

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE INFOCUS

SPRING 2022



In This Issue . . .

Cross Country Championship

Special Education

Your Future Called Workers

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The LORD's Compassions Never Fail: These

By President Rich Gurgel



"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Those beautiful and comforting words the Lord inspired Jeremiah to pen in Lamentations 3:22-23 are even more astounding when you ponder their context.

Lamentations was written as the smoke was rising from Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem. That capital city of God's chosen people had been burned to the ground. Solomon's golden temple, that wonder of the ancient world and center of Israel's worship life, was gone. All of this had come as God's call to repentance to his chosen people.

Yet God enabled Jeremiah to see through the smoke and confess what was still true. Yes, God's call to repentance was painful discipline, but right there Jeremiah saw a merciful God who wouldn't give up on them. The Lord was at work through it all to gather them—as Jesus would say of Jerusalem centuries later—"as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings" (Matthew 23:37).

Such is the faithful heart of God, who longs to bless repentant sinners with his compassion. And that's not a momentary mood but the perpetual passion of his Fatherly heart toward us. He's proved that in our Lord Jesus, whose suffering, death, and resurrection we recount again this spring as Lent gives way to Easter. All that is behind the "every morning" reality of our Lord's compassions.

How important it is right now to hear Jeremiah express this truth! With all that's going on in our world, with the pandemic and supply chain shortages and international tensions—feel free to add your own unique challenges here—we can easily take our eyes off the realities of God's "new every morning" compassions. We can forget that what was true for God's people, even as Jerusalem was a smoking ruin, is still true today: our Lord's compassions bless us every day in more ways than we can count.

May I encourage you to view this edition of MLC InFocus as a concrete way to count God's compassions to you through your college of ministry?



MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE



On the cover:

The 2021 women's cross country team clinched the UMAC championship for the second time in program history.

Correction: Our sincere apologies as we incorrectly identified **Ralph Polzin** (NWC '57) as Richard Polzin in our fall 2021 issue.

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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.

The alumni photos at the bottom of the pages are from the anniversary classes of MLC, NWC, and DMLC: '42, '47, '52, '57, '62, '67, '72, '77, '82, '87, '92, '97, '02, '07, '12, and '17. Thanks to Alumni Director Steve Balza DMLC '93, who provided this random selection of alumni.

Pages Count the Ways!



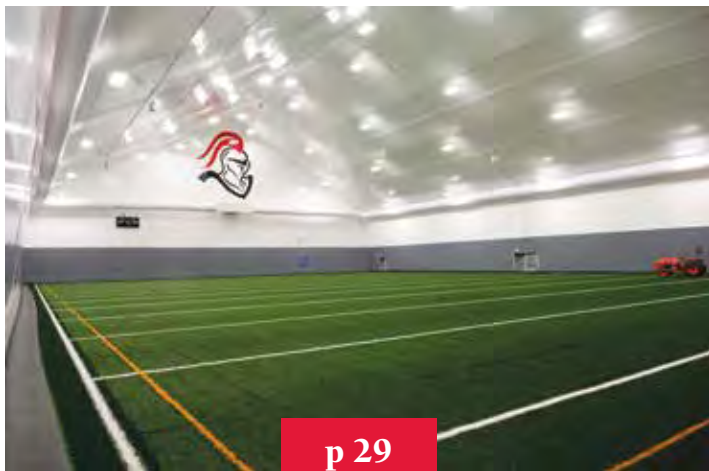
pp 4-8



pp 12-13



pp 14-25



p 29

Are there challenges? Yes! We're working hard to reverse the recent downturn in enrollment—and the number of called worker vacancies in our synod gives such efforts extra urgency. The growing mental health needs of the rising generation—made more acute by the pandemic—challenge us to do better in surrounding our MLC students with the support they need. And while we have watched average educational debt for MLC graduates decrease for three straight years, we know we can do more to make MLC more affordable for our students and those who support them.

But in the midst of all that, please don't overlook what each page of this *InFocus* holds: evidence that the Lord's compassions never fail, and they certainly haven't failed us at MLC!

As you read the **Here on the Hill stories on pages 4-8**, realize what you are seeing! Thank God for many campus activities, sadly put on hold last year, that God has again allowed us to enjoy—not the least of which is welcoming hundreds of prospective students to campus as they ponder whether public ministry might be for them too!

As you read about our **special education programs on pages 12-13**, including a new accelerated master's program, thank the Lord for the MLC students who have a heart for teaching children who have special needs. We are excited that he is allowing us to offer them several different pathways to this ministry.

As you **"Meet Your Future Called Workers" on pages 14-25**, please recognize each story for what it is proclaiming. Every student's presence on our campus is a not-so-minor miracle of God's grace as he continues to bring to us those willing to ponder the privilege of public ministry. The Lord hears our prayers for workers in the harvest field.

As you read about gifts received and projects completed through our **Equipping Christian Witnesses campaign on page 29**, you are witnessing the fruit God is bringing through the gifts and prayers of thousands of his people around our synod.

Thank you for reading these stories! Thank you for your prayers and gifts, which God uses to write these stories. And then remember what is behind everything you will read on these pages. Our Lord's compassions never fail.

We deeply appreciate your gifts to MLC!

Due to supply chain issues, we could not include our usual remittance envelope. If you'd like to support the students of Martin Luther College, please choose one of these easy options:

- Text **GIVE** to 507.223.4344
- Call **507.354.8221** • Go to **mlc-wels.edu/donate**



Jonathan Medico
MLC 2017
Sarasota FL



Mary Ann Gieseke
DMLC 1942
New Ulm MN



Christopher Pluger
MLC 1997
Fairborn OH



Diana Wilson
DMLC 1972
Sioux City IA

here on the hill



Holy Week Devotions—Our Gift to You

God's Suffering Servant is MLC's newest devotion book created for you.

In this eight-day booklet, the prophet Isaiah introduces the Messiah as God's Suffering Servant. Our Lenten watch will turn the spotlight on that Servant in his hour of suffering—the pain and scorn heaped on him, the antagonism of enemies, and the faithlessness of friends. And then we will rejoice as we see the Suffering Servant forgive all who have sinned against him and rise from the dead to become the King Victorious.

When the devotions become available in April, you may access them in multiple ways at mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions

- Read them online • Download a PDF
- Request that we send them to your personal email on a daily basis, April 10-17.

mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions



High School Students Focus on Ministry

Focus on Ministry. It's what we call our multi-day experiential visits for high schoolers who wonder whether they might be a pastor, teacher, or staff minister.

This year the MLC Admissions Office hosted about 700 students and 100 chaperones from 23 different Lutheran high schools for Focus on Ministry events.

Students toured town and campus, experienced college classes, heard presentations, and talked with counselors, faculty, coaches, and students about how God might use their gifts for the public ministry.

The visitors not only became better acquainted with our campus, they also became better acquainted with each other—like the Luther Prep and Kingdom Prep students pictured above.

Congratulations, December Graduates!

Seven students earned their bachelor's degrees this December. They are invited to walk in the May 2022 commencement ceremony.

BA BIBLICAL LANGUAGES (Preseminary Studies)

Andrew Owczarzak
(Bethel-Bay City MI)

BS ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Madison (Leckwee) Boulden
(Trinity-West Bend WI)

Matthew Scharp
(Bethlehem-Menomonee Falls WI)

BS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Rebecca Carpenter
(St. John-Sturgis MI)

Mya Kessler-Peshon
(St. John-Lewiston MN)

BS SECONDARY EDUCATION (ENGLISH)

Katelyn Edwards
(Salem-Loretto MN)

BS EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

Nathan Curtis
(Faith-Sharpburg GA)

One assignment was issued:

Madison (Leckwee) Boulden '21
(Trinity-West Bend WI) to Crown of Life Christian Academy-Ft. Myers FL: gr 1-2 (six-month assignment)



Donna Hartwig
DMLC 1962
Wood Lake MN



Monte Ewald
DMLC 1982
Seattle



Dawn Baer
DMLC 1982
Milwaukie OR



LeRoy Boerneke
NWC 1952
New Ulm MN



MLC Hosts National Choral Festival

Hosting duties for the biennial WELS National Choral Festival are usually passed from one Lutheran high school to another. In 2021, Martin Luther College held the hosting privilege, and we could not have been more excited!

The gym was packed for the Friday night Pops Concert as 465 high school students put their best dancing shoe forward. Saturday included rehearsals and lots of fun. Sunday morning saw the individual high school choirs edifying local churches' worship services, and Sunday afternoon brought all the voices together in amazing harmonies for the Sacred Concert.



These talented students made music, memories, and new friends. Not a small number of these friendships will continue when some of these students meet again as college students enrolled here at MLC, ready to prepare for service as pastors, teachers, and staff ministers—and choir directors, worship coordinators, organists, and singers!

Didn't make it to Choral Fest? Concert videos are available on MLC's streaming site at livestream.com/mlc-streams.



Julianne Foelske
MLC 2007
Concord WI



Charles Cortright
NWC 1977
Anderson CA



Emily Haskell
MLC 2012
Rapid City SD



Joshua Severeid
MLC 2017
Federal Way WA

here on the hill

We're Singing a New Song!

The beautiful new *Christian Worship* hymnals have found their places in Chapel of the Christ. Students are quickly learning the new liturgies, prayers, hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs. As campus worship leaders, instrumentalists, and singers, they are enjoying these new ways to praise our Triune God.

To encourage and inspire the students, **Pastor Michael Schultz** NWC '85, WLS '89 (pictured), project director for the WELS Hymnal Project, came to campus in December to speak about the hymnal suite. He told the campus family how the committee created and produced the worship resources and how the students could make the fullest use of them, not only at MLC, but also in the congregations and schools they'll soon be serving as pastors, teachers, and staff ministers.



Exploring the College Stacks

Students from Prairie Lutheran School in Fairfax, Minnesota, visited the MLC library in December to get resources for their National History Day projects.

Teacher **Anna Endorf** MLC '99 has brought seventh- and eighth-grade students to MLC for several years to check out books on topics their school and local public libraries don't carry. The students learn about navigating the breadth of resources at a college library like MLC's. Sometimes they also attend chapel or have lunch in the caf.

"Our staff enjoys the opportunity to work with these younger students and prepare them for using libraries in the future," said Library Director Linda Kramer. "We welcome other elementary and high school teachers to consider the MLC library as a resource for their students, and we'd be happy to discuss the possibilities." Kramer can be reached at 507.233.9131.

Call for *Thalassa* Submissions

Martin Luther College has now begun accepting submissions for the 16th annual *Thalassa* Prize. This \$1,000 prize is awarded to the best photo-and-essay submission from an MLC student or graduate who has served in an international ministry.

DEADLINE: April 30, 2022

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:
mlc-wels.edu/thalassa

ALL PAST WINNERS:
mlc-wels.edu/Thalassa

2021 WINNER:

Cindy Lendt MLC '09
East Asia

"Hasn't God Chosen the Poor . . ."



**Benjamin
Pagel**
MLC 2007
Moline IL



**Janet
Podjan**
DMLC 1967
Benton Harbor MI



**Michael
Merkle**
NWC 1977
Bay City MI



**Cynthia
Zumm**
DMLC 1972
Fox Lake WI

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC MLC

Let Freedom in Christ Ring: MLK Day at MLC

By Cameron Schroeder (St. Paul-Onalaska WI)

**“Darkness cannot drive out darkness;
only light can do that. Hate cannot drive
out hate; only love can do that.”**

– Martin Luther King Jr.

On Monday, January 17, students and faculty took the day off from classes and homework for a very important purpose. It wasn't really a “day off” at all, but more of a “day on”—a chance to reflect on the legacy of a man who stood for more than the furthering of his own agenda.

Dr. King fought for love to reach into the darkest corners of each and every heart. This goal is one that we at MLC are focused on as well, if for no other reason than the Middle Eastern man with holes in his hands who showed his perfect love for us 2,000 years ago.

MLC's Service & Cross-Cultural Learning Committee planned the day, which began with a special chapel service. Then two educators, Fletcher and Pat James, who are members of Divine Peace-Largo MD, gave a presentation about preaching the gospel with a heart of love for all.

A panel discussion (*pictured*) included the Fletcher family and two members of our campus family, **JuanDa Escobar** (Divine Savior-Doral FL) and **Prof. Aaron Robinson**.

Olivia Robinson
(Fairview-Milwaukee)
and **Alyssa Thompson**
(St. Lucas-Milwaukee)
enjoyed creating a flag
together during the
fine arts workshop.



Cultural Diversity Coordinator
Aaron Robinson speaks.



Featured on the panel were Fletcher
James Jr., **JuanDa Escobar**, Taylor James,
**Cultural Diversity Coordinator Aaron
Robinson**, Pat James, and Fletcher James.

Special electives followed, including fine arts and music workshops, the role-playing of challenging cross-cultural situations, and the viewing and discussion of a documentary about how racial bias impacts us.

Senior **Chloe Robbert** (St. John-Goodhue MN) let the gears begin to turn, applying the day to her future ministry. She said, “We will have people in our classrooms and congregations who are dealing with racial inequality. We need to be ready for that, to love them.”

Called workers—pastors, teachers, and staff ministers alike—will never be perfect vessels of the gospel. But MLK Day at MLC was all about doing what we can to educate ourselves about the challenges that some of our brothers and sisters in Christ face. Our goal is simple: striving to let freedom in Christ ring to every nation, tribe, people, and tongue.



**John
Ferguson**
MLC 2002
Fostoria MI



**Jacki
Adams**
MLC 2012
Bradenton FL



**Louis
Sievert**
NWC 1967
New Ulm MN



**Becki
Renner**
DMLC 1987
Madison NE



“Shine Like Stars” (Daniel 12:3)

On November 3, MLC students left their textbooks in their dorm rooms and prepared to meet evangelists—men and women who “shine like stars” (Daniel 12:3) as they share the gospel in all different ways and all different places. This was a day to hear stories and ask questions about urban, rural, and international ministries. About ministering to little children, teens, families. About sharing Jesus with people who are incarcerated, people with special needs, people in a postmodern world.

In other words, this was a day to remember that though we differ in our personal circumstances, our spiritual situations are exactly alike: We are miserable sinners. We are mercifully saved.

Our gratitude to all the presenters who inspired us with their examples of humble service to our Savior.

Being Comfortable with the Uncomfortable

Rev. Dan and Karen Kroll
Missionaries
Lilongwe, Malawi

WELS Canada: “Being All Things to All People for the Sake of the Gospel”

Rev. Harland Goetzinger
St. Paul-Ottawa ON

Finding the Lost Children of Abraham

Rev. Mike Duncan
Friendly Counselor to Asia

How Real Is Heaven in Your Mind, Heart, and Life?

Rev. Dan Kramer
Peace in Jesus-Boise ID

Will Anything Grow Here? Mission Work in a Hard Harvest Field

Rev. Jeremiah Gumm
King of Kings-Maitland FL

A Stadium for Our Savior: How the World’s Most Popular Sport Can Give Us a Field for Sharing Jesus

Rev. Joel Schulz
Divine Savior-Delray Beach FL

A Crash Course in Church Planting: The Planter

Rev. Matt Vogt
WELS Regional Mission Counselor

A Crash Course in Church Planting: The Church

Rev. Matt Rothe
The Way-Fredericksburg VA

Reaching Out with the Gospel to Those with Special Needs

Rev. Joel Gaertner
National Director,
Jesus Cares Ministries

Rev. Patrick Feldhus
Chaplain, The Lutheran
Home-Belle Plaine MN

Disciple-Making Youth Ministries

Staff Minister Brandon Steenbock
St. Mark-De Pere WI

Lord of the Rings and Lannisters: Developing a Pauline “As Your Own Poets Have Said” Apologetic

Rev. Luke Thompson
Professor
Martin Luther College

Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast

Rev. Eric Roecker
Director, WELS Commission
on Evangelism

Mistakes from 30+ Years of Cross-Cultural Ministry: Do Better than Me, Please!

Rev. Mark Henrich
Hope-Toronto ON

Is My Spanish Good Enough?

Rev. Ryan Kolander
Palabra de Vida-Detroit MI



Mark Zondag
MLC 2017
Tomsk,
Russia



Bonnie Ruch
DMLC 1987
Ontario,
Canada



Elroy Bartsch
DMLC 1957
Johnson MN



Elizabeth Schimmel
DMLC 1992
North Mankato MN

Evangelism Day 2021



Praise and Proclaim Evangelism Training

Staff Minister Dave Malnes
President, Praise and Proclaim
Ministries-Meridian ID

Plan, Execute, Evaluate: Implementing Congregational Outreach

Rev. Jon Schroeder
Faith-Sharpsburg GA

How to Use Your High School to Do More Outreach

Principal Dave Gartner
West LHS-Plymouth MN

Let the Little Children Come

Teacher Kristin Mantey
Little Lions Child Care-Marathon WI

Urban Ministry

Rev. Aaron Robinson
Cultural Diversity Coordinator
Martin Luther College

Evangelism Can Happen Here Too! The Power of a Mission Mindset in a Rural Setting

Rev. Mike Kuschel
St. Matthew-Danube MN
St. Matthew-Flora MN
St. John-Renville MN

Prison Ministry: Setting Souls Free

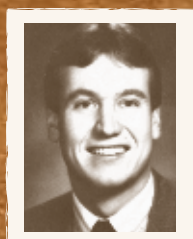
Rev. Darren Green
St. John-Redwood Falls MN

Serving as Christian Witnesses in Today's World

Rev. Donn Dobberstein
Director, WELS Commission on Discipleship

Give the Reason for the Hope You Have: Defending the Faith

Rev. Doug Tomhave
St. Paul-Lake Mills WI



Brian Ewings
NWC 1987
Jim Falls WI



Nancy Haug
DMLC 1982
Anchorage AK



Gregory Ewald
NWC 1982
Seattle



Laura Thomas
MLC 2002
Fort Collins CO



Women's Cross Country Wins UMAC Championships

The MLC women's cross country team won the UMAC Championship for the second time in program history in November. The team won its first title in 1995.

Under second-year head coach **Breanna Olson** MLC '12, the Knights won the event by 16 points over second-place Minnesota Morris.

Three MLC runners finished inside the top 10 at the event, with four runners receiving All-UMAC honors for their efforts.

Abigail Buege (Victory of the Lamb-Katy TX), **Maya Habben** (Mt. Calvary-Flagstaff AZ), and **Hannah Kratz** (Our Savior-Birmingham AL) were each named First Team All-UMAC, while **Leah Nushart** (Zion-Greenleaf WI) was named Second Team All-UMAC. Olson also took home the honor of UMAC Coach of the Year.

Buege finished in second place at the event, giving her the highest finish by an MLC runner at the UMAC Championships since 2006.

Owczarzak Named AFCA All-American

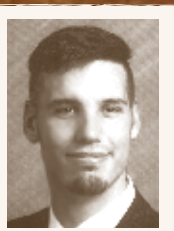
Senior football player **Andrew Owczarzak** (Bethel-Bay City MI) was named Second Team All-America by the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) in December.

Owczarzak (#79, pictured) is the first MLC player ever to receive AFCA All-America honors.

He was also named First Team All-UMAC and Third Team All-Region by D3football.com.

During his five-year career, Owczarzak started 44 games and led an offensive line that helped the Knights rush for over 12,000 yards during those seasons, including back-to-back UMAC Championships during the 2018 and 2019 seasons.

This season, despite playing with an injured hand that required a cast, Owczarzak started all nine games at right tackle and helped the Knights average 242.4 rushing yards per game.



Peter Reese
MLC 1997
Goodhue MN



Josiah Willitz
MLC 2012
Mankato MN



Rebecca Klann
DMLC 1992
Glendale AZ



Roger Stone
NWC 1972
Gary SD



Koelpin Steps Down as Men's Soccer Coach After 27 Seasons

Professor Paul Koelpin NWC '85, WLS '90 will step down from his coaching position after 27 seasons.

Koelpin is the only head coach in the history of MLC men's soccer, coaching 26 of the last 27 years, missing only the 1998 season when he took a sabbatical. As head coach, he recorded a 180-225-25 record, won UMAC championships in 2002 and 2003, and earned UMAC Coach of the Year honors in 2001, 2003, and 2017.

Koelpin, who first picked up soccer as a college player in the early 1980s, considers himself an "accidental coach" who never imagined he would become a coach at all, let alone stand on the sidelines for this long. He also believes the future is bright for the MLC soccer program.

"MLC soccer has a very solid core returning for next season," he said. "The team is poised to be very competitive. The players will benefit from a new voice and some new energy. The Betty Kohn Fieldhouse will also be a real bonus for off-season training and work on artificial turf."

MLC Director of Athletics **Jim Unke** DMLC '83 is thankful for Koelpin's years of service. "Paul has been a great asset to MLC men's soccer and our conference (the UMAC). He always had teams that reflected the purpose of athletics, competitiveness,

and sportsmanship here at MLC. All of the hundreds of players that played for him, I am sure, will have fond memories of his tireless passion for the game. Saying thank you seems so inadequate, but 'Thank you! You will be missed.'"



When asked to look back on his tenure, Koelpin remembers the players he coached and the blessings that come from being a part of athletics at MLC.

"Truthfully, MLC soccer is not about me," he said. "I've been very blessed to coach many young men who have rallied together to form competitive teams. That is a credit to their character. And, honestly, never underestimate the value of having the entire team share a common faith in Christ. That is a real bonus for MLC athletics.

"I'll miss the relationships—with players, parents, assistant coaches, opposing coaches, officials," he added. "I've met and worked with so many very fine people. Soccer was the bond that connected us, but those bonds have extended far beyond the field. I'm confident that MLC soccer will be in fine hands (and feet) moving forward."

Koelpin will continue as a full-time professor at MLC, teaching history and theology. **Dr. Timothy Grundmeier** MLC '07 and **Professor Nicolas Schmoller** MLC '06, WLS '10 will take over the program as associate coaches next year.



50 YEARS on the Clock!

MLC athletics recently thanked **Professor Emeritus John Micheel** for his 50 years as official clock keeper for DMLC and MLC football.

Professor Micheel has also served as official basketball scorer for 16 years and equipment manager for all sports for 14 years.

While serving as a math professor at DMLHS/MLA (1965-1970) and DMLC (1975-1995), Micheel was also our assistant men's basketball coach. He assisted Coaches Drew Buck (10 years), Gary Dallmann (seven years), and Dennis Gorsline (seven years). Micheel continued to serve as a math professor at MLC until his retirement in 2008.

Thank you, Professor Micheel!



Paul Rutschow
NWC 1992
Downers Grove IL



Alyssa Rixe
MLC 2012
Hoskins NE



Joel Steinke
NWC 1992
Beloit WI



Paul Workentine
NWC 1982
Grafton NE

Teachers, MLC Is Here to Assist You as You Serve Students with Special Needs

By **Dr. John Meyer** DMLC '87, Director of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education

In recent years, Lutheran schools have been serving and seeking to serve more students with special needs.

With the start of the Wisconsin Special Needs Scholarship Program, many Lutheran schools in that state are expanding their services to special needs students, and many other schools all over the country are expanding their special education and learning resources as well.

This change can be scary and difficult, but Martin Luther College is ready to help teachers meet those challenges.

Pre-Service Teachers: MLC prepares teachers who are fully qualified for teaching ministry and licensed for special education. Our special education graduates hold an Academic Behavioral Specialist (ABS) license, which covers all areas of special education. If a school is starting a special education program, our graduates are prepared to lead it.

We have begun offering an accelerated master's program in special education as well. Undergraduates can get a head start on their master's degree with learning disability (LD) licensure by taking advantage of our dual-level courses. (See the accompanying article on page 13.) If you know a high school student thinking about special education, please share this wonderful opportunity with them.

In-Service Teachers: Seizing the special education opportunities cannot happen through new teachers only. Veteran Lutheran teachers have a part to play also. Some may choose to retrain to fulfill the role of a full-time special education teacher or coordinator. Others may want to remain general classroom teachers but acquire new skills to serve students with a wider range of differences and needs.

MLC has what teachers need for both.

General Classroom Teachers: The Master of Science in Education degree with a special education emphasis helps classroom teachers . . .

- Recognize and serve a range of students in their classroom,
- Successfully navigate the referral process,

- Implement accommodations,
- Address reading and math delays, and
- Help students with emotional/behavioral challenges.

This program is specifically designed with maximum electives so teachers can grow in other areas of classroom instruction, technology, and leadership as their interests and responsibilities suggest.

Special Education Teachers: The Master of Science in Education degree with Special Education LD Licensure helps teachers . . .

- Diagnose and serve students with learning disabilities,
- Coordinate special education services with the public school,
- Collaborate professionally with school and community partners,
- Implement and monitor student IEPs/ISPs, and
- Ensure all students in the Lutheran school succeed.

Perhaps the most important part of this program is an internship in a special education setting so that teachers can observe and practice successful models of support.

To facilitate this experience, MLC will pay the substitute teacher costs that permit the graduate student to gain these experiences outside their classroom.

As always, our courses are designed by Lutheran teachers for Lutheran teachers in Lutheran schools. Every course embeds the content in ways that are specifically designed for and practical in Lutheran school settings.

Contact **Dr. John Meyer** for more information about earning your master's degree.

Office Suite #116
507.354.8221
meyerjd@mlc-wels.edu



Tom Bernthal
NWC 1987
Lovelock NV



Kathryn Hinderer
DMLC 1952
Hartland WI



Juul Madson
NWC 1942
Princeton MN



Wayne Schulz
NWC 1962
Denmark WI

NEW ACCELERATED

MS Education (Special Ed) Degree For Undergraduate Students

Do you have a heart for special education? We do too. And the need is great! WELS schools need special education teachers who can understand, identify, and plan appropriate strategies to help more students succeed—while also providing the Christian education parents desire.

To help meet that need, MLC is now offering undergraduates an accelerated master's program in special education with learning disability (LD) licensure. Qualified students can take dual-level courses that completely or partially fulfill both undergrad and graduate requirements. When they graduate as seniors, then, they're almost halfway through their master's program already.

This accelerated program will save qualified students two years and \$4,000 on their master's degree.

Stephanie Dalueg (*St. Paul-New Ulm MN*) is in the accelerated program. She'll graduate in May 2023 with her bachelor's degree, and just one year later, in May 2024, she'll graduate with her master's degree in special education with LD (Learning Disability) licensure.

How does it work? Three courses (nine credits) she's currently taking will apply to both her undergrad (BS) and graduate (MS) requirements. Additionally, another three undergraduate courses will partially complete her graduate degree requirements. She'll retake those three at the graduate level, needing to complete only the additional graduate-level assignments and paying only half the tuition cost. And then she'll finish six more graduate courses, including an internship.

Stephanie is just the kind of MLC teacher-in-training who will benefit from this program. It was while working at a summer camp that she first realized she had the heart and the gifts for these kids.

"Camp Knutson," she explains, "is a camp designed specifically for children with identified needs such as autism, Down syndrome, cancer, heart conditions, and skin conditions. I worked with so many different children, and it made me realize that this is what I want to do in the future. I want to support these children the best way I can, and I think that's through special education."

Once she decided this is the kind of gospel ministry she wants to do, she knew she wanted to get her master's degree right away. "I thought this would be a great opportunity to dive deeply into a topic that I am truly interested in."

Of course she doesn't know what the future holds. When she finishes, will she be called as a general classroom teacher who then supports the special ed students in her school? Or will she be called as a full-time special ed teacher for one WELS school? Or will she be a full-time special education teacher who serves several schools?

"I know my future is in God's hands," Stephanie says, "but I also know that wherever I go, I will use my skills to support the special education students in my school. Wherever God takes me, my goal will be to serve him to the best of my ability and to give him glory always."

Accelerated Master's Degree Special Education with LD Licensure

36 CREDITS

Complete 3 courses (9 cr)

as an undergrad student

Complete 3 courses (9 cr)

partially as an undergrad student, partially as a graduate student

Complete 6 courses (18 cr)

as a graduate student



Mollie Stern
MLC 2002
Adrian MI



John Dorn
DMLC 1992
Watertown WI



Michelle Vasold
MLC 1997
Saginaw MI



David Frey
MLC 2007
Belleville MI

Meet YOUR (FUTURE) CALLED WORKERS

Pages 14-25 are adapted from MLC's recruitment magazine, *KnightWatch*.

We hope high school students will be inspired by these stories, but we think our *InFocus* readers will also be interested. These are the people who may be serving at your congregation or school one day!



**CAMERON
SCHROEDER**

Luther HS '18

MLC '22 / Preseminary Studies

Major: Biblical Languages, Classical

Emphasis: Spanish for Pastors

*Forum (actor), College Choir,
Praise Ensemble, Admissions
student writer, Bible study
leader, Camp Phillip junior
staff director*

CAMERON SCHROEDER

Just because he's a Schroeder . . .

Contrary to what my last name might lead you to believe, I'll be the first called worker from my immediate family. I definitely didn't always think I would pursue ministry. In fact, I remember specifically *not* taking Latin my first year of high school because I thought it would be useless unless I became a pastor. It wasn't until my junior year of high school that I seriously considered the ministry.

SHOUT-OUTS: Pastor Jon Bilitz,

my religion teacher at the time, encouraged me to chat with **Pastor Ross Stelljes** who was visiting to recruit for MLC. He even told me I had gifts that would make me a great pastor—affirmation I didn't even know I needed. Soon I was applying to MLC, and I've loved every step of the journey ever since!

He's singing a new song: I'm really passionate about worship, and God has blessed me with a guitar and a lot of quality time to learn my way around it. I love showing people that we can worship our God in a variety of different ways with all of our hearts.

It's about Jesus. Period. I'm passionate about living life in a way that gives people a taste of how much Jesus loves them, and the blessing of singing and preaching powerful truths all over the country is such a cool way to do that. It's definitely a great foretaste, not only of the joy of sharing the gospel in ministry, but of the glorious worship that we'll all be a part of in heaven!

KEY QUESTION: What will MLC do for your faith-life?

It's ridiculously easy to saturate your entire day with God at MLC. You'll hear story after story of college students drifting from the faith or failing to go to church regularly during the college years. While MLC certainly isn't immune to these temptations, there is so much opportunity to be in the Word: Bible studies, chapel services, and more. I lead a weekly worship session to lift students up through prayer and the Word one extra time in the middle of a busy week of school. It's a great place to grow as a Christian as you train to be a vessel for the gospel.

Maybe someday: It's nearly impossible not to think about where it might be cool to serve someday. I've always thought I'd enjoy a mission startup. There's something really great about the idea of bringing the gospel in its truth and purity to a place where the WELS hasn't had a strong presence before.

HIS ADVICE: Pray, pray, and pray some more. God can absolutely use you in the ministry or anywhere else. Don't feel as though you need to choose a path and commit to it for life! Just take the first step and see where he leads you! MLC is a great first step.

Meet YOUR FUTURE CALLED WORKERS



PRESEMINARY STUDIES

If you're interested in sharing the gospel as a pastor, MLC is the place for you. Our four-year BA program emphasizes theology and the biblical languages (Greek and Hebrew), but you'll do so much more than go to class. You can play sports, sing in choir, and do ministry and volunteer work. At MLC, you'll grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and socially. Upon program completion, you can apply to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, where you'll finish your pastoral training. For more information, go to mlc-wels.edu/academics/degrees



KATE ASWEGE



**KATE
ASWEGE**

Kettle Moraine LHS '18

MLC '22 / Education

Major: Elementary Education

*Captain of volleyball team,
Student Athletic Advisory
Committee, Event Team,
Daylight, piano lessons,
Women's Choir, summer nanny*

It's been a ball! I've really enjoyed my time on the volleyball team because it was an instant way to make friends. In fact, one of my teammates is now my best friend and roommate! We have a lot of fun together.

It's her serve: My campus job on the Event Team has been a huge blessing—and a great way to serve—during my time at MLC. Being on the team allows me to pick which events I can attend, working out incredibly nicely with my school and volleyball schedule. The job has also pushed me out of my comfort zone because it requires me to talk to a number of different people, ranging from fellow students to licensure officials. This job might seem easy, but it takes a lot of planning and organization to run an event!

Don't tell anyone, but at first MLC was her safe school: Deep down I've always known I wanted to be a teacher. However, I definitely tried to deny this fact by exploring other career options. My top occupations were nursing and, as a backup, teaching. I eventually ended up being accepted into the University of Wisconsin for nursing school and the University of Minnesota for elementary education. I'd also been accepted into Martin Luther College but applied only as a safe backup option in case the other two didn't work out.

SHOUT-OUT: During the spring of senior year, I had a really hard time deciding between nursing and teaching. The person who helped talk me through my choices was **Mr. David Bartelt**, the superintendent of KML at the time.

Looking back: I can see God's hand working to shape my life, despite my attempts to take matters into my own control. I've never regretted my decision and have spent some of the best years of my life at MLC. I'm able to play the sport I love, and I met some of my best friends and even my fiancé, **Ethan Aguilar** (*California LHS*), here!

MLC = Relationships: With a common goal and faith, it's effortless to be friends with almost anyone you encounter! I have lifelong friends that I met playing volleyball and living in the dorms. Also, the rumor that MLC stands for Making Lutheran Couples is totally true . . . but it's nothing to be ashamed of!

LOOKING AHEAD: **Just let her talk:** I'd love to be involved in anything that utilizes my social skills! I enjoy being a part of any outreach opportunity and being able to speak to people about my church, school, and Savior.

HER ADVICE: I know the weight of making a decision about your career and college is heavy. Everything seems uncertain. As a senior in college, I'd tell you 1) go with your gut feeling and 2) don't worry so much! A college decision is never locked in stone. It's not a life-ending circumstance if you choose to pursue a different career. Sometimes we're so focused on the present that we forget that God has a bigger picture for us.

Meet YOUR FUTURE CALLED WORKERS



FRIENDSHIPS & FUN

At MLC, you make friends everywhere—on the court, on the stage, in the classroom, in the dorm. We have all kinds of students here—different backgrounds, different personalities—but because they're united in their faith and in their purpose, they get each other. Want to meet your lifelong friends? They'll be waiting for you at MLC.

NATHAN PAUSMA



**NATHAN
PAUSMA**

Winnebago Lutheran Academy '20

MLC '24 / Preseminary Studies

Major: Biblical Languages, Classical

Emphasis: Spanish for Pastors

Soccer, track & field, Student Senate, Technology Advisory Committee, Safety Committee, Daylight, Bible soccer camp, summer VBS teacher

Letting his light shine: I was able to help with soccer/Bible camps at churches in Maryland, Ohio, and Wisconsin the last three summers. I also did a VBS at St. Luke's in Oakfield, Wisconsin, which was a great opportunity. I even gave devotions for a couple days. I definitely learned a few things that will help me in my future ministry.

Getting inspired: In Mansfield, Ohio, I helped a new mission church with their first-ever soccer camp. Some of us from WLA stayed with **Pastor Brad Wright** and his family. Seeing how much fun they had while hosting us and running the camp motivated me in my training to be a pastor. It's great to know I have people just like them modeling what a true Christian leader is supposed to be like.

HIS ADVICE Part 1: Talk to your local congregations, schools, or community organizations and do events that help other people. There's no better way to shine your light. And honestly, it's ridiculous how much you benefit from them as well. If you ask me, it's a win-win situation every time.

HIS ADVICE Part 2: You want to find a career in which you do something you love. As far as a college goes, you want to go somewhere that they put you first. If the counselors aren't asking about you and then showing you how their college can serve you, that college is one I wouldn't consider too much. You're paying the college to educate you, so go to the college that has the most tools in the toolbox for you to use in your future career. MLC's amazing counselors are super helpful at answering all your

college questions, MLC-related or not, plus they're just great people to have conversations with.

SHOUT-OUTS: My WLA track coach, **Mr. Seth Jaeger**, really was an amazing role model. After watching him every day, I wanted to be just like him. And two pastors, **Pastor David Haag** and **Pastor Josh Olson**, showed me how awesome being a pastor could be. They made me see the talents God had given me and instilled a desire in me to be just like them.

What surprised him most about MLC: How included—a part of something bigger, a member of a family—I feel here. I'm not the most social person, but after one year, I have so many wonderful relationships with not only people in my class but people in all of the other classes and many of the professors as well. MLC is more friendly and amazing than I ever thought it would be.

Dreaming about the future: I am definitely going to be happy wherever God places me, whether that's a well-established church in the middle of Wisconsin, a small country church in South Dakota, a medium-sized church in the suburbs of Florida, or a new startup in Mexico. God knows what's best for me, and I'm just excited to see how he'll use me and everyone else I know at MLC.

Meet YOUR FUTURE CALLED WORKERS



DAYLIGHT

At MLC, we believe some of the most valuable ministry training occurs outside the classroom. That's what our Daylight program is all about. Each spring and summer vacation, you have opportunities to serve a congregation with VBS, soccer/Bible camps (like Nathan Pausma), canvassing, music ministries, humanitarian aid, and more. Some students fill 10-week paid ministry assistant positions. If you love travel and gospel ministry, you'll love Daylight! mlc-wels.edu/daylight



EMILY (UNKE) RIDER



**EMILY
(UNKE)
RIDER**

Manitowoc LHS '14
Math teacher at Michigan LHS

MLC '18 / Education

Major: Secondary Math Education

Activities at MLC: Softball, soccer, intramurals, president of Meet Math, Jesus Cares (ministry for individuals with developmental disabilities), job in athletics department, dorm supervisor

Emily graduated in 2018 and has served in several ministries already: admissions counselor at MLC, English and religion teacher in Southeast Asia, teacher's aide at Carlsbad Christian Academy-Carlsbad CA, K-2 teacher at King of Kings-Maitland FL, and (currently) upper-level math instructor and dormitory supervisor at Michigan Lutheran High School.

Ministry starts at MLC: I'm so thankful for MLC! The doctrine classes really help us "be prepared to give an answer for the hope that we have." Also, the attention that each professor gives the students is unmatched at any other teaching school. Teaching and preaching is what MLC does, and they do it so well.

KEY QUESTION: **Isn't the teaching ministry, well, a little boring?** My husband, Jesse MLC '19, and I never thought we'd take the road God has led us on. Jesse is someone who loves the Lord and is willing to go on some crazy adventures with me. In the three years since graduation, we've lived in Minnesota, Southeast Asia, California, Florida, and now Michigan!

In Southeast Asia: I knew I'd be trying to help spread the Word and help others' faith to grow, but I never knew how much my personal faith would increase. Seeing people who've been forbidden to learn these things go from not knowing who Jesus is to thanking the Lord so sincerely for saving them and loving them really puts the reason we do ministry into perspective. Growing up with the Word always around makes it hard to see just how precious it is. Being involved in this ministry made me want to keep it as close to my heart as I possibly can.

God uses every experience: It seems clear why God placed me in each ministry to prepare me for my call at Michigan Lutheran. Being an admissions counselor prepared me to build relationships with students and encourage students to consider the public ministry. Teaching younger grades taught me patience. Teaching in Southeast Asia prepared me for the international ministry I now have in the dorms and showed me how important it is to let the light of Christ shine in my life. I'm sure this ministry at Michigan LHS will come with lots of unexpected challenges, but I'm confident God will be with me all the way.

SHOUT-OUT: My high school math teacher at Manitowoc Lutheran, **Jim Carolfi**, was an incredible teacher, and I thought I'd try to be like him.

HER ADVICE: You don't need to have everything in your life figured out by graduation day. Try to identify the gifts God gave you and choose your college based on that. If you think God gave you a heart for ministry, give MLC a chance. God will get you where he wants you, no matter what decision you make.

Meet YOUR CALLED WORKERS



**TEACH
ABROAD**

Want to teach abroad? Our program connects MLC graduates like Emily and Jesse Rider with international mission settings. Service in these fields generally lasts one or two years, but participants sometimes opt to stay longer. It's a great way to share the gospel with people who often have never heard the story of Jesus before! And you'll grow too—personally, professionally, and spiritually.
mlc-wels.edu/international-services



EMILY MUIR



**EMILY
MUIR**

*Luther Prep '14
Teacher at Evergreen LHS*

MLC '18 / Education

Major: Elementary Education

Minor: Math

Minor: Science

*Activities at MLC: Soccer,
basketball, track & field,
president of Urban Ministry
Club, piano, College Chorale,
security team (campus job)*

Emily graduated from MLC in 2018 and was assigned as a tutor at Luther Prep. Then in 2021, she was assigned to Evergreen LHS.

First call - tutor at LPS: Since attending Luther Prep, I wanted to come back as a tutor. I know how much my tutors did for me, and I wanted to do that for my girls as well. I looked after about 50 girls in the dorms, which included airport runs, trips to the hospital, appointments, supervising study halls, bed checks, and having deep chats with girls throughout the week. I was able to be their mom/sister/friend.

Second call - teacher at Evergreen: My first year at Evergreen I taught science and coached soccer, just as I did at LPS, but I added a few more classes, including two English courses, Yearbook, and Geometry, as well as helping with varsity basketball. It's an amazing opportunity to teach high school, because each student grows so much in each year. These are formative years, and as a teacher and/or coach, you get to be a part of it.

Encouragement along the way: In my immediate family, I'm the only person who's a called worker, even though most of my family is very involved in their churches. The first thought of becoming a called worker came from the encouragement of my teachers and the secretary at my grade school, Trinity-St. Luke's in Watertown, Wisconsin. It's safe to say I would not be a called worker without their encouragement. As a student at LPS, I was supported in my faith and was shown that being a called worker could be an exciting and fulfilling career. We were also given opportunities to experience teaching, and there was so much support to continue on this career path.

At first, she wasn't sure: I considered many other schools, and I was even accepted into an accelerated program for a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. However, I knew I liked the size and atmosphere of MLC, and I felt comfortable that I could succeed there. So I gave my first year a shot. Then I taught in Milwaukee for the summer, using what I was learning in real life. Once I felt that connection and saw a way to use my talents, I decided to commit to teaching as my career choice.

KEY QUESTION: **Aren't MLC students all alike? Isn't there an MLC type?** Don't feel like you have to fit a certain mold to become a called worker. My whole family went to public high school, and I was the first to go to Luther Prep and then MLC. Do you have a talent, ability, or perspective that is unique? Then please use that uniqueness to diversify our congregations. For example, are you good at connecting with people? You could counsel students and other members. Are you good at playing an instrument? Amazing! Use that for church services or giving lessons. Are you good with a camera? Use that to promote your school! Are you good at sports/fitness? Connect outside of the classroom, share your passions, and share those gifts.

HER ADVICE: Choosing a college is hard. Take it from someone who has a hard time deciding things. Even more so, finishing college is hard, but MLC's professors want you to finish and do well. Consider all the gifts God has given to you and lean into those. He will bless those efforts. Let your light shine, because what makes you different will help you reach others in your ministry.



Meet YOUR CALLED WORKERS



THE DIVINE CALL

Martin Luther College celebrates a very special day each May. It's Call Day—when the education and staff ministry graduates hear the name of the school or church where they'll begin their ministries. It's exciting to know that your gifts will be used to fill the church's needs, and God will be with you every step of the way.

FUTURE

Math
Teacher
and
Coach

BEN RIEGSECKER

MLC '22

Nebraska LHS '18

He understands that, like football, ministry is a team sport. "We all have the same goal of advancing the gospel," he says. As for *where* he advances the gospel, he knows it's in God's hands, but "My dream would be to be a tutor at a high school and teach math there! Along with teaching, I would love to coach a variety of sports, including football, basketball, and track!"



COLIN KRUEGER

MLC '24

Fox Valley LHS '19

He's double-majoring in vocal music education and physics education. It's an interesting mix. Whether he ends up serving God's church as a high school choir director or a science instructor—or both!—he's excited to share the gospel. He says, "What better way is there to make sure my life feels meaningful than dedicating it to the greatest purpose of all?"



ANNA TREDER

MLC '24

California LHS '19

Growing up in the Midwest with two called-worker parents, she was dead-set against MLC. She wanted to do something different with her life. But then her family moved to California, and suddenly she was surrounded by people who had not heard the gospel. That's when it hit her: "There was nothing else I wanted to do with my life than tell other people about Jesus."



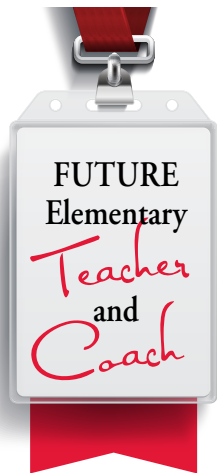
JOSEPH GRAMBSCH

MLC '22

Lakeside LHS '18

He's on the Wind Symphony Leadership Team and serves as an RA, a Student Senate member, and junior class president. Clearly, he has a gift for leadership, and at a time when our WELS schools desperately need more leaders, he's hoping to step up. "My dream is to serve as a principal," he says. "Nothing intrigues me more than working with fellow teachers and pastors and all staff to provide the best Christ-centered education we possibly can to our students."





EMMA DORN

MLC '22

Illinois LHS '18

She's loved teaching since her first Early Field Experience at MLC. She'll be eligible for assignment this May, and she's ready to serve wherever she's sent—perhaps your school! "I'll be content with the assignment I'm given," she says, "because I know that's where God wants me. It's really the best job ever, because God put you there, and he's having you carry out his purpose in whatever you're doing."

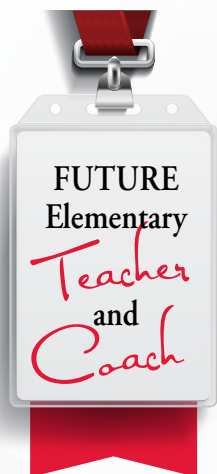


JUAN ESCOBAR

MLC '23

Divine Savior Academy '19

He was born in Bogotá, Colombia, and was first introduced to his Savior at Divine Savior Academy in Miami. At MLC, he started a Spanish Bible study, and he would love to use his native Spanish as a missionary back in South America one day. "I'd also enjoy going back to my home congregation, Divine Savior Church in Miami, which has people from many different places," he says. "There's something beautiful about meeting other cultures and their people, and I love to talk about God, especially in my native language, Spanish."

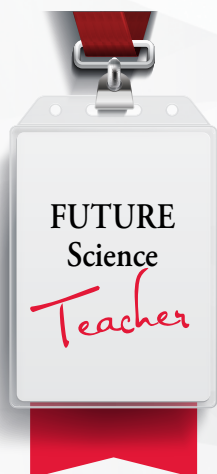


GRACE SIEVERT

MLC '23

Rocky Mountain LHS '19

With an elementary education major and a physical education minor, she's excited to teach and coach. It wasn't always that way. She came to MLC very unsure whether teaching was for her. But now, she says, "I love MLC, and I can't wait to be a teacher in the ministry." What a blessing she'll be to a WELS church and school one day—maybe yours.



KINCAID DIERSEN

MLC '24

Minnesota Valley LHS '20

He's always known he wanted to teach, but what? Eventually, he landed on science—not a surprise since his dad and older brother, Callahan, are science teachers. But his circle of interests is big, and his servant's heart is even bigger. "I really look forward to filling in wherever I'm needed," he says. "Any course that needs teaching or activity that needs advising—if I'm deemed capable, I look forward to helping with that."



Meet YOUR FUTURE CALLED WORKERS

Focus On Alumni

By Director of Alumni Relations **Steve Balza** DMLC '93

Thank You, Alumni!

Special thanks to the many graduates who contributed to the MLC Alumni Association's appeal for new *Christian Worship* hymnals for Chapel of the Christ.

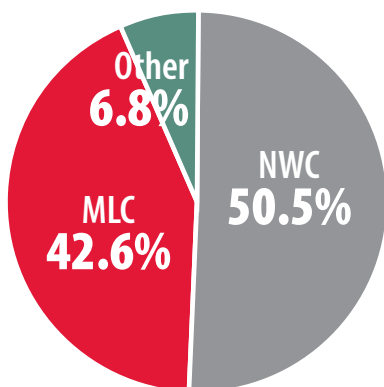
The hymnals arrived, and we use them regularly in our twice-daily chapel services. What a blessing to have access to this tool that will serve our synod as we praise our Savior for years to come!



Did You Know?

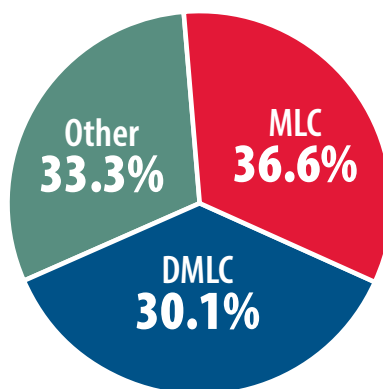
Martin Luther College came into existence in 1995. Twenty-six years into the MLC era, 4,320 called workers are serving WELS as pastors, teachers, and staff ministers. Just under 50%—2,142 of them—graduated from Martin Luther College (1996 or later).

WELS Pastors



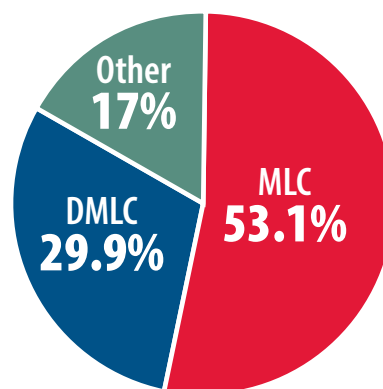
Of 1,302 WELS pastors, 555 graduated from MLC, and 658 from Northwestern College (pre-1996).

WELS Staff Ministers



Of 93 WELS staff ministers, 34 graduated from MLC, and 28 from Dr. Martin Luther College (pre-1996).

WELS Teachers



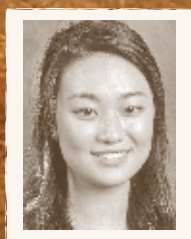
Of 2,925 WELS teachers, 1,553 graduated from MLC, and 876 from Dr. Martin Luther College (pre-1996).



Wallace Gaulke
NWC 1962
Rio Creek WI



Stella Westmeyer
DMLC 1967
Mandan ND



Na Bin Song
MLC 2017
Seoul, South Korea



Carl Lemke
DMLC 1967
Greenleaf WI

Alumni Commencement Dinner

FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022 | CAFETERIA CONFERENCE CENTER

Registration and **social hour** kicks off at 4:00 pm.

Dinner and **presentations** to follow.

Your RSVP is free and saves your seat for the fellowship and presentations.

Pay just \$5 upon arrival (cash or check to MLC) to enjoy a delicious cafeteria meal.

Visit with old friends, meet other alumni, and hear presentations on MLC programs and progress.

The event will conclude in time for you to make your way to the chapel and claim your seat for the **7:00 pm concert**.

Capacity is limited and RSVP is required.

RSVP online at bit.ly/22Dinner or contact Steve Balza in the Alumni Office (507.217.1731 or alumni@mlc-wels.edu) to reserve your spot.

For more information, visit bit.ly/MLCAlumniDinner.

THIS YEAR'S PRESENTERS:



Mrs. Lois Bode

DMLC '67
MLC Archives

Mrs. Bode served as the volunteer archivist for nearly a decade and has a passion for preserving and presenting our past.



President Rich Gurgel

NWC '81
State of the College Address

Two years in, President Gurgel

is busy preserving the core components of ministry training while seeking new, innovative ways to recruit and prepare gospel servants.



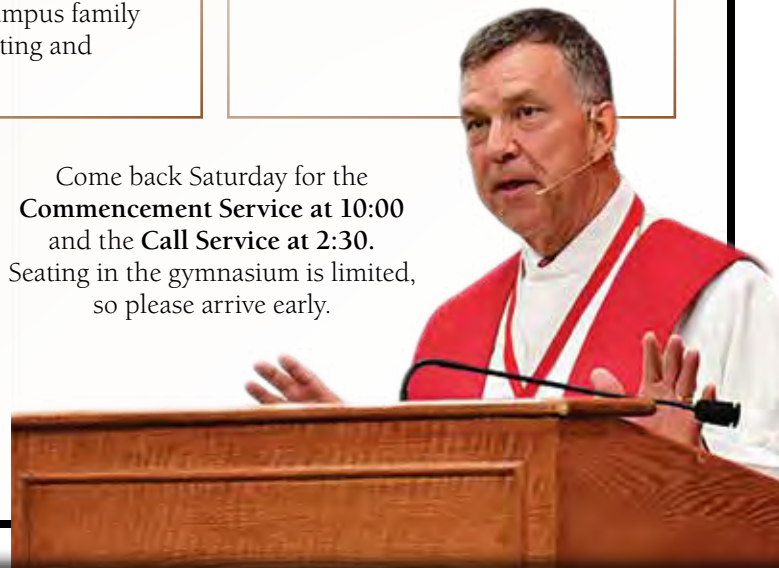
Prof. Aaron Robinson

MLC '96
Minority Recruitment & Retention

Professor Robinson serves as our first cultural diversity coordinator. He's passionate about helping the campus family grow in empathy and understanding while recruiting and retaining more minorities for ministry.



Come back Saturday for the **Commencement Service at 10:00** and the **Call Service at 2:30**. Seating in the gymnasium is limited, so please arrive early.



Lillian Busch
MLC 2017
Woodbridge VA



Stephen Zanto
DMLC 1972
Golden CO



Frederick Horn
DMLC 1977
Red Wing MN



Daniel Fenske
DMLC 1987
Jackson WI

Melacha Scholarship

The Melacha Scholarship was established in 2018 by Scott and Marta Haynes in honor of Marta's parents, John and Diane Wenker.

Melacha is a Hebrew word that means "that which requires exertion or effort." It refers to creative, constructive human efforts, the type of activities the Israelites would have refrained from doing on the Sabbath as a reminder that God is the ultimate Creator and Master.

John and Diane were certainly committed to the work ethic suggested by *melacha*. They also trusted God in all circumstances, one of their favorite Bible verses being Proverbs 16:9 (NKJV): "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."

Working in the financial services industry until his retirement in 2018, John was recognized for his servant leadership, integrity, and work ethic. His success would not have been possible without the unfailing support of his wife, Diane.

Over the years, John and Diane have been overjoyed to practice faithful stewardship of the financial blessings God has given them. They've generously supported WELS ministries, especially Christian education. This scholarship maintains that legacy.

Melacha Scholarship recipients are presemnary and education majors who are in need of financial assistance and who demonstrate satisfactory academic achievement, potential for the ministry, participation in MLC life and activities, and campus citizenship.

Recipient Expresses Gratitude

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Haynes,



My name is Stephen Gerling, and I want to thank you for the Melacha Scholarship. I am receiving instruction through the Seminary Certification program at Martin Luther College. This means that I already received my bachelor's degree but need these courses to pursue my seminary education.

My wife, Hannah, and I had our first child, Sofia, in February of last year. As you can imagine, this means that all possible financial help is a Godsend. We are most recently from Doral, Florida, but we met in Taiwan in 2008-2009 as children of missionaries.

I decided to pursue training for the ministry about a year after being confirmed in the WELS. I had grown up as a Baptist and had run the gamut of Christian thought

throughout my college and adult life. I took a Bible information class when I pursued my then-girlfriend (now wife), whose father is a WELS pastor.

I believe the emphasis placed on understanding the Bible in its original languages will prepare me for engaging in the pseudo-intellectual atmosphere of our present culture. I look forward to being a tool that God uses to strengthen his people with truths of eternal value.

Again, the financial aid that God has provided through you in the form of this scholarship is a great blessing. My wife and I thank you for the support—financially, spiritually, and emotionally. We are in a place in our journey where it seems God is emphasizing our daily need for him to give us everything necessary. Thank you for ministering to us in this way.

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 the Mission Advancement Office at MLC, and we will guide you through the process. **507.354.8221**



**Bertram
Sauer**
NWC 1947
Saginaw MI



**Linda
Harbach**
DMLC 1977
Franksville WI



**Norman
Seeger**
NWC 1972
West Salem WI



**Virgil
Micheel**
NWC 1967
White SD



Thanking Our Generous God for *Generous Donors!*

We are thanking our generous God for empowering you, our donors, with the “grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7). Our *EQUIPPING CHRISTIAN WITNESSES* campaign is making a huge difference in the lives of our students!

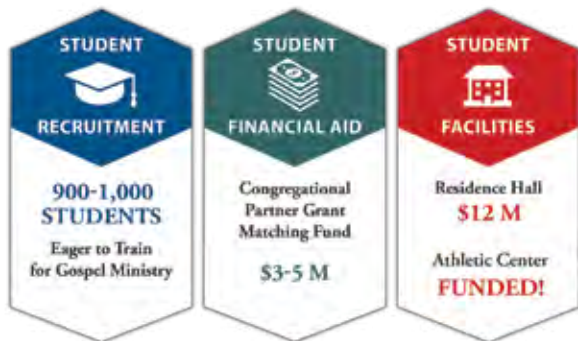
YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS

As of January 2022, your gifts have surpassed the \$9 million mark!

\$9,130,591 Donated or Pledged to ECW

7,159 Total Gifts

3,376 Donors



SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL AID

Your gifts to the **Congregational Partnership Grant Program** have resulted in another \$1 million credited to the tuition accounts of 90% of our students. We are all so grateful! Not only does your grant ease each student’s financial burden, it also alleviates their anxiety and helps them focus more time on their studies. And when they graduate, they will carry a lighter debt load as they enter the public ministry.

New this year
An increase from \$1,000 to \$1,200 max!

\$1,200 Congregational grant

\$1,200 MLC matching grant

\$2,400 Financial assistance per student per year

mlc-wels.edu/donate

Text GIVE to 507.223.4344

NEARLY FINISHED FIELDHOUSE

The Betty Kohn Fieldhouse is fully funded and almost fully constructed! As you read this issue, our spring sports teams are already practicing inside this huge turf-ed facility. Watch for the dedication date sometime in the next few months!



RESIDENCE HALL

Your gifts for our new residence hall (tentatively called “Luther Heights”) continue to come in. What a blessing it will be when we build this beautiful new living and learning space for our students!



Donald Helwig
DMLC 1962
Milwaukee



Christine Lincoln
DMLC 1977
Glendale AZ



Robert Hartman
NWC 1957
Brown Deer WI



Harold Goede
DMLC 1947
Milwaukee

FACULTY & STAFF NOTES

Professor Peter Baganz DMLC '87 (history) was appointed as secretary of the Brown County Historical Society.

Dr. Bethel Balge (adjunct, piano) was featured on Minnesota Public Radio in November. A 2020 ProMusica performance featuring Balge and two principal players from the Minnesota Orchestra was broadcast on American Public Media's *Performance Today* program. ProMusica began as the Summit Avenue Music Series on the MLC campus.

Dr. James Carlovsky MLC '02, '10 (math & education) presented "Meaningful Math Assessments . . . Even Online!" at the Northern Wisconsin District Teachers' Conference in Fond du Lac WI in February. He presented "Trends in Mathematics Instruction" at the Pacific Northwest District Teachers' Conference in Des Moines WA in March. And he presented "Teaching Middle School Math with Understanding" at the Milwaukee Metro Teachers' Conference at St. John-Wauwatosa WI in March.



Professor Rebecca Cox DMLC '89 (phy ed) was named UMAC Volleyball Coach of the Year for guiding the Knights to the UMAC Championship tournament for the first time since 2017. Coach Cox has coached the volleyball team for 13 years. She was also named Coach of the Year in 2011.

Professor Joel Fredrich NWC '77, WLS '82 (foreign language, history & theology) presented on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at the Joint Pastors' Conference in Elkhart Lake WI in January.

Professor Kelli Green DMLC '92 (special education) presented "The Brain on Stress: How Trauma Affects Teaching and Learning" and "SEL and PBIS: Design for School Year Ahead" at the Lutheran Special Education Ministries Conference in fall 2021. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has posted her "SEL and PBIS" presentation online and made it a requirement for LCMS special education teacher licensure in 2021-2022. She presented "Education Neuroscience for Teaching and Learning" and "Education Neuroscience Strategies to Calm Anxious Teachers and Learners" at the Pacific Northwest District Teachers' Conference in fall 2021 and at the Western Wisconsin District Teachers' Conference in February 2022. She

continues to serve as a member of the WELS Commission for Lutheran Schools Education Leadership Team, as the special education coordinator for the Minnesota District, and as a board member of the Minnesota Division for Emotional and Behavioral Health, formerly the Minnesota Council for Children with Behavior Disorders.

Professor on Loan



Professor Paul Grubbs MLC '01 (English) taught language arts courses at Luther Preparatory School February 28-March 2, working with students in courses taught by LPS Professor **Martin Pagel** MLC '08, '19.

"I loved teaching high school English at Fox Valley LHS from 2003 to 2011," he said, "and I was excited for an opportunity to work with secondary students again. I also appreciated the chance to adapt some of my favorite material from current courses to that new audience. Finally, MLC instructors enjoy the benefits of the diligent work high school teachers do when their students arrive in our classrooms, so this was also a great chance to spend time around those creative, dedicated colleagues."

Professor Grace Hennig DMLC '89 (music) introduced the new hymnal, *Christian Worship*, at St. Peter-St. Peter MN on January 30. In February she presented another hymnal-related topic, "What You Can Do with a Melody-Line-Only Hymn," at the Western Wisconsin District Teachers' Conference at Peace-Sun Prairie WI.

Professor Craig Hirschmann DMLC '84 (music) and **Professor Emeritus Dr. Wayne Wagner** DMLC '72 (music) presented an organ recital on the 57-rank Schantz organ in Chapel of the Christ in January and an earlier organ recital, as part of the Sioux Falls Chapter of the American Guild of Organists Summer Noontime Recital Series, at Mt. Olive-Mankato MN in July.

Professor Thomas Nass NWC '77, WLS '82 (Hebrew) gave a presentation on the doctrine of the ministry at an informal leadership meeting of the WELS, ELS, and LCMS in Jacksonville FL in December.



**John
Stelljes**
MLC 2002
New Ulm MN



**Sara
Marggraf**
MLC 2007
Delano MN



**Kevin
Lorge**
MLC 2012
Greenville WI



**Sarah
Bahn**
MLC 2002
Sun City CA



Professor Breanna Olson MLC '12 (physical education) was named UMAC Women's Cross Country Coach of the Year for taking the Knights to the UMAC Championship.

Dr. Mark Paustian NWC '84, WLS '88 (English & Hebrew) presented "Overhearing the Gospel (Indirect Communication in the Scriptures)"

at the Cottonbelt Pastoral Conference held at Living Promise-Morristown TN in January. He also presented "Here I Stand: Lutherans Finding Their Voice in Apologetics" at the Grow Conference at Abiding Word-Houston in February. He continues to host the podcast *Where Two or Three: Christian Conversations at the Table of Communication Scholarship*, and he guested on two other podcasts: *Impact*, hosted by **Mark Kjenstad** MLC '99, and *Pub Theology*, hosted by **Brandon Steenbock** MLC '06, '21.

Dr. Joel Pless (adjunct, Graduate Studies) was honored at the annual meeting of the WELS Historical Institute in October for his 17 years of service on the Institute's Board of Directors, the last four years as chair. He will continue to serve as a docent at Salem Landmark Church, the birthplace of WELS. He also authored a week of devotions in *Meditations*.

Dr. Ryan Rathje MLC '98 (adjunct, Graduate Studies) presented "Grading Is Broken, and It Needs Fixing: An Introduction to Standards-Based Assessment and Grading" at the Minnesota District Teachers' Conference in October.

Professor Aaron Robinson MLC '96, WLS '00 (English, cultural diversity coordinator) participated in a panel discussion, "A Christian Conversation about Race" at the Awake and Alive Conference in Mankato MN in January. He presented "How to Be Salt and Light in Today's American Culture" at the Pacific Northwest District Mission Conference in February. And he serves as a member of the Wisconsin Lutheran College Board of Regents.

Dr. Kristina Rouech (adjunct, Graduate Studies) co-authored "Five Tips for Launching an Online Writing Group" for *The Scholarly Teacher* on September 30, 2021. She also co-presented "Examining the Effectiveness of a Learning Community Through Comparative Experiences" at the 28th National Conference on Students in Transition in October and "Assessing Students' Course Knowledge Using a Group Process Map" at Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Summit 2021 in October.



Dr. Jonathan Schaefer MLC '02 (director, New Teacher Induction) earned his PhD in educational psychology from Capella University.

Professor David Scharf MLC '00, WLS '05 (theology) presented "Doctrine and Practice of Stewardship" at the Area Lutheran High School Conference in Brookfield WI in March. As part of his service on the WELS Commission for Congregational Counseling, he guided Our Savior-East Brunswick NJ through a Self-Analysis & Adjustment (SAA) in January. He also continues to serve as writer/editor of the monthly *Forward in Christ* "Q & A" column, and to create *Grace Moments* (written devotions) and *Grace Talks* (video devotions) for Time of Grace-Milwaukee.

Professor Nicolas Schmoller MLC '06, WLS '10 (theology & foreign language) wrote "Bible Contradictions?" for the August 2021 *Forward in Christ*. He also led a four-week Bible class on the intertestamental period at St. Paul-New Ulm MN in November.

Professor Scott Schmudlach DMLC '85 (vice president for administration) presented "Integrating the Faith" at the Western Wisconsin District Teachers' Conference at Peace-Sun Prairie WI in February.

Professor Ross Stelljes NWC '85, WLS '89 (theology) presented a three-week Bible class series on Psalms 46-50 at St. John-New Ulm MN in December.

Dr. Bill Tackmier NWC '85, WLS '90 (adjunct, Graduate Studies) presented a paper on October 5 at the Northern Michigan Pastoral Conference held at Faith-Mount Pleasant MI. Tackmier, who is the LCMS contact person for the WELS Commission on Interchurch Relations, presented "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Today: One Man's Perspective."

Professor Emeritus Dr. Wayne Wagner DMLC '72 (music) was elected president of the Board of Directors of the New Ulm Community and Senior Together (CAST) non-profit, which provides programming and services for New Ulm area seniors. He also regularly teaches music appreciation classes for the group.

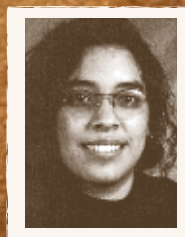
Prof. Tyson Zarnstorff MLC '05 (math) presented "Teaching Mathematics with Understanding for Grades 3-5" at the Milwaukee Metro Teachers' Conference at St. John-Wauwatosa WI in March.



Jason Strong
MLC 2007
Greenfield MN



Lyndell Schroeder
DMLC 1962
Neenah WI



Norma Fernandez
MLC 1997
Monterrey, Mexico



Justin Gut
MLC 1997
Kronewetter WI



MLC DAY

MAY 4, 2022

Celebrate With Us!



We'll provide opportunities for you to send **prayers** for the 2022 graduates—for the whole class or for individual graduates. In addition, you can submit prayers of thanks for others who serve your family, congregation, and school.



We'll open our social media channels so you can **share** photos, videos, and other posts to celebrate MLC Day.



We're asking you to consider a financial partnership with us through the Congregational Partner Grant Program (CPGP). Your **gift**—perhaps given in the name of your designated graduate—will help MLC match the congregational grants. The CPGP provided more than \$1 million in financial assistance to 600+ MLC students last year!

NEW THIS YEAR

K-8 teachers, watch for our new **Project Elijah** resources. We've created four days of easy-to-use devotions and activities to help your students think about becoming a pastor, teacher, or staff minister. We're asking you to be Elijah and "pass the mantle" to each Elisha in your classroom.



mlcday.com