reformation, which was celebrated in New Ulm on September 30.



### 75 Years Ago

1943 – The campus family recognized the 59 years of service of **Professor Godfrey Burk** (1884-1943). When DMLC opened its doors on November 10, 1884 (Luther's birthday), Professor Burk (pictured) was the first and only member of the faculty duly called. He taught the college's first eight students in the only building on campus, which came to be known as "Old Main," and continued teaching for 59 years. **Professor Emeritus Arthur Schulz** DMLC '50 is a living link to our very first professor, clearly remembering Professor Burk playing organ for chapel after his retirement.

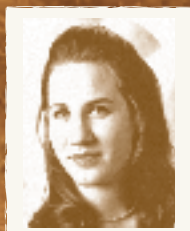


### 50 Years Ago

1968 – **Professor Delmar Brick** NWC '46 (pictured) and his wife, Ione, escorted 23 people on a study tour of the Luther Lands in honor of the 450th anniversary of the Reformation. The "Southern Minnesota Lutheran Heritage Tour" took the group through parts of Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Austria. An East German official guided them to the sites beyond the "Iron Curtain." This summer the MLC Alumni Association is taking 96 participants on a similar tour in honor of Reformation 500.



**Donald Gurgel**  
DMLC 1968  
Rochester MN



**Susan Kuckhahn**  
MLC 1998  
Gibbon MN



**Philip Janisch**  
MLC 2013  
Plymouth MN



**Lisa Stuebs**  
DMLC 1993  
Platteville WI



# MLC History *The Way It Was*

Have you checked out our History webpage recently? We've got great content for you to enjoy!

"Professor Interviews" is a new feature that allows you to read or listen to the thoughts and memories of newly retired faculty as they complete their service at MLC.

"Written Histories" includes several books about the histories of both NWC and DMLC.

Check out these and more at [mlc-wels.edu/history](http://mlc-wels.edu/history)!



## Join Us for the 2018 Alumni Commencement Dinner

**Friday, May 11, 2018, 4:00 pm**  
**Luther Student Center Cafeteria**

Enjoy a delicious meal . . . good fellowship . . . presentations by professors . . . and then attend the 7:30 concert in the Wittenberg Collegiate Center Auditorium.

*Only \$5.00 - payable on arrival*

**Reservations are required:**

Call the alumni office at 507.354.8221 x387 or register online at [mlcdinner18.eventbrite.com](http://mlcdinner18.eventbrite.com).

*All alumni and families welcome!*

*This year's presenters:*



**Professor  
Peter Baganz**

"Learning History & Geography Through Study Tours"



**Admissions  
Director  
Mark Stein**

"The Great Need for More Ministers of the Gospel"



**President  
Mark Zarling**

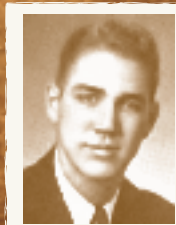
"State of the College" Report and Q & A



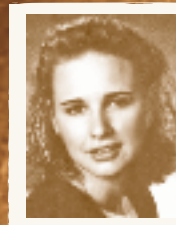
**Daniel  
Kirk**  
DMLC 1958  
Owosso MI



**Rachel  
Puschl**  
DMLC 1973  
Wrightstown WI



**William  
Wietzke**  
NWC 1948  
Montrose CO



**Amy  
Jungemann**  
DMLC 1993  
Dallas

## Spring Alumni Trip:

### *King's Singers Concert or Twins Baseball - Take Your Pick!*

Alumni are invited to join MLC students and members of New Ulm's CASTLE group for an entertaining afternoon in **Minneapolis** on **Sunday, April 15**. Two events are occurring simultaneously, and a limited number of tickets are available for each.

For 50 years, the **King's Singers** have been entertaining audiences worldwide with their sweet harmonies and British wit. Originally formed in 1968, the group consisted of six students from King's College, Cambridge. Today's group carries on the tradition of vocal excellence. The concert is in Orchestra Hall, an attraction in and of itself. Our seats for the 2:00 pm show are main floor, near the front.

Spring is just around the corner, and that means a return to our national pastime. The **Minnesota Twins** are coming off a solid season that included their first playoff appearance since 2010, and they're looking to get off to a fast start. They'll take on their division rival, the Chicago White Sox, at beautiful Target Field with first pitch slated for 1:10 pm. Our tickets are chair-back upper deck right field, with a \$10 upgrade option for lower level.

Deluxe motorcoach transportation for these two events is available from MLC, with buses loading at 10:00 am and returning around 6:00 pm. Discounted cost for alumni for either event is \$35 with transportation or \$15 without. **For more information or to purchase your ticket, visit <https://mlcinmpls.eventbrite.com>.**



**Daniel  
Gawrisch**  
MLC 2008  
New Berlin WI



**Shanna  
Stubalt**  
MLC 2008  
San Jose



**Tony  
Hansen**  
NWC 1988  
Eau Claire WI



**Mikaela  
Patterson**  
DMLC 1988  
Rapid City SD





## Meet the Presidents

### Northwestern College President Carleton Toppe

**President Carleton Toppe** (1914-1998) began his ministry at Northwestern College in 1948 as professor of English. He became registrar in 1954 and then served as the college's fifth president from 1959 to 1987.

His presidency saw great changes at the school, all introduced with care and deliberation. Two dormitories, a gymnasium, and a remodeled auditorium were added to

campus. The preparatory department was separated from the college department and renamed "Northwestern Preparatory School." The college sought and was granted accreditation. And the curriculum was redrawn, with a reduction in required credits, a reduced emphasis on languages, and the addition of many electives.

A gifted teacher and leader, Carleton Toppe served the college and the church well for four decades. In his retirement he wrote a history of Northwestern College, *Holding the Course: Northwestern College 125* (Northwestern Publishing House: 1990).

The Northwestern College Alumni Society honors the NWC presidents through memorial scholarships. The Carleton Toppe Grant for GPA and Religion is awarded annually to a preseminary student based upon his campus citizenship and participation, potential for pastoral ministry, and excellence in academics, especially religion.

Northwestern College served as the WELS preseminary college from 1865 to 1995, when it amalgamated with Dr. Martin Luther College to form the present Martin Luther College.



### Northwestern College

1865-1869 Adam Martin  
1869-1870 Lewis O. Thompson  
1871-1919 Dr. August F. Ernst  
1919-1959 Erwin E. Kowalke  
**1959-1987 Carleton Toppe**  
1987-1993 Robert J. Voss  
1993-1995 John Braun



### Dr. Martin Luther College

1884-1885 Christian J. Albrecht  
1885-1893 Otto Hoyer  
1893-1908 John Schaller  
1908-1918 Adolph Ackermann  
1918-1920 Johannes P. Meyer  
1920-1935 Edmund Bliefernicht  
1936-1966 Carl L. Schweppe  
1966-1980 Conrad Frey  
1980-1993 Lloyd O. Huebner  
1993-1995 John Lawrenz



### Martin Luther College

1994-2007 Theodore Olsen  
2007-present Mark Zarling



**Eunice Schulz**  
DMLC 1963  
Oak Creek WI



**Diane Roekle**  
DMLC 1978  
Saginaw MI



**Joseph Christina**  
MLC 1998  
Grayslake IL



**Yvonne Relien**  
DMLC 1968  
Hortonville WI



# Dusseau Family Urban Teaching and Leadership Scholarship

This scholarship fund was established in 2016 by DMLC graduates Dr. Ray and Mrs. Ruth Dusseau.

Ruth emergency taught grades 5-8 at Immanuel-Hadar NE (1966) and taught grades 5-6 at Redemption-Milwaukee (1966-1971). Ray served as principal and grade 5-8 teacher at Pilgrim-Menomonee Falls WI (1966-1973); as principal at Atonement-Milwaukee (1973-1984); as principal at Shoreland LHS (1984-1992); and as professor of education at Wisconsin Lutheran College (1992-2012).

Dr. Dusseau is also the founding director of the Center for Urban Teaching in Milwaukee. "God is blessing the Lutheran schools in Milwaukee with growth that is only limited by our synod's ability to prepare enough teachers equipped to accept urban calls," he says. "The Center for Urban Teaching focuses on the identification, preparation, and support of high-performing urban teachers. The primary source for teachers in WELS schools is Martin Luther College. When MLC began partnering with the Center and established an urban minor, we established our scholarship to provide encouragement and support. As in all things, to God be the glory."

Ray and Ruth's two children attended Lutheran elementary schools in Milwaukee. Robert DMLC '94 is now principal of Risen Savior-Milwaukee, and Michelle is a professor of communication at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Their granddaughter is currently an MLC student active in urban ministry.

*Dusseau Scholarship winners are sophomore, junior, or senior applicants who are pursuing an urban ministry minor and who have demonstrated a strong potential to serve in low socio-economic urban settings and strong leadership in the support of urban teaching and outreach. Financial need may be considered but is not a prerequisite for selection.*

We're deeply grateful to donors who choose to support Martin Luther College students with a named scholarship, grant, or endowment. If you'd like to create something similar to honor a family member or leave a legacy, please contact Pastor Michael Otterstatter, vice president for mission advancement. He will guide you through the process.

[ottersmj@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:ottersmj@mlc-wels.edu) / 507.766.2744

## First Recipients of the Dusseau Scholarship



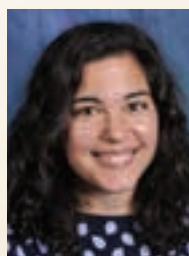
**Mary Meyer** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN) graduated in December 2017 with an elementary ed major and urban ministry minor. She's taken immersion trips to Chicago, Houston, and Milwaukee; taught two summers at Siloah-Milwaukee through the Center for Urban Teaching; and student taught at St. Marcus-Milwaukee.

"Every urban school I toured had high expectations for their students, and teachers used methods that were positive, engaging, and effective," Mary says. "I saw how difficult it can be to live in a city where crime and poverty is high, and I saw how these grade schools were helping to build not only the characters of their students but also their love for their Lord and Savior."



**Grace Williams** (Abiding Word-Houston) is a senior majoring in secondary English ed and minoring in urban ministry. She's taken immersion trips to Milwaukee and Chicago and taught summer school at Garden Homes-Milwaukee through the Center for Urban Teaching.

"I grew up in urban settings (Anchorage and Houston)," Grace says. "The cities are in desperate need of Christ's light and love, as well as committed, high-functioning educators. Like Jonah, I believe God has equipped me with the experiences to evangelize in an urban environment. My CfUT experiences have cemented my joy of working in these cityscapes, and I aspire to one day be an exceptional educator working with these exceptional kids!"



**Anna Scarfo** (Atonement-Milwaukee) is a junior with an elementary ed major and an urban ministry minor. She's the president of the Urban Leadership Team at MLC; has taken immersion trips to Milwaukee, Chicago, and New York; and has worked with the Center for Urban Teaching for eight summers.

"What I enjoy about urban ministry," she says, "are the people and the need. My passion drives me to serve wherever the Lord leads me, and the Lord calls my heart to the city, to serve and bloom with his people."

All recipients are chosen by the MLC Financial Aid Committee.



**Martin Moldenhauer**  
DMLC 1973  
Neenah WI



**Sharon Schroeder**  
DMLC 1968  
Appleton WI



**Ryan Heiman**  
MLC 1998  
Fond du Lac WI



**Laura Miller**  
MLC 2013  
Auburn WA



# He is risen! He is risen indeed!

This is the life-changing message Martin Luther College students have dedicated their lives to: The Lord Jesus Christ died to redeem us and rose again to seal the victory. Please consider partnering with us as we prepare these students for a lifetime of sharing this good news in your congregations and schools.

## Hallelujah!

Rev. Mark Zarling  
MLC President



### Current Priorities

Your gift will help us with current expenses as we fulfill our mission: preparing men and women to share the good news of Easter in WELS congregations, schools, and other ministries.



### Campus Enhancement

Your gift will help us maintain and improve the facilities in which our students study, worship, and live.



### Congregational Partner Grant Program (CPGP)

Your gift will support the CPGP Matching Fund, which matches congregations' tuition grants to MLC for their sons and daughters studying for the public ministry.



Easily *give online* at [mlc-wels.edu/donate](http://mlc-wels.edu/donate).  
Or *mail* your gift to MLC, 1995 Luther Ct, New Ulm MN 56073.



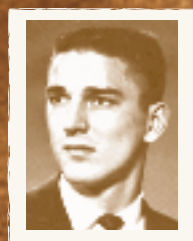
Jamie  
Jurek  
MLC 2008  
Saginaw MI



Lori  
Roekle  
DMLC 1988  
Saginaw MI



Casey  
De Frain  
MLC 2008  
Phoenix



Daniel  
Schmeling  
DMLC 1963  
Big Rib Falls WI

# FACULTY & STAFF NOTES



## **Dr. Cindy Whaley** **Earns “Professor of the Year”**

The Minnesota Academy of Reading (MAR) named **Dr. Cindy Whaley** DMLC '76 (education) Professor of the Year for her contributions to the literacy community of Minnesota.

Due to our January blizzard, Dr. Whaley could not accept the award in person at the MAR Policies and Issues Symposium at Hamline University, but she did utilize Google Hangout to speak to the group and present her keynote address, “The Lifelong Journey of a Successful Reader.”

Whaley has previously won the “Celebrate Literacy Award” from MAR (2012) and the “Community Support Award” for New Ulm Public Schools (2015) in recognition of her work with iTutoring.

**Professor Peter Baganz** DMLC '87 (history) presented “Finding History in Popular Music” at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers’ Conference in Tomah WI in February. He also began serving on the Brown County Historical Society board in January.

**Dr. Bethel Balge** (music) was awarded a \$3000 Artist Grant from the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, a grant sponsored by the McKnight Foundation, to support her studies and preparations for concerts in the 2018-19 season.

**Professor James Carlovsky** '02 (math/technology) presented “Technology: Composition Tools” at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January.



**Professor Benjamin Clemons** '03 (dean of educational studies) was appointed to the Board of Directors of Kingdom Prep Lutheran High School, a Milwaukee-area all-boys high school committed to faith, service, experience, and excellence, which will open its doors to the first group of ninth graders in fall 2018. He also presented “Teacher Talk for Effective Classroom Management” at the Minnesota District Lutheran Teachers’ Conference in February.



**Professor Rebecca Cox** DMLC '89 (physical education) is serving on a self-study sub-committee for the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC).

**Professor Larry Czer** DMLC '79 (English) presented “New Methods of Teaching Grammar” at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January.



## **Dr. David Wendler** **Wins Outstanding Service Award**

**Dr. David Wendler, Professor Emeritus** DMLC '70, received an Outstanding Service Award from the University Council of Jamaica, the accreditation agency for that

country. He has worked many years both as a member of the Education Standards Committee, which sets accreditation standards for their colleges and universities, and as an assessor of the quality of the institutions. He received the award at the 30th Anniversary Awards Luncheon in Kingston, Jamaica, in October.



**David  
Lange**  
DMLC 1993  
Candia NH



**Walter  
Sievert**  
DMLC 1948  
Mobridge SD



**Shirley  
Hatton**  
DMLC 1973  
Monte Vista CO



**Ross  
Chartrand**  
MLC 2013  
Manassas VA





**Professor Rachel Feld** '06 (director of academic computing) presented "Using Google Apps in WELSSA" along with Tom Plitzuweit (executive director for WELSSA) at the Wisconsin Lutheran State Teachers' Conference in Milwaukee in October and "Tech Tools for ELA Skill Development" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January.



**Professors Paul Grubbs** '01 (English, pictured) and **Jonathan Roux** DMLC '95 (education) presented both the keynote, "Integrating Language Arts Across the Curriculum," and a sectional, "Strategies for Visual Literacy," at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January. They also presented a similar keynote address and a different

sectional, "Writing Across the Content Areas," at the Lake Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Crete IL in February.

**Professor Emeritus Earl Heidtke** DMLC '73 presented "Thinking Geographically in the Primary Grades: Geography Tools and Methods" at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Tomah in February.

**Professors Emeritus Susan Haar** DMLC '65 and **Dr. Carla Melendy** presented "Social Studies in Preschool?" at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Tomah in February.

**Professor Paul Koelpin** WLS '90 (history/theology) presented "Luther: Still Relevant After 500 Years" at the Michigan-Ohio Pastor/Teacher/Delegate Conference in Columbus in January and also at a Pastor/Teacher Conference in Frankenmuth MI in February.

**Professor Jennifer Krause** '96 (education) presented "Spice Up Your Spelling Instruction" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January.

**Professor Cheryl Loomis** DMLC '77 (education) presented "Stages of Writing Development" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January.

**Professor Jennifer Mehlberg** '07 (education) presented "Emergent Writing" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January, and she presented "HighScope Curriculum" and "Administration in Early Childhood Education" at the Michigan District Teachers' Conference in October.

**Dr. John Meyer** DMLC '87 (director of graduate studies & continuing education) presented "Learning-Focused Instruction" at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Tomah in February.

**Dr. Kari Muente** '99 (social sciences) presented "Social Studies and Inclusive Practices" and "Using Primary Sources to Enhance Social Studies Content Knowledge" at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Tomah in February.

**Dr. Mark Paustian** WLS '88 (English/Hebrew) made three recent presentations: "Speak to My Heart" at a marriage retreat in Stillwater MN in January, "The Voice of Christ in the Psalms" at the Minnesota River Valley Pastors' Conference in Redwood Falls in March, and "Communicating Christ in a Secular Age" at the Men of Truth Conference at MLC in March.



**Professor Jonathan Roux** DMLC '95 (education) presented "Reading Workshop: It's Easier Than You Think" at the Michigan District Teachers' Conference in Bay City in October, "Book Talk: Chapter Books for Middle and Upper Grades" at the Minnesota District Teachers' Conference at MLC in October, "What's New in Picturebooks?" at the Wisconsin State

Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Milwaukee in October, "Ideas for Teaching Listening and Speaking" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January, "Writing Through the Grades" at the Northern Wisconsin Teachers' Conference in Kiel in February, and "Please Sign Here: The Importance of Handwriting" at the Lake Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Crete IL in February.



**Keith Free**  
NWC 1978  
Omaha NE



**Shawna Mehlberg**  
MLC 2008  
West Bend WI



**Arthur Valerio**  
NWC 1963  
Milwaukee



**Mark Wendland**  
NWC 1968  
Lusaka, Zambia

# FACULTY & STAFF NOTES



**Professor Jonathan Schaefer** '02 (director of WELS New Teacher Induction) presented "Ministry Development Planning" at the Northern California Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Modesto in February.



**Professor David Scharf** WLS '05 (theology) presented "The Doctrine and Practice of Stewardship" at the California/Nevada Pastors' Conference in January and at the Southern Conference of the Minnesota District in February.

**Professor Adrian Smith** '03 (music) played organ for the Organ Dedication Service and the afternoon Organ Concert of Thanksgiving and Praise at St. Mark-Watertown WI in January.



**Professor James Unke** DMLC '83 (athletic director) was elected chair of the Executive Council of the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) and appointed chair of the UMAC Finance Committee. He was also invited to be keynote speaker at the KNUJ Player of the Year Banquet.

**Dr. Wayne Wagner, Professor Emeritus**

DMLC '72 completed a pipe organ consulting project for Christ-West Salem WI and served as guest organist for the 75th church anniversary of St. Matthew-Janesville WI in December.



**Floyd Ross**  
DMLC 1983  
Franklin WI



**Thomas Zarnstorff**  
DMLC 1978  
Whitewater WI



**Shannon Eckert**  
MLC 1998  
Tucson



**Paul Schupmann**  
MLC 2003  
Aurora IL



**Dr. Cindy Whaley** DMLC '76 (education) presented "Teaching Writing for Grades 3-5" at the Southwest Minnesota Language Arts Curriculum Conference at MLC in January and "The Brain: An Amazing Gift from God" to the Parents-Teachers-Friends at Immanuel-Hutchinson MN in February.



**Dr. Jeff Wiechman** DMLC '92 (vice president for academics) presented the keynote address, "K-8 Social Studies: Why? How?" at the Western Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers' Conference in Tomah in February. He also presented a one-day workshop on supervision of instruction at the Arizona-California Principals' Meeting in Tucson in March.

**Instructor Kathryn Wurster** (music) presented a voice recital entitled "Songs I Love by American Composers" at MLC's Chapel of the Christ and at Bethany Lutheran College's Trinity Chapel in March. Also appearing on the program were **Professor Jonathan Laabs** '08 (music) and **Instructor Jennifer Haugen** (music).

**Professor Miles Wurster** (music) served as clinician for the WELS 2018 East Regional Band Festival held at Illinois LHS in March.



**Don Scheuerlein**  
NWC 1978  
Bay City MI



**Grace Hillemann**  
DMLC 1953  
Savanna IL

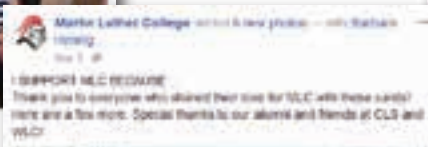


**Theodore Thurow**  
NWC 1943  
Menominee MI



**Richard Schlieve**  
NWC 1968  
Lebanon WI









## ***The social event of the year just keeps getting better!***

MLC Day invites supporters across the globe to celebrate God's many blessings to MLC through social media!

### **PRAY** for our mission and ministry:

- Offer prayers of thanks for MLC in your schools and churches
- Send your prayers to us, and we'll post them online

### **SHARE** our story:

- Celebrate your own MLC Day at your school
- Share MLC Day posts with us and with your Facebook friends

### **GIVE** to support ministerial training:

- MLC Day contributions will help fund the Congregational Partner Grant Matching Fund, directly supporting MLC students!

***mlcday.com | mlcday@mlc-wels.edu***



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