

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE INFOCUS

YEAR IN REVIEW 2023-2024

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On the cover:

At the Call Service on May 18, **Brian Friesenegger '24** learns that he has been assigned to Luther Preparatory School.

You Are Clay Jars, Treasure-Filled, Indestructible

May 2024 graduation sermon excerpt

By President Rich Gurgel NWC '81, WLS '86

... What was God thinking? Why didn't he choose more fitting gospel messengers than clay jars like you and me—with more sin lurking in our hearts than we care to admit? Why didn't he just use his holy angels? They're far more impressive beings. But that was not God's plan, as Paul reveals in the first verse of your class passage:

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (2 Corinthians 4:7).

God has poured into clay jars like us the immeasurable treasure of Christ's love for us. God chose frail and sinful jars of clay like us because he wanted it to be very clear that the glory of his gospel is not anything *from* us, but it is the all-surpassing power of his grace *to* us in Jesus.

So, yes, you are clay jars, but *treasure-filled* clay jars. God has loved each of you here with an everlasting love. He has known you by name from eternity. He knew that in the water of your baptism he would pour the treasure of his saving love into your hearts. And he keeps pouring his love into you day after day through his means of grace. He gives you a value that cannot be measured with all the world's gold. This treasure brings hope and joy and peace every time you reflect on it.

At the heart of MLC's purpose is pouring into one another this treasure of Jesus—in the hope that this treasure leaks out of us for the benefit of a world of clay jars around us.

But now, as clay jars, treasure-filled, you can expect that trouble will never be far from you. That's especially true for all of you who will this very afternoon—or four years from now—be called into public ministry.

Remember, Satan doesn't take kindly to the plundering of his kingdom. Satan's kingdom is undone when treasure-filled clay jars overflow to fill other clay jars. So, while Satan marks every sheep of Christ for slaughter, he puts an especially big red “X” on you. Please understand this. The fact that you'll have struggles in your ministry is *not* evidence you've selected the wrong vocation. It's evidence you've chosen the right one—and Satan hates you for it and seeks to make things as challenging for you as possible!

But don't be afraid, clay jars. Not only are you treasure-filled. You are also *indestructible*. That's what Paul says in the last verses you chose: **“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body.”** (2 Corinthians 4:8-11)

Do you hear God's promise to you? Yes, you're going to be hard pressed, but you'll never be backed into a corner. Your Lord Jesus is always with you. He has already defeated any enemy against you. ... Yes, you'll often find yourself perplexed in life and ministry—at a loss to know the next step to take—but you do not need to despair. In Jesus you can never lose, because the



Pursuing Excellence

UNDER THE CROSS

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 or Laurie Gauger, MLC InFocus, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm MN 56073.

The mission of MLC is to train men and women to meet the public ministry needs of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.





living Jesus has you cradled in his arms. . . .
 Yes, unless you hide your faith in this
 post-Christian culture, you will be persecuted.
 But you are never abandoned. He has promised
 that he will never leave you or forsake you. . . .

Yes, there will be days you feel you've been
 struck down, as what you'd planned and
 worked on for weeks doesn't turn out anything
 like you imagined. Yet you are never truly
 defeated. Your labor in the risen Lord is never,
 ever in vain!

Yes, you are going to be imitating Jesus'
 ministry by carrying around a bit of his
 cross and death. Yet even when we feel the
 sentence of death, God is using us to deliver
 the treasure of life to others. Paul says that so
 simply as your verses end: **"So then, death is
 at work in us, but life is at work in you"**
 (2 Corinthians 4:12).

So, my dear brothers and sisters, to a world
 of sinful, struggling, and troubled clay jars,
 God sends out . . . *clay jars!* You are those
clay jars, no strangers yourselves to sin
 and struggle and trouble. But there's one
 massive, eternal difference. You are
 treasure-filled—filled to overflowing with
 the very treasure everyone in this world
 desperately needs—and indestructible!

Go, dear treasure-filled clay jars, and serve
 with that confidence! Amen.

Commencement 2024

"HERE AM I!"

We're thanking the Lord of the Church for our 175 graduates:

105 BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN
 EDUCATION or BACHELOR OF
 SCIENCE (TEACHERS)

3 BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN PRACTICAL
 THEOLOGY (STAFF MINISTERS)

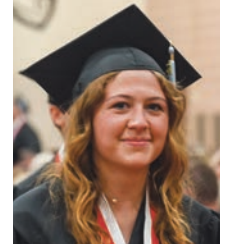
45 BACHELOR OF ARTS IN
 BIBLICAL LANGUAGES
 (PRESEMINARIANS)

13 MASTER OF SCIENCE
 IN EDUCATION

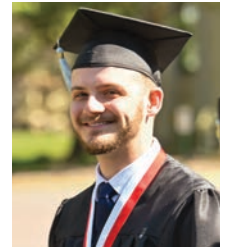
6 MASTER OF SCIENCE
 IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

1 MASTER OF SCIENCE
 IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

2 MASTER OF ARTS
 IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES



Madeline Walz
MLC '24



Nathanael Hintze
MLC '24

We were excited to award our first MS in Special Education degree and our first MS in Educational Administration degree with a Technology Director emphasis. Our online graduate program continues to grow every year!

"SEND ME!"

Kincaid Diersen (*dark suit*) and
Claire Tomhave (*white dress*)
 were among the 138 graduates
 who received calls into the



Kincaid Diersen
MLC '24



Claire Tomhave
MLC '24

teaching ministry or staff ministry on May 18. Kincaid was assigned to St. Croix Lutheran Academy to teach biology, and Claire to Luther Preparatory School to serve as tutor. All our assigned graduates are now headed to their new ministries, and those preseminary gentlemen who graduated from MLC four years ago and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary this May are headed to their new ministries as well. *Check out all the assignments on pages 20-23.* Then thank the Lord with us that he has given these new gospel ministers to the church he loves!

Catch all the graduation fun and
 excitement in our short video!



The alumni photos at the bottom of the pages are from the anniversary classes of MLC, NWC, and DMLC: '59, '64, '69, '74, '79, '84, '89, '94, '99, '04, '09, '14, and '19. Thanks to Copy Editor Heidi Schoof DMLC '86, who provided this random selection of alumni.



Abbie
Henke
MLC 2004
Appleton WI



Gary
Jeffers
NWC 1984
Prescott AZ



Senior Achievement Award Recipients 2024

Back:

Camden Sulzle (St. John-Redwood Falls MN)
Service Award
UMAC Scholar-Athlete Leadership Award

Joel Sauer (St. Peter-Sturgeon Bay WI)
Leading Scholar-Studies in Pastoral Ministry

Mason Cox (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)
Jerome Kruse Knight Award for Athletic Achievement

Josiah Koelpin (Calvary-Dallas)
Via Veritas Vita Award

Front:

Owen Eubank (Salem-Ann Arbor MI)
Brooks Scholarship
Leading Scholar-Studies in Pastoral Ministry

Aric Reim (St. John-New Ulm MN)
Leading Scholar-Studies in Pastoral Ministry

Jordyn Heckendorf (Shepherd of the Hills-West Bend WI)
Jerome Kruse Knight Award for Athletic Achievement
UMAC Scholar-Athlete Leadership Award

Noah Ungemach (First German-Manitowoc WI)
Fine Arts Award

Not pictured:

Stephanie Hintz (Christ Our Savior-Columbia TN)
Leading Scholar-Studies in Educational Ministry

Kyle Doering (St. Paul-Lake Mills WI, MLC '25)
Student Body President Recognition

MLC High Jumper Earns All-American

Samuel Plocher (Holy Trinity-Des Moines WA) was named First Team All-American by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) for his performance at the high jump during the indoor track & field season.



Sam was one of the top 20 high jumpers in the nation who competed in the NCAA DIII Indoor Track & Field Championships in Virginia Beach, Virginia, in early March. On his third and final attempt, he cleared the 2.04-meter mark, notching a top-eight podium finish to earn All-American honors—as a first-year!

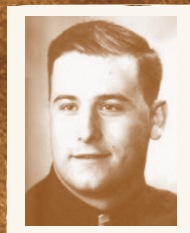
Sam is the first MLC Knight to make All-American since **Todd Brassow** MLC '17, who was also a high jumper.

Sam was coached by **Head Coach Breanna Olson** MLC '12 and assistant coaches **Isaiah Degner** MLC '05 (pictured with Sam above), **Benjamin Olson** MLC '13, **Tony Ortmann**, and **Emma Holzhueter**. This staff earned special honors this year as well, winning two UMAC Coaching Staff of the Year awards: for men's indoor track & field in the winter and for women's outdoor track and field in the spring.

Sam is keeping his award in perspective, grateful for the chance to use his God-given gifts and also grateful for the personal growth he's experiencing. "In any sport at MLC," he says, "you learn how to work with your peers, grow in leadership, take defeat gracefully, and respect your coaches. All of those skills translate to ministry."



Christine Marquardt
DMLC 1969
Princeton WI



James Roecker
DMLC 1994
Slinger WI



Kari Muento
MLC 1999
West Bend WI



Charles Flunker
MLC 2009
Green Bay WI

MLC Organist Wins Second Place at *Nationals*

Junior **Ben Foster** (*Emanuel First-Lansing MI*) pulled out all the stops, played both “Great” and “Swell,” and brought home the second-place trophy from the National Undergraduate Organ Competition in Ottumwa, Iowa, in April.



After sending in an audition tape, Foster was one of only three organists in the nation invited to play in person before three judges at this national competition.

His program consisted of Bach’s *Valet will ich dir geben*, two congregational hymns (DIVINUM MYSTERIUM and ARIRANG), and the “Finale” from Viernes’ *Symphony No. 1*. When the points were added up, Ben was awarded the \$2,500 second prize and also the \$500 audience prize.

Foster’s competitors had studied with greats like David Briggs and Christopher Houlihan, while he was vaulted onto the national stage by our own gifted **Professor Craig Hirschmann DMLC ’84**.

While the other contestants are seeking organ performance degrees, Ben has dedicated his gift to the public ministry of the gospel here at Martin Luther College. He’s pursuing a double major in staff ministry and parish music, singing in the College Choir, and playing trombone in the Wind Symphony. He is also apprenticing under organ builder Richard Swanson of Grand Ledge, Michigan, to add another dimension to his music ministry in the church someday.



Northwestern College Alumni Society *President Fund Grant* Recipients 2024

Back: **Corey Tipton** (*St. Lucas-Milwaukee*)

Pres. Robert J. Voss Grant for Student Life

Ryan Boggs (*St. Luke-Watertown WI*)

Pres. August F. Ernst Grant for Confessional Languages (Latin)

Luke Rogotzke (*Zion-Sanborn MN*)

Pres. E. E. Kowalke Grant for Biblical Languages (Hebrew)

Justus Borgwardt (*St. John-New Ulm MN*)

Pres. August F. Ernst Grant for Confessional Languages (German & Latin)

Matthew Hillmer (*St. Matthew-Oconomowoc WI*)

Pres. Robert J. Voss Grant for Student Government

Caleb Carlovsky (*St. Paul-New Ulm MN*)

Pres. Adam Martin Grant for Living Languages (Spanish)

Jonathan Harbach (*St. John-Dakota MN*)

Pres. Carleton Toppe Grant for GPA & Religion

Front: **Jedidiah Mittelstadt** (*St. Mark-Watertown WI*)

Pres. John A. Braun Grant for Leadership

Micah Boehm (*Crown of Life-West St. Paul MN*)

Pres. E. E. Kowalke Grant for Biblical Languages (Greek)

Joshua Fisch (*St. John-Mukwonago WI*)

Pres. August F. Ernst Grant for Confessional Languages (German)

Jonathan Holtz (*St. Paul-Appleton WI*)

Pres. John A. Braun Grant for English

Luke Staude (*Christ Alone-Thiensville WI*)

Pres. Carleton Toppe Grant for Worship and Music



Sarah Randall
MLC 1999
Sioux Falls SD



Leon Todd
NWC 1964
Milwaukee



Hannah Paustian
MLC 2019
New Ulm MN



Wolf Parsons
MLC 2014
Box Elder SD



Sending Out Seniors STRONG TO SERVE

Amanda Rehberger '24 discusses her Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment with President Rich Gurgel. On Call Day, Amanda was assigned to teach grade 4 and music at Apostles Lutheran School in San Jose.

“Wow. I didn’t even know I had those gifts.”

It’s a common response by MLC seniors while they’re poring over their Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment with President Rich Gurgel. In the hour that the president and student spend together, the students come to a better understanding of how God has uniquely gifted them and how they can harness those gifts for ministry. It’s often an eye-opener and a confidence-builder as they edge closer and closer to their first call into the ministry.

A Tool to Assess Strengths: Clifton StrengthsFinder is an inventory that’s been used by 30 million people worldwide to help them understand their unique set of gifts. President Gurgel spent 10 years at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary using the tool with seminary seniors as well as some faculty and staff. It was found to be so valuable to the senior men—just on the cusp of their ministries—that the seminary invested in the training needed for then-Professor Rich Gurgel to become a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach.

President Gurgel brought his training and his passion for this kind of consulting to MLC. He worked with 65 seniors majoring in education and staff ministry this year, as well as 100+ MLC faculty and staff over the last two years. (Preseminary seniors at MLC will go through their strengths assessment four years from now, at the seminary.)

Enhancing the Tool with the Gospel: During the hour-long discussion with the seniors, President Gurgel uses a

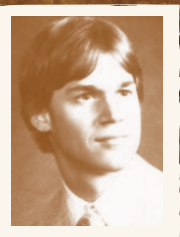
scaffolding constructed by Clifton Strengths—they call it “name, claim, and aim”—but he builds a gospel foundation beneath it all, keeping the focus on the grace of God.

As the assessment helps students “name” and “claim” their gifts—recognizing their own strengths and where they may have seen those strengths at work in their lives—the president reminds them that these gifts come from God. As the apostle Paul says, “To each of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it” (Ephesians 4:7).

As they discuss how they can “aim” those strengths—put them to work thoughtfully and effectively in their ministries—the president reminds them that we use our gifts to serve the one who gave them to us. “He who saw all our callings in life before we ever had those callings,” the president says, “equipped us in advance to bring glory to his name and service to our neighbor with that set of gifts he gave us.”

And the strengths we lack teach an important lesson too, he says. “We say with the apostle Paul that ‘when I am weak, then I am strong’ (2 Corinthians 12:10). Gallup has never been very fond of talking about weaknesses, but anything that teaches us to rely on the grace of God in Jesus (just as Paul’s thorn in the flesh did for him) suddenly turns from a weakness into a great blessing. God’s grace is made perfect—or better, God’s grace reaches its goal—in our weakness.”

Those weaknesses also teach us to depend on others. “We are interdependent on those God places around us in all our



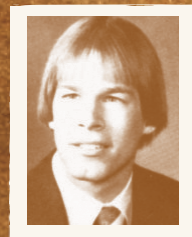
Norval Koch
NWC 1979
Manitowoc WI



Kurt Nielsen
MLC 2004
Apple Valley MN



Sarah Berg
DMLC 1994
New Ulm MN



Philip Spaude
NWC 1979
Saginaw MI

callings in life,” President Gurgel says. “It’s good to know that where we may not have a particular strength, God may have put someone else with those strengths nearby. That helps us remember not to be irritated that everyone is not like us. Those we might be tempted to look down on, because they do things differently than we do, are actually some of God’s greatest gifts to us.”

And finally, there’s one gift that Clifton StrengthsFinder never even mentions, but the president reminds the students that it should be at the very top of the list: God’s grace to us in Jesus.

The Right Tool at the Right Time: The seniors initially received their StrengthsFinder reports at the “Preserving the Trust” workshop at the beginning of the school year, a weekend dedicated to developing physical, emotional, and spiritual resilience. As the president told them that weekend, “We’ve trained you for ministry. Now we want you to hold onto everything God has invested in you. With these tools and with Jesus’ grace, we want you to preserve the trust.”

Then they met with the president sometime during the school year—often before they left for their student teaching or staff ministry internship. “The purpose of the meetings,” the president said, “is to help the seniors get a little better grasp on the uniqueness of their gifts and talents and to be thankful for how God uniquely wired each of them.

“They’ll have much to learn from their supervising pastor or cooperating teacher, but at times they may be tempted to go too far and try to do everything exactly like their mentor. Then they’re like David trying on Saul’s armor to fight Goliath. That won’t work. They need to make their ministry their own by using their own strengths—the strengths God gave them.”

Strengths in Service to the Gospel: Finally, the president puts this powerful tool into proper perspective. “Can any human inventory—such as CliftonStrengths—perfectly measure how God has gifted us? Certainly not. We’re far too ‘fearfully and wonderfully made’ (Psalm 139:14) by God for any human inventory to capture.

“But such an inventory can serve as a catalyst to spark a grace-filled discussion. It can provide some insight into the kindness of God to us in Jesus, who pours out into our lives a unique set of gifts. He intends these gifts to be used for callings and works of love he has had in mind for us from before we were even born. ‘For we are God’s handiwork,’ the apostle Paul tells us, ‘created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do’ (Ephesians 2:10).

“In the end,” President Gurgel says, “it is all grace upon grace.”



As Seniors Learn About Their Strengths

For many seniors, their meeting with President Gurgel to discuss their Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment was powerful and revelatory.

One student realized for the first time that they did not have to be like the classmates they’d considered more “gifted.” It was an emotional moment as the student saw that God had given them exactly the strengths he wanted them to have.

Some students were already student teaching or interning, which allowed them to discuss with the president a specific challenge they were facing and how their individual strengths might provide them with a unique God-given path to meeting that challenge.

Amanda Rehberger (St. Paul-Appleton WI, pictured) appreciated learning about her strengths and knowing that as she is called into ministry, God has equipped her with just the gifts she needs.

“Knowing that God pours out every gift that I need is a huge blessing as I begin my ministry! The meeting reminded me that all our abilities and strength come from God, who promises to “equip you with everything good for doing his will” as he works in us “what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ” (Hebrews 13:21).



Susan Gorz
DMLC 1979
Algoma WI



Jeremiah Wallander
MLC 2019
Menasha WI



Jean Dretske
DMLC 1974
Waukegan IL



Dennis Needham
DMLC 1969
East Moline IL

From the Hill to the 2023-2024

TO ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, GERMANY, AND SPAIN

London, Galway, Berlin, Madrid. Those four cities were home to seven MLC students who left the hill to study abroad for a semester this year. “This study abroad experience has prepared me more for ministry and sharing the gospel,” said **Alison Foxen** (*David’s Star-Jackson WI*), who studied in London. “At MLC, we talk a lot about what to do in evangelism and mission situations; however, nothing can prepare you for how to share the Bible in real-world situations until you actually experience it.” *Pictured: Alison at Peak District National Park, England.*

Scan the QR code to read more about the adventures of Allie and all our study abroad students.



TO THE MIDWEST

Six states. Ten congregations. Four WELS high schools—including Michigan Lutheran Seminary (*pictured*). The MLC College Choir toured the Midwest this spring break, singing the Word in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and of course Minnesota. Their “Piercing the Darkness” program included works from J. S. Bach, Carl Schalk, and MLC Professor Emeritus **Dr. Kermit Moldenhauer** *DMLC '71*, among many others.



TO THE CITY

New Ulm may not be urban, but with the Twin Cities an easy drive, we consider ourselves urban-adjacent. We’re also strongly tied to another city—Milwaukee—and that’s where 36 MLC students went in February to see ministry in action in four urban schools and to attend a conference on WELS urban education.

Dr. Ben Clemons *MLC '03*, director of Urban Ministry, explains the purpose of the trip. “It allowed MLC students to see that, although they may be unfamiliar with urban contexts, the ministry that’s happening there is familiar in many ways. At the same time, they began to see the exciting challenge of working with students, families, and parishioners from other cultures and backgrounds.” *Pictured: Eva Doeblner* (*King of Kings-Garden Grove CA*) reads with students.

World

TO CHURCHES AROUND THE COUNTRY

Thousands of MLC students have volunteered at congregations around the country through our Daylight program. They teach VBS, canvass, coach sports Bible camps, assist at worship, lend humanitarian aid, and more.

Over spring break **Katie Butler** (*Star of Bethlehem-New Berlin WI*), **Morgan Behnke** (*Trinity-Brillion WI*), and **Caitlin Broehm** (*Mt. Olive-Appleton WI*) had a great Daylight experience at River of Life-Goodyear AZ, where they assisted with Easter outreach.

As you read this, students are serving from California to Connecticut, from Florida to Alaska.



TO CIVIL RIGHTS SITES

Charting the course of a movement! **Pastor Aaron Robinson MLC '96**, *WLS '00*, our diversity coordinator, led a group of students (*pictured*) on a civil rights tour over spring break in March. Their itinerary included the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, the Rosa Parks Museum in Birmingham AL, the Edmund Pettus Bridge and National Voting Rights Museum in Selma AL, and—*pictured here*—the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. served as pastor from 1954 to 1960.



TO ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires is the destination of our five-week Spanish language immersion class. Students sign a Spanish-only pledge and divide their time between intensive study and cultural excursions—including professional Tango lessons, of course. *Pictured with Tango instructor: Parker Winghart* (*Our Savior-Brookings SD*)

TO TEXAS

... with some stops in Nebraska and Oklahoma on the way. The Wind Symphony hopped on the bus with their “Something Old, Something New” program right after graduation.

The 40-member ensemble, including trumpeter **Katie Rosenau** (*St. Mark-Leesburg FL*) and saxophonist **Joe Panning** (*St. Paul-Litchfield MN*), presented works from Richard Wagner to Frank Ticheli. One high note of the tour: stops at two Divine Savior Academies in Texas.



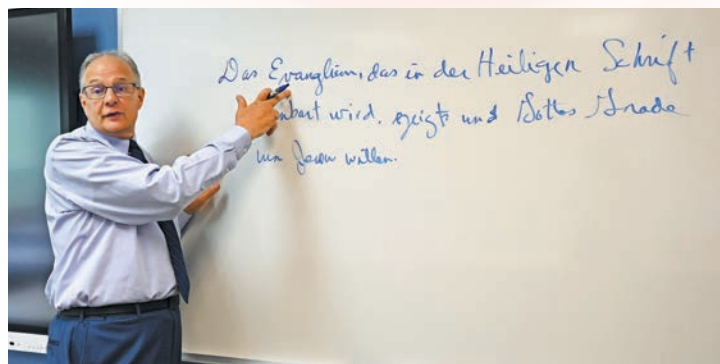
“Minor” but Significant Change in *Preseminary*

By **Professor James Danell** NWC '86, WLS '90
Dean of Preseminary Studies, Professor of German

How does Martin Luther College best train young men for enrollment at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS)? If you asked 100 people, there's a good chance you'd get 100 different answers—each based on the personal experience of the individual answering it.

Seven years ago, MLC's preseminary faculty took up a serious study of this question. The discussion included representatives from MLC, WLS, and our prep schools, as well as MLC students. We also consulted the MLC Governing Board, the WELS Conference of Presidents, circuit pastors, high school foreign language teachers, and members of the WELS Board for Ministerial Education. In the fall of 2025, we plan to put the results of that discussion into place. It will be the most significant change to our preseminary training since 2000.

THE CHANGE: Going forward, students will have more flexibility when it comes to earning their Bachelor of Arts degree. Though their major in biblical languages (Greek and Hebrew) and theology will not change, they will be able to choose one of eight emphases (German, Latin, German & Latin, Spanish, English, history, music, or science) or one of four minors (German, Latin, German & Latin, Spanish).



Professor James Danell teaches German at MLC.

REASONS FOR THE CHANGE: With support from all key constituencies, including WLS, the preseminary program is making this change to align requirements with three realities.

First, preseminary students historically came from our prep schools, schools specifically designed to put young people on a path toward public ministry. To meet that goal, their curricula included a strong Latin and German component. This is still true. The MLC preseminary program continued that training by requiring more study of those languages so important to the confessional Lutheran church.

In the last decades, however, our area Lutheran high schools (ALHS) have grown substantially, both in size and number. Many MLC students have come from these ALHSs, as well as from public schools. We couldn't be happier about that! Their high school curricula are designed to meet the needs of students seeking various vocations, and very few offer four years of face-to-face Latin and German language.

A second reality is this. As a result of curriculum changes in 2000, there was a change to the nonbiblical language requirement at our seminary. Though it still very much values the confessional languages, the seminary no longer requires that all traditional-aged students be able to read German and Latin.

A third reality is the strong, consistent feedback we hear regarding the current requirement that all preseminary students must take six semesters of a third, nonbiblical language. The pushback isn't new. This is the fourth time since 1960 that our worker training system has discussed a change like this. In surveys conducted as part of this most recent discussion, 20-35% of students reported a negative impact of this requirement on willingness to prepare for pastoral ministry or to continue preparation for it. They also reported a negative

PRESEMINARY STUDIES AT MLC

Current program	Program 2025-
MAJOR Biblical Languages & Theology	MAJOR Biblical Languages & Theology
Nonbiblical Language Requirement Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latin • German • Latin and German • Spanish 	Emphasis/Minor Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latin* • German* • Latin and German* • Spanish* • History • English • Music • Science <p><i>* The four foreign language options can be elevated from an emphasis to a minor with additional credits.</i></p>



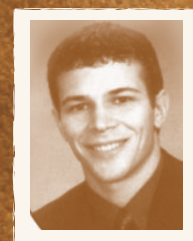
Jennifer Schroer
DMLC 1994
Saginaw MI



Noah Willitz
MLC 2014
Bridgeport MI



Laura Mattek
MLC 2009
New Ulm MN



Matthew Bauer
MLC 2004
Lake Mills WI

Curriculum

impact on the time and energy available to devote to the study of the biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew, so important for pastoral ministry.

Over time, a consensus has developed that expanding options to include non-language choices aligns requirements with realities. As we do this, however, we want to emphasize our continued commitment to the study of nonbiblical languages. Our prep schools are committed to retaining the confessional languages. The preseminary program is retaining its entrance requirement of two years of foreign language study, presumably Latin, German, or Spanish. Our seminary will still encourage the use of these languages on their campus. And at MLC we will continue to encourage all those with the gifts and interest to continue to study one of these languages, perhaps even earning a minor in it.

THE PLUSES AND MINUSES OF THE CHANGE: Some students who could do well in one of these nonbiblical languages may use the freedom this change offers not to study them. This is very much on our hearts. The WELS needs people who can work in these languages. A significant number of American congregations, not to mention our Latin America missions, use Spanish in their ministries. German and Latin are the languages the confessional Lutheran church used for 400 years. These are the languages our greatest theologians wrote and spoke, and we remain committed to offering them.

But expanding our students' choices also brings exciting possibilities. It's exciting to think about the potential when students *freely* choose to devote themselves to German, Latin, or Spanish. It's exciting to think about the benefits that will come from having pastors who have a broader, more in-depth knowledge of history, who have had additional opportunities to read broadly and write well, who can more knowledgeably engage with people in the area of science, or who are better trained in music composition and history, including the musical heritage of the Lutheran church.

Because we do have a special concern for the continued study of German and Latin in the WELS, we have also established the Confessional Language Scholarship Fund. Gifts given to this fund will provide annual scholarships to students who demonstrate proficiency in studying one or both confessional languages. We invite you to consider supporting it.

We also ask for your prayers that God would bless this change and that through it, more young men would be led to say, "Here am I, send me."



Confessional Language Scholarship Fund

Supporting Students Who Study German & Latin

You can be among the first to donate to the new Confessional Language Scholarship Fund!

This fund will provide scholarships to MLC preseminary students who select an emphasis or minor that includes German and/or Latin, starting in the 2025-26 school year.

These students may receive up to \$2,500 over four years, while those who study both languages may receive up to \$3,500.

In this way, the preseminary faculty hope to encourage the continued study of our Lutheran heritage among the next generation of WELS pastors.

A significant number of gifts will be needed to accomplish the goals of this new fund. Will you help?

- Send your gift to MLC Mission Advancement Office, 1995 Luther Ct, New Ulm MN 56073
- Give online at mlc-wels.edu/scholarships/confessional-languages-scholarship/



Bethany Mashke
MLC 2004
Benton Harbor MI



Earle Treptow
NWC 1989
Green Bay WI



Sheryl Persaud
MLC 2019
St. John's, Antigua



Peter Metzger
MLC 2009
Gladwin MI

Support at Every Step for **Early**



Support at every step! That's what our congregations and schools have been requesting for their early childhood (EC) teachers.

We understand the challenges. Some EC teachers have full bachelor's and even master's degrees in early childhood education. Some have training in elementary education but not early childhood education. And others enter the field as adults with limited or no ECE training at all.

We want to help. The MLC Office of Continuing Education has designed options to help busy EC teachers at *every* level of professional and theological training and in *every* geographical location.

The options are tiered, so that each teacher is sure to find the entry and exit point that's appropriate to their background and education level. And Tiers 2-4 are stackable—they build on each other so that the courses/certification completed at one level will apply to the next.

TIER 1

- ECE Basics
- 25 Modules
- Online
- Free

TIER 1: EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHING AND MINISTRY OVERVIEW

These free resources provide a basic introduction to developmentally appropriate practice and ministry. Teachers will complete 25 modules on five topics: Ministry, Health and Safety, Working with Children, Teaching, and Childhood Exceptions. Use the modules to onboard new staff or to lead out-of-the-box inservices for your entire staff—director, teachers, and aides—right at your school.

TIER 2

- Prep for CDA Credential
- 1 semester/120 hours
- Online
- Free textbooks

TIER 2: CDA CREDENTIAL TRAINING

MLC provides these 120 hours of online instruction in the eight subject areas required for the CDA Credential, which is a nationally recognized initial qualification for early childhood teachers. EC teachers and aides can choose from two credentials: Center-Based Infant/Toddler or Center-Based Preschool. The training can be completed in one semester (three 1-credit courses at \$340/credit) in preparation for the CDA exam. MLC will provide the two required textbooks (\$74 value) and get you started in the CDA application process after you've completed the coursework.



mlc-wels.edu/continuing-education/four-tiers/

For more information, contact Dr. John Meyer at meyerjd@mlc-wels.edu.

Childhood Teachers



TIER 3

- Ministry certification
- Required for divine call
- 18 credits (including 3 credits from Tier 2)
- Five-week professional experience
- Online or face-to-face at your location

TIER 3: EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER MINISTRY CERTIFICATION

MLC provides this ministry training required for called early childhood teachers in WELS schools. The program requires a five-week professional experience and 18 credits, 12 of which are theology and ministry credits that must be obtained from MLC. *The 3 credits from Tier 2: CDA Credential Training can be applied to Ministry Certification.*

Teachers with this ministry certification who also meet state requirements are eligible for divine calls issued locally by their congregation or school. Those with this certification and an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood are eligible for divine calls from other schools and congregations.

TIER 4

- 67-credit Associate of Science degree
- Required for divine call
- 30+ credits must be completed through MLC (including ministry certification credits from Tier 3)
- Gen ed credits may be transferred in or earned with MLC's assistance
- Online

COMING SOON!

TIER 4: ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE (AS) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

MLC offers this degree program for individuals currently serving in early childhood education settings without an early childhood degree. The degree qualifies individuals to receive divine calls to WELS EC ministries. It may also meet minimum state qualifications for early childhood teachers, but it does not lead to a license.

All required theology and professional courses are available online, and at least 30 credits must be earned through MLC. *The 18 credits from Tier 3: EC Teacher Ministry Certification can be applied to this degree.* Teachers can also work with MLC to earn all required general education credits.

BEYOND TIER 4 . . . Don't forget! MLC also offers an on-campus bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education (ages 0-8) with licensure for traditional and nontraditional students and our online master's degree in Educational Administration with an Early Childhood Director emphasis.

IN HONOR OF JIM ■ We honored Jim Unke this fall by dedicating the James M. Unke Court. A professor, coach, and athletic director at MLC for 25 years, Jim was called home to heaven in July 2022.



DAYS & KNIGHTS FALL '23-'24

HOMECOMING! ■ The Sprinter Fun Run kicked off Saturday morning of Homecoming in September. After finishing the beautiful one-mile course through campus, our alumni, parents, and friends enjoyed Knights football and volleyball and played some games in the Family Fun Zone. A Wind Symphony concert, talent show, alumni mixer, disc golf tourney, and on-campus worship made for a great weekend!



ROCK CLIMBING FOR CREDIT ■ **Maya Habben** (Mt. Calvary-Flagstaff AZ) and **Justin Peter** (St. James-Portage MI) are ready to do some rock climbing at Devil's Lake, Wisconsin, as part of **Professor Breanna Olson's** MLC '12 Outdoor Education course. The class spent three days in the state park, camping, hiking, cooking a Cajun boil—and climbing! (No worries—they didn't try the real thing until they'd had lots of indoor practice and could demonstrate mastery in tying knots, climbing, belaying, and back-up belaying.) Outdoor Education is a new offering in our PE major this year. It teaches cooperation, trust, and problem solving through physical challenges—skills these students can use as PE teachers in their own classrooms someday.



SCHOLAR-ATHLETES ■

Camden Sulzle (pictured) is one of several true scholar-athletes, earning a place on both the All-Conference First Team and the Academic All-Conference list.

First Team All-Conference

CROSS COUNTRY

- Maya Habben** (Mt. Calvary-Flagstaff AZ)
- Caleb Lash** (First-Racine WI)
- Camden Sulzle** (St. John-Redwood Falls MN)

FOOTBALL

- Thomas Balge** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)
- Cole Broekhuizen** (St. John-Bay City MI)
- Mason Cox** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)
- Joey Ehlke** (Good Shepherd-West Bend WI)
- Christian Koelpin** (Faith-Tyler TX)
- Jude Pederson** (Cross of Christ-Coon Rapids MN)
- Jeremiah Stanton** (Redemption-Milwaukee)

Academic All-Conference

The first-semester Academic All-Conference listing included 96 MLC athletes who made the grade, earning a GPA of 3.5 or better. This put MLC at the top of the entire conference. Our Knights also led the UMAC in team academic awards, notching the top slot in five of eight sports:

- men's cross country (3.83)
- volleyball (3.77)
- women's soccer (3.75)
- men's soccer (3.36)
- football (3.08)

HELLO, DOLLY! ■

It was another stunning musical production from MLC Forum! Our student actors delighted the audience, and we welcomed back many alumni who played these iconic roles back in their day!

Pictured top: Isabel Monday (St. Peter-Appleton WI) as Dolly and Ethan Cloute (St. Luke-Watertown WI) as Horace. Pictured below: Ella Bergemann (Good Shepherd-Downers Grove IL) as Minnie Fay, Brooke Flunker (St. Paul-Winneconne WI) as Irene Molloy, Ethan, and Isabel.



STRIKE UP THE BAND! ■

Dr. Miles Wurster added a musical kick to Homecoming weekend with a concert featuring classics from Gershwin, Grainger, Vaughan Williams, and more!



UNTIL A CHILD IS BORN ■ It's a highlight every year! This year's Christmas concert featured excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*, and all our campus musicians played a part.



DAYS & KNIGHTS WINTER '23-'24



MEANWHILE, AT THE ICE CREAM SHOP . . . ■ A little December party and photo shoot at New Ulm's MN Eis was in order for our Student Ambassadors! They work hard for Admissions all year, leading tours, making Focus on Ministry weekends run smoothly, posting on social media—doing everything possible to show prospective students how great it is to prepare for public ministry at MLC!



OUR FIRST FOCUS ON THE FINE ARTS ■

What are music, art, and theater like at MLC? Prospective students want to know! At our first Focus on Fine Arts weekend this February, the high schoolers sang along in a College Choir rehearsal (pictured), watched a Wind Symphony concert, enjoyed *The Importance of Being Earnest*, sat in on art class, and played the Schantz organ and the Reuter Steinway. Maybe the best part? Talking to lots of students and profs about how they could develop their special gifts for ministry here at MLC!

LET IT SNOW—PLEASE? ■ We didn't have much snow this year, but when we did, we leaned into it! Here **Katie Tauscher** (St. John-Barre Mills WI) and two little ones from our Early Childhood Learning Center had no fear as they sledged down the hill. The ECLC is our lab school, where we serve community children while training future teachers like Katie.

"Learning about early childhood education is fascinating," Katie says, "but learning ECE from MLC is so meaningful because you get to teach children about their Savior." On Call Day, by the way, Katie was called to First Light Early Learning Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where she'll be teaching littles about Jesus every day!

And a note to alumni: This tiny toboggan is way safer than a cafeteria tray. Wink-wink.





BINGO! ■ The prizes were incredible! Almost 200 handmade blankets, quilts, hats, and mittens. More than 200 plates of cookies and bars. And more than \$3,000 in gift cards and cash!

As shown by the faces of **Harrison Hahm** (St. John-Red Wing MN), **Mercy Sandefur** (Abiding Faith-Fort Worth TX), and **Joseph Brown** (Abiding Word-Houston), the MLC Ladies' Auxiliary Bingo Night was again a huge success.



FIRST TEAM ALL-CONFERENCE ■

BASKETBALL

Jordyn Heckendorf (Shepherd of the Hills-West Bend WI)

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Men's Indoor Track Coaching Staff of the Year: Head Coach Breanna Olson and assistant coaches Isaiah Degner, Benjamin Olson, Tony Ortmann, and Emma Holzhueter

Lucas Holtz (St. Paul-Appleton WI)

Nathan Pausma (St. Luke-Oakfield WI)

Sam Plocher—Rookie of the Year (Holy Trinity-Des Moines WA)

Thomas Plocher (Holy Trinity-Des Moines WA)

Martin Raasch (Good Shepherd-Sioux Falls SD)

Micah Schibbelhut (St. Paul-Onalaska WI)

Ella Schlei (Zion-Sanborn MN)

Jeremiah Stanton (Redemption-Milwaukee)

Camden Sulzle (St. John-Redwood Falls MN)

TELL US HOW YOU TELL THE STORY! ■

On Evangelism Day we heard from experts across the synod who told how they share the story of Jesus in their specific ministry contexts.

Pictured: **Pastor Tim Satorius** NWC '85, WLS '89, who served in Latin America, was one of dozens of speakers who informed and inspired our students.



BECAUSE THE GOSPEL IS GLOBAL ■

Learning about the larger world is our goal during International Education Week. Coordinated by the Cultural Engagement Center, the week featured study abroad and teaching abroad presentations; international dinners in the caf; Scripture readings by students in Korean, Thai, Mandarin, German, and Spanish at chapel; and a Human Library event—where we “read” international students by hearing their stories.

Pictured: Three international and three domestic students enjoy the Global Potluck in the CEC: **Wei (Nadine) Li** (China), **Liza Bornschlegl** (Resurrection and Life-Rochester MN), **Jason Hanania** (Bethany-Saginaw MI), **Renée Johnson** (St. Paul-Ottawa, Canada), **AnaCristina Iglesias** (St. Mark-Watertown WI), and **Xueqian (Sissi) Gan** (China).



OUR FIRST J-TERM ■

Time well spent! Our first ever January term was a great opportunity for first-years like **Laura Faught** (St. John-Slades Corners WI, pictured) to complete their Early Field Experience I on campus. Meanwhile, first-year preseminary students like **Andy Raasch** (Salem-Stillwater MN, pictured) enjoyed their first Early Ministry Experience, immersing themselves in congregational life for a while. Andy visited Sure Foundation-Brandon, South Dakota, and worked with **Pastor Craig Wilke** MLC '15, WLS '19.





ENDING ON A HIGH NOTE! ■ These 2024 honors recitalists gave their all as part of MLC's music program—and they'll take their gifts into ministry!

Rebecca Bieberitz
(St. Mark-Eau Claire WI)
piano

Maya Habben
(Mt. Calvary-Flagstaff AZ)
piano

Carolyn Bauer
(St. Paul/First-North Hollywood CA)
piano

Hope Sulzle
(St. John-Redwood Falls MN)
piano & organ

Emma Berg
(Eastside-Madison WI)
soprano

Joseph Panning
(St. Paul-Litchfield MN)
saxophone

Emma Pufahl
(Emmanuel-Tempe AZ)
flute

Bethany Valleau
(New Life-Shoreview MN)
soprano

Owen Eubank
(Salem-Ann Arbor MI)
organ

Ella Bergemann
(Good Shepherd-Downers Grove IL)
piano

Emma Mindock
(Mount Olive-Appleton WI, pictured)
soprano

Benjamin Foster
(Emanuel First-Lansing MI)
organ



DAYS & KNIGHTS SPRING '23-'24



CHAPEL REHEARSAL HALL

■ It may look rough, but we couldn't be more excited! This is Phase 1 of the Chapel Rehearsal Hall project, and it's nearing completion. We hope to finish up the HVAC and other infrastructure and then move seamlessly into Phase 2 in August. This will be a top-notch rehearsal and recital hall for our students—and we have you donors to thank for it!



IT'S ARBOR DAY! ■ We've been holding Arbor Day for more than a century on this campus! This year students raked and picked up on campus, as always, but also in New Ulm parks and, by request, at the homes of those who needed a little hand.



CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

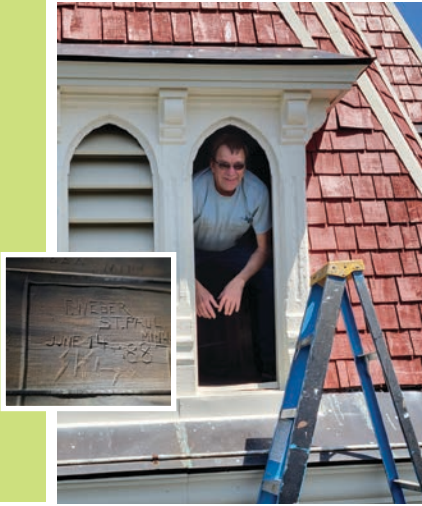
■ Alice and her friends took 5,000 children down the rabbit hole at our production of *Alice in Wonderland* this spring. This Children's Theatre production is one of four shows MLC Forum stages every year—and definitely the one that gets the most giggles. This summer we say goodbye to Forum faculty advisor **Erin Laabs** MLC '08, who directed six musicals and oversaw 26 shows over seven years. "MLC students are completely wonderful human beings," she says. "I loved building each theatre production right with them and seeing their passion for theatre itself, for working with each other, and for learning about all aspects of a production. I can't wait to run into them again in future walks of life."



WE CALL IT SWINE SIZZLER ■ It's a day of fun and games right before we part ways for the summer!

SECRETS IN THE TOWER

■ **John Hartwig** DMLC '82 knew about hidden carvings in the Old Main bell tower and then came to MLC in May to show us. He climbed into the tower from the outside and pointed out the locations of the carvings, including this 1888 one from Fred Weber of St. Paul, who is on the first roster of students in the academic department at DMLC.



FIRST TEAM ALL-CONFERENCE

OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

UMAC Coaching Staff of the Year for Women's Outdoor Track: Head Coach **Breanna Olson** and assistant coaches **Isaiah Degner**, **Benjamin Olson**, **Tony Ortmann**, and **Emma Holzhueter**

- Elena Brauer** (Holy Trinity-Des Moines WA)
- Maya Habben** (Mt. Calvary-Flagstaff AZ)
- Lucas Holtz** (St. Paul-Appleton WI)
- Elise Nolte** (Riverview-Appleton WI)
- Jack Pittenger** (Bethany-Port Orchard WA)
- Samuel Plocher** (Holy Trinity-Des Moines WA)
- Martin Raasch** (Good Shepherd-Sioux Falls SD)
- Madelinn Romsdahl** (Emmaus-Phoenix)
- Micah Schibbelhut** (St. Paul-Onalaska WI)
- Jeremiah Stanton** (Redemption-Milwaukee, pictured)
- Camden Sulzle** (St. John-Redwood Falls MN)
- Stephen Wietzke** (Crown of Life-Pueblo West CO)

BASEBALL

- Mason Cox** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)
- Parker Winghart** (Our Savior-Brookings SD)

SOFTBALL

- Jordyn Heckendorf** (Shepherd of the Hills-West Bend WI)
- Lisa Hoffer** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)

TENNIS

- Britney Prah** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN)



SMASHING RECORDS

■ A lot of Knights broke records this year in track, football, softball, and baseball. But one Knight may have broken the record of most records broken: baseballer **Mason Cox** (St. Paul-New Ulm MN, pictured with his parents, **Coach Randy Cox** and **Professor Rebecca Cox** DMLC '89). Take a look at these stats!

Single-Season (2024)

- 1st in Home Runs: (5)
- 1st in Hits: (60)
- 1st in Runs: (32)
- 1st in Triples: (6)
- 1st in SLG: (.758)

Career

- 1st in Home Runs: (12)
- 1st in Hits: (170)
- 1st in BA: (.431)
- 1st in OBP: (.499)



MLC AND WLS GRADUATES

ARIZONA-CALIFORNIA DISTRICT

Molly Bauer (North Hollywood CA) to **Emmanuel LS-Phoenix**: ECE director apprentice (assignment made permanent)

Janessa Brock (Happy Valley CA) to **Shepherd LS-Albuquerque NM**: gr 3-5 (assignment made permanent)

Grace Brown (Conroe TX) to **Cross of Glory LS-Peoria AZ**: gr 4

Silas Dose (New Ulm MN) to **Hope LC-Chino Valley/Prescott AZ**: associate pastor

Tyler Holzhueter (Waterloo WI) to **Cross of Glory LS-Peoria AZ**: gr 7-8, Principal Training Program

Leah Klammer (Fall Creek WI) to **Mt. Calvary CA-Redding CA**: K, transitional K, piano, organ

Elise Matthies (Lake Mills WI) to **St. Mark LS-Citrus Heights CA**: 4K, K

Hannah Mayer (Fort Atkinson WI) to **California LHS**: dorm supervisor, Spanish, drama (reassigned for second year)

Madelyn Nordlie (Appleton WI) to **Grace Lutheran Child Learning Center-Sahuarita AZ**: ECE (one-year assignment)

Elsa Ponath (Stillwater MN) to **East Fork LS-Whitewater AZ**: gr 2 (assignment made permanent)

Amanda Rehberger (Appleton WI) to **Apostles LS-San Jose CA**: gr 4, music

Matthew Rieger (New Ulm MN) to **California LHS**: math, coach (one-year assignment)

Madeline Walz (Jackson WI) to **California LHS**: dorm supervisor, PE, assistant AD, coach (one-year assignment)

Daniel Waterstradt (Penryn CA) to **Arizona-California District**: associate of district president (two-year assignment)

Joshua Zander (Manitowoc WI) to **California LHS**: social studies, coach (one-year assignment)

DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICT

Emily Ciha (Manitowoc WI) to **St. Paul LS-Rapid City SD**: K

Jacob Klug (Juneau WI) to **Mountain View LC-Calgary AB Canada**: pastor

Alyssa Nash (Lewiston MN) to **St. Martin LS-Watertown SD**: gr 2

Joseph Nash (Wildomar CA) to **Great Plains LHS**: dorm supervisor, geography, math (one-year assignment)

Leah Nushart (Maple Grove WI) to **Trinity LS-Aberdeen SD**: gr 6-8

Nicole Porter (New Ulm MN) to **Great Plains LHS**: dorm supervisor, math (reassigned for second year)

Joshua Schroeder (Chula Vista CA) to **New Mission Start-Kalispell MT**: pastor

Erika Wordell (Rapid City SD) to **Bethel LS-Sioux Falls SD**: gr K-2, music (one-year assignment)

MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Samantha Bjerke (Winona MN) to **St. Bartholomew LS-Kawkawlin MI**: gr 1-2

Anna Borgwardt (Fond du Lac WI) to **Divine Grace LS-Lake Orion MI**: gr 1-2

Noah Bruckschen (Mishicot WI) to **Mt. Sinai/King of King LC-Montrose/Frankenmuth MI**: pastor

Megan Buth (Newnan GA) to **Michigan Lutheran Seminary**: tutor (reassigned for third year)

William Costin (Lincoln NE) to **Michigan Lutheran Seminary**: tutor (one-year assignment)

Isaiah Duff (St. Paul) to **Salem LC-Owosso MI**: associate pastor

Caleb Gustafson (West Bend WI) to **Peace LC-Granger IN**: pastor

Jewel Heiting (Kaukauna WI) to **St. Paul LS-Livonia MI**: gr 1

Sarah Otto (Janesville WI) to **St. Paul LS-Columbus OH**: gr 1-2 (one-year assignment)

Kaitlyn Rodmyre (Federal Way WA) to **Bethel LS-Bay City MI**: gr 1-2

Emily Rothfuss (Bay City MI) to **Michigan Lutheran Seminary**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Hannah Schneekloth (Mabel MN) to **Grace LS-St. Joseph MI**: gr 5-8 science

Matthew Speidel (Apple Valley MN) to **Crown of Life LS-Warren MI**: gr 5-8, Principal Training Program

Michael Starr (Bay City MI) to **Beautiful Savior LS-Grove City OH**: gr 6-8

Jacob Ungemach (Manitowoc WI) to **Beautiful Savior LC (new mission start)-Oakley OH**: pastor

Jeremiah Wallander (Appleton WI) to **Michigan Lutheran Seminary**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

MINNESOTA DISTRICT

Madeline Abel (Fort Atkinson WI) to **Good Shepherd LS-Burnsville MN**: gr 5, AD (one-year assignment)

Katherine Boehlke (Eagan MN) to **Good Shepherd LS-Burnsville MN**: gr 7-8

Michaela Bubolz (Reedsville WI) to **Christ LS-Zumbrota MN**: gr 2-3

Aaron Bush (New Berlin WI) to **Martin Luther College**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Kincaid Diersen (New Ulm MN) to **St. Croix LA**: biology

Andrew Grady (Ross OH) to **St. Croix LA**: social studies

Noah Hartmann (Milwaukee) to **St. Paul LC-North Mankato MN**: associate pastor

Lisa Hoffer (Plymouth MN) to **St. John LS-Lake City MN**: gr 6-8 (one-year assignment)

MacKenzie Holzbauer (Fond du Lac WI) to **Martin Luther College**: admissions counselor (one-year assignment)

Lynsey Marohn (Reedsville WI) to **Building Blocks for Life PS-Cambridge MN**: ECE teacher, director apprentice (assignment made permanent)

Taylor Natalie (Federal Way WA) to **God's Treasures Child Care-Winthrop MN**: ECE, childcare (one-year assignment)

Tatiana Parker (St. James MN) to **Crown of Life LS-West St. Paul MN**: gr 1

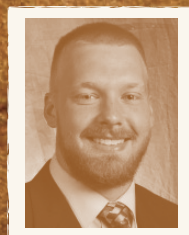
Madelyn Plitzuweit (Oconomowoc WI) to **Bloomington LS-Bloomington MN**: gr 2, music (one-year assignment)



Warren Widmann
NWC 1959
Mobridge SD



Charissa Scharf
MLC 2014
Hot Springs
Village AR



Grant Freese
MLC 2019
Plymouth NE



Julie Rogotzke
DMLC 1989
Sanborn MN

Assigned to Your District



Hannah Renner (Rochester MN) to **Trinity LS-Belle Plaine MN**: gr 1-2, school choir (reassigned for second year)

Nathaniel Savage (Phoenix) to **Martin Luther College**: tutor (reassigned for third year)

Erica Schlomer (Cincinnati) to **St. Paul LS-Arlington MN**: gr K, 5-6 departmentalized (one-year assignment)

Noah Ungemach (Manitowoc WI) to **Minnesota Valley LHS**: gr 9 religion, music

Alyssa Walther (Watertown WI) to **Holy Trinity LA-New Hope MN**: ECE

Hannah Willems (Johnson Creek WI) to **St. Croix LA**: social studies, English (assignment made permanent)

Collin Wenzel (Appleton WI) to **Christ Our Rock LC-Rochester MN**: pastor

Daniel Zabel (Lake City MN) to **St. John LS-Caledonia MN**: gr 7-8 (one-year assignment)

NEBRASKA DISTRICT

Alyssa Bergemann (Port Orchard WA) to **St. Mark LS-Lincoln NE**: gr 1-2

Andrew Carter (Brownsville WI) to **Grace/Trinity LC-Geneva/Grafton NE**: pastor

Tristan Pankow (Bay City MI) to **Living Shepherd LC-Laramie WY**: pastor

Annaliese Wenz (Shepherd MT) to **Nebraska LHS**: math

Noah Worster (York NE) to **Nebraska LHS**: dorm supervisor, instructor (reassigned for second year)

NORTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Margaret Beam (Palm Coast FL) to **Divine Peace LS-Largo MD**: gr K-2

Hannah Esmay (Temple TX) to **Refuge Early Learning Center-Raleigh NC**: PreK-2, Director Training Program

Caleb Koelpin (Dallas) to **Atonement LC-Baltimore**: pastor

Marissa Marten (Sheboygan WI) to **Grace CA-Falls Church VA**: gr 7-8

Esther Robinson (New Ulm MN) to **Grace Lutheran Child Care-Charlotte NC**: ECE

NORTHERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Ruth Gehring (Menomonie WI) to **Emanuel LS-New London WI**: gr 1

Naomi Bridgemen (Eau Claire WI) to **St. Paul LS-Appleton WI**: gr 8, gr 6-8 social studies

McKenzey Crowley (Rapid City SD) to **St. John LS-Wrightstown WI**: gr K-1

Grace Deck (Hotchkiss CO) to **First German LS-Manitowoc WI**: K

Malakai Dunn (Thornton CO) to **Mount Olive LS-Appleton WI**: vice principal, AD, Principal Training Program

Ryan Henning (Jenera OH) to **Grace LC-Manitowoc WI**: pastor

Sarah Kramer (Redwood Falls MN) to **Trinity LS-Brillion WI**: gr 3-4

Jacob Leyrer (Wauwatosa WI) to **Fox Valley LHS**: gr 10-12 math

Ethan Mallow (Menomonee Falls WI) to **Winnebago LA**: technology director, science

Ashley Peterson (Sioux Falls SD) to **St. Paul LS-North Fond du Lac WI**: gr 3-4 (one-year assignment)

Alyssa Roethke (Hartford WI) to **Trinity LS-Kiel WI**: K (one-year assignment)

Nathaniel Ruediger (Clio MI) to **St. John LS-Manitowoc WI**: gr 5-6 (one-year assignment)

Renée Ruediger (Ottawa ON Canada) to **Manitowoc LHS**: international coordinator, language arts

Sadie Schultz (Rhineland WI) to **St. John LS-Maribel WI**: 3K-4K

Eli Steinbrenner (Hartford WI) to **Good Shepherd LC-Plymouth WI**: pastor

Anna Treder (Wildomar CA) to **Beautiful Savior LS-Cincinnati**: gr 1-2 (one-year assignment)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Keith Brassow (Saginaw MI) to **Pacific Northwest District**: associate of district president (two-year assignment)

Noelle Dimke (Henderson CO) to **Faith LS-Anchorage AK**: ECE (one-year assignment)

Charis Glende (Fayetteville NC) to **Immanuel LS-Salem OR**: gr 1

Jayden Koehler (Neenah WI) to **Evergreen LHS**: science, coaching

Jonah Schlomer (Rome WI) to **Redeemer LC-Yakima WA**: pastor

Hannah Sieh (Wasilla AK) to **Grace LS-Kenai AK**: gr K-1

SOUTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Benjamin Bitter (Milwaukee) to **Peace LC-Trinity FL**: pastor

Natasha Cabeza Velasquez (Milwaukee) to **King of Kings LS-Maitland FL**: preschool

Ethan Coffee (Van Nuys CA) to **Divine Savior Academy-Delray Beach FL**: gr 1

Hannah Foley (Westland MI) to **St. Paul LS-Beverly Hills FL**: gr 1

Tristen Goff (Cleburne TX) to **Christ the King Academy-Palm Coast FL**: gr 2

Stephanie Hintz (Franklin TN) to **Risen Savior CA-Pooler GA**: gr 3-4

Aiden Holien (Watertown SD) to **Sola Fide Academy-Lawrenceville GA**: gr 7-9 social studies

Nathan Holz (Clarksville TN) to **Hope LC-Irmo SC**: pastor

Rachel Ihlenfeldt (Greenleaf WI) to **Divine Savior Academy-Doral FL**: gr 5

Megan Kieselhorst (DeForest WI) to **Christ the King Academy-Palm Coast FL**: gr 7

Micah Kieselhorst (Watertown WI) to **Christ the King Academy-Palm Coast FL**: gr 8, Principal Training Program

Jee Ah Larsen (Pewaukee WI) to **Abiding Love PS-Cape Coral FL**: ECE teacher, director apprentice (assignment made permanent)

Allyana Rautenberg (Peridot AZ) to **Crown of Life CA-Fort Myers FL**: gr 2

Alexis Waack (Watertown WI) to **Divine Savior Academy-Doral FL**: staff minister (one-year assignment)



Nathanael Goelzer
MLC 2019
Deland FL



Gina Schumann
DMLC 1979
Duluth MN



Richard Frank
NWC 1969
Flint MI



Karen Kell
DMLC 1984
Watertown WI

MLC AND WLS GRADUATES

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

Michaela Albrecht (Grafton WI) to **Divine Savior Academy-Santa Rita Ranch TX**: K

Matthew Beussman (Springfield MN) to **Divine Savior Academy-Santa Rita Ranch TX**: gr 3

Clayton Fury (Houston) to **New Mission Start-Conway AR**: pastor

Emily Raymond (Sun Prairie WI) to **Divine Savior Academy-Santa Rita Ranch TX**: gr 2

Josiah Wordell (Mequon WI) to **Divine Savior Academy-Santa Rita Ranch TX**: middle & high school religion, coaching

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Serina Blase (Watertown WI) to **Zion LS-South Milwaukee WI**: gr 7-8

Nathaniel Brown (Benton Harbor MI) to **Garden Homes LS-Milwaukee**: gr 8, middle school religion

Natalie Eickhoff (De Pere WI) to **Our Savior LS-Grafton WI**: gr 1-2, school music coordinator (reassigned for second year)

Tabitha Gregorius (Watertown WI) to **Bethlehem LS-Menomonee Falls WI**: gr 5 (reassigned for second year)

Adia Hahm (Los Angeles) to **Mount Lebanon LS-Milwaukee**: gr 2 (reassigned for second year)

Alexandra Heiman (Cincinnati) to **Salem LS-Milwaukee**: 4K (reassigned for second year)

Rebecca Hengst (Wethersfield CT) to **St. Paul LS-Cudahy WI**: gr 3-4

Abigail Hillmer (Katy TX) to **Mount Lebanon LS-Milwaukee**: gr 4 (one-year assignment)

Hoonsik Jo (Seoul, South Korea) to **Jerusalem LS-Morton Grove IL**: gr 5-6, gr 3-8 science (reassigned for second year)

Makayla Kaiser (Cottage Grove WI) to **St. John LS-Lomira WI**: ECE

Mikayla Kiedrowski (Milwaukee) to **Risen Savior LS-Milwaukee**: gr 6, gr 5-8 language arts (one-year assignment)

Katherine Kopplin (Rowlett TX) to **St. Paul LC-Muskego WI**: staff minister (one-year assignment)

Olivia Krueger (Monroe MI) to **St. Philip LS-Milwaukee**: gr 7-8

Caleb Lash (Racine WI) to **Shoreland LHS**: STEM, Project Lead the Way

Natalie Mapes (Saginaw MI) to **St. John LS-Wauwatosa WI**: 3K

Bryce Marohn (Eau Claire WI) to **Kenosha LA-Kenosha WI**: gr 5

Alicia Mengel (Waukesha WI) to **Wisconsin LHS**: grade school band

Megan Muske (Appleton WI) to **St. Marcus LS-Milwaukee**: 4K (one-year assignment)

Grace Nelson (Green Bay WI) to **St. Philip LS-Milwaukee**: 4K, 5K (one-year assignment)

Abigail Robbert (Baraboo WI) to **Morning Star LS-Jackson WI**: K

Christopher Robbert (Maple Plain MN) to **Christ/St. Peter LS-Milwaukee**: Extended Learning Center

Sophia Scheuerlein (Watertown WI) to **Salem LS-Milwaukee**: K (one-year assignment)

Jacob Schmidt (Ixonia WI) to **Faith LC-Radcliff KY**: pastor

Hannah Schroeder (Sturgeon Bay WI) to **Our Savior LS-Grafton WI**: gr 5-6

Nicholas Schroeder (Carlsbad CA) to **St. Lucas LS-Milwaukee**: gr 8, Principal Training Program

Katlyn Schwab (Kawkawlin MI) to **Trinity LS-Waukesha WI**: gr 6, departmentalized language arts

Madylin Thiel (Inver Grove Heights MN) to **St. Marcus LS-Milwaukee**: gr 4 (reassigned for second year)

Sidney Tomhave (Commerce City CO) to **Garden Homes LS-Milwaukee**: gr 3 (assignment made permanent)

Hugo Ugalde-Bemer (Cedar Rapids IA) to **Zion/St. Peter LC-Theresa WI**: pastor

Kristin Uher (New Ulm MN) to **St. John LS-Lannon WI**: upper grades departmentalized (one-year assignment)

Claire Vogel (Flushing MI) to **St. Philip LS-Milwaukee**: gr 3-4 (reassigned for second year)

Keegan Young (Manitowoc WI) to **Christ/St. Peter LS-Milwaukee**: gr 7-8, Principal Training Program (assignment made permanent)

Elizabeth Zabel (Appleton WI) to **Atonement LS-Milwaukee**: gr 5-6, language arts (reassigned for second year)

Michaela Zabell (Bangor WI) to **St. John LS-Milwaukee**: gr 7, music coordinator

Zackary Zuberbier (Milwaukee) to **Faith LC-Antioch IL**: associate pastor

WESTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Duane Backhaus (Tomah WI) to **Living Hope LC-Peoria IL**: pastor

Eric Bartsch (Sussex WI) to **First LS-La Crosse WI**: gr 6 (one-year assignment)

Paige Biesterfeld (Lowell IN) to **St. Matthew LS-Stoddard WI**: gr 2-4

Aaron Bode (Phoenix) to **St. Matthew LS-Winona MN**: gr 5-8

Jenna Boggs (Watertown WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (one-year assignment)

Matthew Emmendorfer (Chesaning MI) to **Mt. Calvary/Grace LS-La Crosse WI**: gr 3-5 departmentalized, technology

Brooke Flunker (Winneconne WI) to **St. Paul LS-Tomah WI**: gr 3, music

Brian Friesenegger (Elizabeth CO) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (one-year assignment)

Kiley Gregoriua (West Bend WI) to **Luther HS**: Spanish

Ryan Gurgel (Mequon WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (one-year assignment)

Alyssa Heckendorf (Reno NV) to **Eastside LS-Madison WI**: gr 2 (one-year assignment)

Jordyn Heckendorf (Kewaskum WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (one-year assignment)

David Hirsch (Manhattan KS) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Lauren Kamps (Coleman WI) to **St. John LS-Waterloo WI**: ECE teacher, director apprentice (assignment made permanent)

Andrew Kramer (Redwood Falls MN) to **Peace LS-Sun Prairie WI**: gr 7 (reassigned for second year)

Zachary Meier (Richfield WI) to **St. Matthew/St. John LC-Ontario/Kendall WI**: pastor



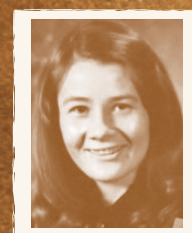
James Burow
DMLC 1989
Beloit WI



Annette Paap
DMLC 1959
Vernon Center MN



Henry Shoop
DMLC 1984
Phoenix



Janet Huebner
DMLC 1974
New Ulm MN

Assigned to Your District



Robert Read (Richardson TX) to **Bethany LC-Fort Atkinson WI**: associate pastor

Zachary Satorius (Annandale VA) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Brett Schmidt (Lake Mills WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Ethan Schultz (Waukesha WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

Luke Schultz (Rhineland WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: instructor (reassigned for third year)

Katie Tauscher (West Salem WI) to **First Light Early Learning Center-La Crosse WI**: ECE

Isaiah Terry (Ixonia WI) to **Christ/St. John LS-West Salem WI**: gr 3-4

Claire Tomhave (Lake Mills WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (one-year assignment)

Amber Wenman (Burlington WI) to **St. Stephen LS-Beaver Dam WI**: gr 2

Kylie Wolf (Greenville WI) to **Luther Preparatory School**: tutor (reassigned for second year)

ASSIGNED TO WORLD MISSIONS

Matthias Borgwardt (New Ulm MN) to **Peridot/Our Savior LS-Peridot AZ**: gr 6

Jake Vilhauer (Arvada CO) to **Lusaka, Zambia (One Africa Team)**: outreach team (two-year assignment)

ELECTING INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

Rebekah Cole (Milwaukee) to **Dominican Republic**

Zachary Cole (Show Low AZ) to **Dominican Republic**

Lydia Krenke (Las Vegas) to **Dominican Republic**

Abby Micheel (Eau Claire WI) to **Japan (Friends Network)**

** Additional calls and assignments may have been made since this list went to press.

For the fully updated lists, go to mlc-wels.edu/assignments and wls.wels.net/about-wels/assignment-list

ABBREVIATIONS:

CA – Christian Academy

ECE – Early Childhood Education

K – Kindergarten

LA – Lutheran Academy

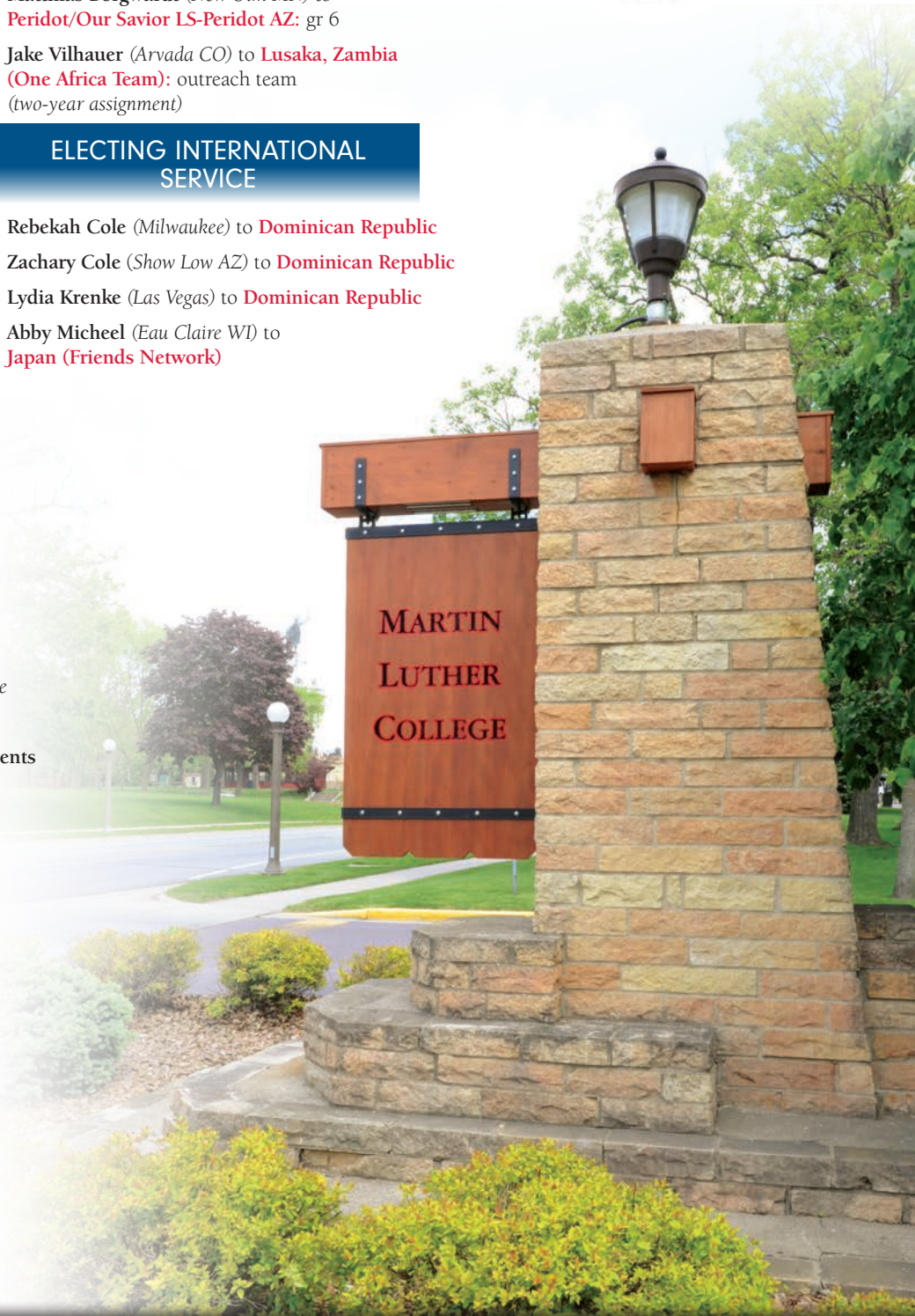
LC – Lutheran Church

LHS – Lutheran High School

LPS – Lutheran Preschool

LS – Lutheran School

PS – Preschool



David Habeck
DMLC 1974
Kewaunee WI



Angela Horneber
MLC 2014
Pittsford NY



Jason Teteak
MLC 2019
Middleton WI



Melissa Schupmann
MLC 1999
Aurora IL



Focus On *Giving*

Different Minds, ONE HEART

By **Sarah Gieseke** DMLC '82

The earliest years of the Christian church are rich in acts of selfless support for fellow Christians and the Lord's work. Those examples from the past live on in the present. Consider three recent donations we've received at MLC. Each came from a variety of plans and activities, yet they all embody what God reveals about the early Christian church. "All the believers were one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32).

RISEN SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH IN MCFARLAND, WISCONSIN, knows the importance of providing tuition funds for families. Their 120 members have always supported their families through a Christian Education Assistance program by making up the difference between member and non-member tuition at local Lutheran elementary schools and Lakeside LHS. They also provide up to half the member tuition rate.

But they didn't want to stop there. They know that education cannot happen without trained pastors, teachers, and staff ministers. That's why the congregation added a budget line for tuition assistance at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Then members Carol and Bob felt the need to up the ante. "It is important to encourage and help students who will serve in our churches," they said. They added \$100,000 to Risen Savior's donation for MLC student tuition. How the Spirit inspires!

called Not Unto Us. But they did not raise the funds only for themselves. From the beginning they designated 10% of the campaign offerings to MLC.

Living Hope does outreach through a fine arts camp. Last summer they had help from Luther Preparatory School students. One of those LPS students, **Ella Bergemann** (*Good Shepherd-Downers Grove IL*), is now at MLC, a meaningful reminder to their members and an encouragement to others of the larger work of WELS.

The church's final donation of \$19,151 went to MLC's Congregational Partner Grant Program, along with a letter that said, "We pray for MLC regularly. We thank God for the faithful faculty, staff, and students. [Signed] Your brothers and sisters at Living Hope."



Participants of Living Hope's 2023 Fine Arts Camp enjoyed help from LPS students, including **Ella Bergemann**, who's a rising sophomore at MLC.



Risen Savior-McFarland WI has MLC and WLS tuition assistance in their budget.



The hearts of believers are also united at **LIVING HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN MIDLOTHIAN, VIRGINIA**. From 2020 to 2023 they conducted a building expansion campaign

Sometimes hearts encourage feet to move. That was the case for **ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH IN WEYAUWEGA, WISCONSIN**. Their parent group, Friends Assisting Christian Education (FACE), sponsored a walk-a-thon and encouraged unity by having participants walk in "flocks." Each flock was made up of students from preschool through eighth grade. Their flocks logged the equivalent of 400 miles. That's 70 miles more than if they walked from Weyauwega to MLC!

The faculty chose to donate the \$6,819 walk-a-thon and school mission collections money to MLC's tuition assistance. They see it as a way to support and encourage future pastors, staff ministers, and teachers. As Principal Jeff Miller put it, "Each

year, students enter the public ministry having been trained the same way and holding the same beliefs. What a tremendous blessing from God and one that we should support with our prayers and resources.”

Principal Miller concludes, “God be praised that he opened the hearts of so many to give and used the feet of our students to witness to their faith and raise offerings.”



Happy feet and hearts at St. Peter's Walk-a-thon, which raised money for MLC tuition assistance.



THE BARBARA STRACKBEIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship was established in 2023 by Barbara's husband, **Pastor John Strackbein** WLS '79, with a foundational gift from the South Central District of WELS and further gifts from Holy Cross Lutheran Church of Oklahoma City, where Pastor Strackbein and Barbara served. The scholarship pays tribute to Barbara's life of service and honors our heavenly Father, who gave her such wonderful gifts to serve.



Barbara (1951-2023) met the love of her life, John Strackbein, at Bethany Lutheran College, where she was a cook and he was a dishwasher. She graduated from Concordia Teachers College in 1973 and went on to teach third grade at Holy Cross Lutheran School in Emma, Missouri (LCMS). On July 4, 1974, Barbara and John were married.

While John took preseminary courses at Bethany Lutheran College, Barbara became a nurse's aide. While John was at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Barbara had three sons. After John graduated in 1979, he received a call to serve two congregations in Salina and Russell, Kansas, and there the couple had two more sons.

In 1987, the family moved to Guadalajara, Mexico, to learn Spanish for five months in preparation for a call to Puerto Rico, where they served as missionaries for 18 years. These years were very special to the couple, and this scholarship

was set up to acknowledge and foster the work of the gospel among Spanish-speaking peoples.

In 2005, the Strackbeins were called to Holy Cross Lutheran Church, where John continues to serve as pastor. At Holy Cross, Barbara filled many roles: teaching children in the “No Child Left Behind” program, working as a cook at a public grade school, singing alto in the church choir, teaching Sunday School, and occasionally playing organ or trombone for worship. She also enjoyed painting biblical scenery and writing Bible verse cards as gifts.

Barbara loved being a mom. She adored her husband and five sons and loved spending time with her grandchildren. And more than anything else, she dedicated her entire self to her Savior.

Her husband, John, writes, “Barbara's love for Jesus and his Word is worth remembering. Her greatest desire was that she could use her life to share that love with as many people as possible.” He hopes that Barbara's desire to share Jesus' love will be echoed in the heart and life of the recipient of this memorial scholarship.

Scholarship recipients are MLC students who demonstrate scholastic merit and financial need and, more specifically, who were born in the Caribbean or in Latin America or are studying Spanish at MLC.

Would you like to establish a named scholarship? You can honor a loved one, support a specific area of ministry training, receive personal thank-you letters from MLC students, enjoy tax benefits, and—most important—give glory to the Lord of the Church while leaving a lasting legacy at MLC.

We'll help you set it up! Contact **Mark Maurice** (mauricme@mlc-wels.edu / 507.354.8221) or **Sarah Gieseke** (gieseism@mlc-wels.edu / 507.354.8221).

Big News in Competency-Based Education!

WE'RE ENROLLING FOR FALL 2024!

So many of you have been asking about our exciting Competency-Based Education (CBE) program that we couldn't wait to share the news: We're now enrolling students for *this fall*.



Program Director Dr. Nichole LaGrow and Instructional Designer Marty LaGrow (pictured) have informed us that our accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission, has given us approval to offer the first component of our nontraditional education program: a Competency-

Based Theology Education (CBTE) minor. This minor is comprised of six theology courses that are required for adult learners who want to serve in the public ministry.

Learners enrolled in the theology minor will complete two courses every 15 weeks, with about a week between terms. The courses will follow a structured sequence and are intentionally designed with the returning adult learner in mind. The course of study also includes weekly synchronous meetings to support learners as they connect Scripture to their lives as Christian educators.

Completion of this CBTE minor is the *first step* for these returning adult learners who want to serve as teachers within our Lutheran elementary schools. When they finish, we hope to have approval for the next component of the program, so they can seamlessly move ahead!

Interested in applying for the theology education minor? We're now enrolling learners for this fall and plan to have additional cohorts in spring 2025 and summer 2025. Please contact Dr. Nichole LaGrow (lagrowna@mlc-wels.edu/507.354.8221). And get weekly updates at mlc-wels.edu/nep/



Competency-Based Education is . . .

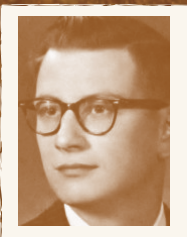
a way we can assist adults who want to be WELS teachers but cannot uproot their families and quit their jobs to pursue a traditional four-year on-campus experience here in New Ulm.

This program recognizes these adults' life experience and job-embedded skills, allowing them to earn their college degrees while staying in their own communities and continuing in their own jobs, some of which are in WELS schools!

They can't come to MLC,
but through CBE,
MLC can come to them!

Thank you for your gifts to Competency-Based Education!

It's your generous gifts that have gotten us this far! The program will be self-sustaining in a few years, but not just yet. If you'd still like to give, please contact VP for Mission Advancement **Mark Maurice** at mauricme@mlc-wels.edu/507.354.8221.



John Falck
DMLC 1959
Greenleaf WI



Jean Weindorf
DMLC 1969
Roswell NM



Timothy Zenda
NWC 1994
Sycamore IL



Elizabeth Siegler
DMLC 1964
New Ulm MN



MLC DAY

MAY 1, 2024

A Record-Breaking MLC Day!

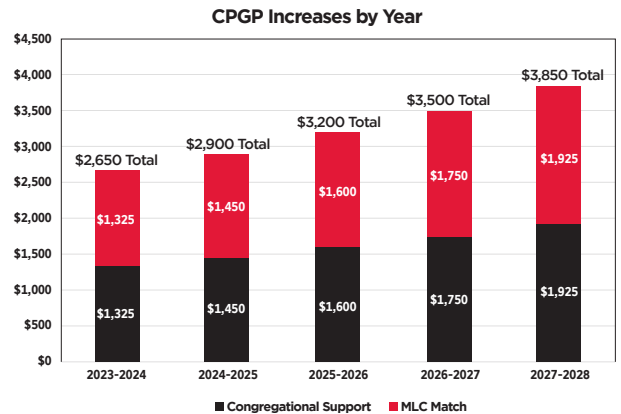
We had a record-breaking MLC Day—thanks to you!

You donated \$187,503—and every dollar goes straight to our students through the Congregational Partner Grant Program!

Through CPGP, MLC matches congregations' grants—up to \$1,450 per student for 2024-2025. Thank you for your gifts this year:

- \$ 127,503 donated**
- \$ 60,000 MLC Day match from two anonymous donors**
- \$ 187,503 total**

According to our strategic plan, *Pursuing Excellence Under the Cross*, we are increasing the amount we will match by 10% for each of the next five years. That means a new student can receive more than \$12,000 over the course of the next four years!



And THANK YOU for the love and encouragement you sent our way!



mlcday.com

YOU CAN STILL GIVE!

Go to mlc-wels.edu/donate | Text CPGP to 507.233.4344 | Call 507.354.8221 x295



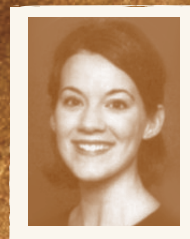
Nathan Sutton
MLC 1999
New Ulm MN



Earline Retzlaff
DMLC 1964
Manitowoc WI



Jonathan Bergemann
MLC 1999
Wauwatosa WI



Laura Fry
MLC 2004
Normal IL

Fritz Reuter Inducted into *Minnesota Music*



Composer. Organist. Choir director. Man of faith.

Friedrich “Fritz” Reuter, the first full-time music professor called to Dr. Martin Luther College, was inducted into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame this spring. An octet of MLC students sang “God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage” to the famous Reuter-composed tune to honor his legacy. Reuter’s granddaughter, Margo Martens, accepted the award at the induction.

Fritz Reuter (1863-1924) was 44 years old when he became a professor at DMLC in April 1908. He came to DMLC highly qualified in keyboard, choral conducting, music history, stringed instruments, music theory, composition, and pedagogy.

Fritz Reuter gave music “a place and a dignity hitherto unknown at the college” (Morton Schroeder, “Gifted Musician,” *Northwestern Lutheran*, June 1997). He began singing classes, started mixed and male choirs, taught a 32-hour course load per week, and gave keyboard and violin lessons.

When he could, he composed his own music. His choral piece “Weihnachtsgeschichte,” or “The Christmas Story,” written for mixed choir, organ, and narrator, was performed almost every year at the DMLC Christmas Concert from the late 1920s to the late 1950s, several times between the 50s and 90s, and again at the final Christmas concert of Dr. Martin Luther College in December of 1994.

Confined to bed with illness, Reuter was on a leave of absence from Christmas 1922 to the end of that school year. He never recovered his health and died on June 9, 1924, of a brain tumor. But his musical legacy continues at MLC.



Reuter and the men’s choir of 1910. In the *Messenger*, DMLC’s early newsletter, Reuter said, “The men’s choir, as well as the mixed choir, works diligently in the area of tone and voice formation and intonation, and in the area of melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic assuredness” (*Messenger*, vol. II, 1911-1912, no. 3, 57).

An MLC student octet, under the direction of **Professor Adrian Smith MLC '03**, sang “Be Thou Faithful” and “God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage” at the induction ceremony. For many decades, musical ensembles have sung the latter to the tune of REUTER as they arrive back on campus after being away on tour. As soon as the bus begins the final ascent of the Center Street hill, conversation ceases and the a cappella arrangement fills the space. (We could probably have chosen any soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, of any age, who once belonged to a choir on this hill, and they could have sung REUTER in harmony, a cappella, at his induction ceremony!) The octet: **Benjamin Foster** (*Emanuel First-Lansing MI*), **Josiah Smith** (*St. Paul-North Mankato MN*), **Zachary Cole** (*Immanuel-Taylor AZ*), **Jason Horn** (*Reformation-San Diego*), **Elise Nolte** (*Riverview-Appleton WI*), **Abigail Schmitz** (*Redeemer-Fond du Lac WI*), **Meg Stangl** (*Trinity-Watertown WI*), and **Emma Berg** (*Eastside-Madison WI*).



Hall of Fame



All the Way Back to Bach

A stained-glass window at St. John-Frankenmuth, Michigan (ELS), features Fritz Reuter and Johann Sebastian Bach. The two were not only great musicians and great Lutherans, but Reuter could trace his educational lineage back to Bach. As a result, many, many graduates of DMLC and MLC also fall into the line of succession.

Reuter studied with several well-known instructors in Germany, including Bernhard Reichart. Reichart's teacher was Johann Toepfer, whose teacher was August Mueller, whose teacher was Johann Christoph Bach, whose teacher (and father) was J. S. Bach.

At DMLC, Reuter taught Emil Backer (DMLC 1924-1957), who taught his son, Bruce Backer (DMLC 1958-1995). Another teacher of Bruce Backer, Heinrich Fleischer, can also trace his instructional lineage back to Bach.

As a result, any student of Reuter, Emil Backer, Bruce Backer, or any of their students has a direct link to the German Lutheran whom many consider the greatest composer of all time.

Pictured: Owen Eubank (Salem-Ann Arbor MI) is one of perhaps hundreds who can trace their musical lineage back to Bach. He studies organ with Professor Craig Hirschmann DMLC '84. At DMLC, Hirschmann studied with Professor James Engel, not Bruce Backer, but he does have a link to Bach (and also Mozart!) through his professor at Lawrence University, the late Miriam Clapp Duncan.



Fritz Reuter's granddaughter, Margo Martens, played Reuter's "Cradle Song" on the Reuter Steinway in Chapel of the Christ. She came to campus to get assistance from MLC Professor **Grace Hennig** in the creation of recordings and a script for a video essay on Reuter. The Minnesota Music Hall of Fame then created the video, which is part of the permanent display at the museum.



Reunions

Now Booking: 2025 Reunions!

Will your class celebrate a major graduation anniversary in 2025? Celebrate with a reunion at Martin Luther College! Each year several alumni groups meet on campus to tour the new college buildings, attend a worship service, and make new memories.

The Alumni Relations Office can help you get your reunion started.

Head online to mlc-wels.edu/alumni/reunions to register, or connect with Michelle Markgraf at alumni@mlc-wels.edu or 507.233.9135.

Old Main Turns 140

Thanks for Your Old Main Stories!

My fiancé, Matt Schmidt, and I watched the sun rise over the hill from the bench in front of Old Main on our last day at MLC. We had had shared classes, premarital counseling with Prof. Paustian, and nightly devotions in the hallways of Old Main while we were dating. It seemed fitting but bittersweet to say goodbye to one phase and hello to the next from a place that has seen so many come, grow, and be sent out into the mission field.

Sarah Schlicht MLC '07

The class of 1957 received their calls into the teaching ministry while waiting on the steps of Old Main. On a quiet evening in May of '57, we waited on the steps for President Schweppe to call in the assignments to Professor (Doc) Hoenecke. He then walked over from the boy's dorm and began reading the list. We had received a duplicated sheet on which the class names were written. We weren't concerned about receiving a call. We knew there were 80+ calls for the 24 in our class. After the reading of the assignments, we headed to the dorm to wait in line for the one phone to make the call home. We didn't receive the actual call until graduation.

By today's standards this would seem rather crude, but we felt the same excitement, anxiety, and emotions that a graduate of today would feel. We were ready to begin the service, "The Calling," to serve the Lord for which we had been preparing for many years.

Richard Schlavensky DMLC '57

I remember my return from Christmas vacation in 1967, when I had to arrive on campus a day early, and all the buildings were still locked. I got special permission to enter Old Main (someone opened its front door for me) and sleep on a bench (I think it was at least a little padded) in the second-floor hallway outside



of the nurse's office—Mrs. Kaiser, I believe. It was the spookiest night of my life. That creaky old building emitted a continuous cacophony of scary sounds throughout the night. I was the only human being on campus . . . But I was still glad then for the special permission given to me, and now in retrospect, I'm glad for this neat memory.

Jon Rupprecht DMLC '68, NWC '74

I remember early on graduation morning in 1971-74, playing hymns on my trumpet with other members of the band from the rooftop of Old Main. It was so awesome giving praise to our heavenly Father at the start of the day, the day many of us received Divine Calls to serve the Lord in the public ministry.

Susan (Rauch) Musgrave DMLC '74

My first year at DMLC I lived on the third floor of Old Main with two third-year students. It was one of the dorms for women. Our room was next to the bell, which was rung for meals (loud)! We washed our clothes in the laundry in the basement and hung them out the back door. Care had to be taken as to where we hung our unmentionables, since the men walked by the lines on the way to classes. Getting to meals, especially breakfast and supper, was easy since we only had to walk down two flights to the cafeteria. The nurse and some profs' offices were located on the second floor.

Alice Schmidt DMLC '68



John Koelpin
NWC 1989
New Ulm MN



Amanda Polzin
MLC 2009
Rhineland WI



Karl Gurgel
NWC 1964
Fond du Lac WI



Emily Thomas
MLC 2009
Fort Collins CO

2024 Reunions

- September 4-5: DMLC Class of 1966 (La Crosse WI)
- September 20-21: DMLHS Class of 1964 (New Ulm)
- September 20-21: MLA Class of 1974 (New Ulm)
- September 24-25: DMLHS Class of 1959 (New Ulm)
- September 27-29: DMLC Class of 1974 (New Ulm)



TALKS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO ALL.

MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

MORE THAN THE SCORE

A GAME DAY | LECTURE SERIES

Join MLC faculty for an in-person lecture before each home football game.

11:00 am | Cafeteria Conference Center

- SEP 7 | WHERE TERROR NEVER RESTS Prof. Paul Koelpin
- SEP 21 | EVOLUTION & CHRISTIANITY Prof. Dan Fenske
- OCT 5 | HOMECOMING (OLD MAIN HISTORY & TOUR)
- OCT 26 | TBD
- NOV 9 | FANTASY FICTION & SHARING THE GOSPEL Prof. Luke Thompson



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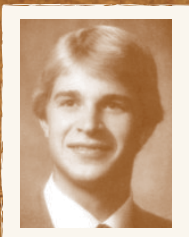
Do You Remember?

Where on campus is this path? Please send your answers to Michelle Markgraf at alumni@mlc-wels.edu. Thank you!



From March 2024 issue: This 1960s photo shows the cafeteria when it was on Old Main's first floor. Thank you to the many people who shared memories of the food served! We learned about Jell-O that bounced and special birthday cakes Mr. Bilitz made (**Alice Schmidt DMLC '68**), bowls of peanut butter and jelly on the tables (**James Schmidt DMLC '68**), and Schwan's ice cream (multiple alumni). **Bruce Ahlers MLA '68** remembers dressing up for Sunday noon and Wednesday evening meals.

Morning meals in the 1950s consisted of a box of cereal. **Bette (Heil) Feiock DMLC '54** recalled that students did not like to go out in the freezing cold to get a bowl of cold cereal, so they would plan ways to skip going to the cafeteria. One time, Bette, **Bev Haar DMLC '56**, and **Bethel (Kell) Zabell DMLHS '56, DMLC '61** hid in the closet when the housemother made the rounds. Bev and Bethel were crouched in the corners and escaped notice. Bette was by the closet door and was caught.



Charles Westra
NWC 1984
Beaver Dam WI



Amy Woldt
DMLC 1989
Milwaukee WI



Keith Bowe
DMLC 1979
Hartford WI



Kristy Watchke
DMLC 1984
Blaine MN

FACULTY & STAFF NOTES

Faculty Retiring in 2024



Professor Grace Hennig DMLC '89 served as a professor of music at MLC from 2023 to 2024. Prior to her ministry here, she served as music coordinator at Emanuel-New London WI (2007-2009), tutor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary (1995-1996), music instructor at DMLC (1994-1995), and K-3 teacher and organist at Good Shepherd-Downers Grove IL (1989-1993).

Grace holds degrees from Bethany Lutheran College (AA), Dr. Martin Luther College (BS), Concordia University Chicago (MCM) and University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (BA). She served on committees for *Christian Worship: Supplement* (2008) and *Christian Worship: Psalter* (2021), and her hymn and psalm settings appear in those books, as well as *Christian Worship: Hymnal* (2021) and *Lift Up Your Hearts* (2013). She has published music through NPH, GIA, and Beckenhorst. She also serves as a founding member of the Lutheran Institute of Music Education.

Grace's colleague and former choir director Rev. Dennis Marzolf, music professor emeritus at Bethany Lutheran College, has witnessed Grace's musical vocation from her youngest years:

"Grace is a wise steward of many gifts. Hers is a multi-faceted vocation as wife, mother, daughter, sister, teacher, writer, performer, composer, and friend. Anyone reading this can likely enlarge the list.

"Grace and I were 'newbies' at Bethany Lutheran College at about the same time. What a joy to share the music of the church, and

specifically the music of the Lutheran church! We made lots of music, and enjoyed the occasional moment or two of shenanigans.

"In those two years, many of her ideas about the music of the church started to coalesce, and it has been gratifying to see how plants have grown and ideas have matured. I know that if a wise Providence allows her many more years of good and happy health, Grace will engage, energetically, with the opportunities presented to our Lutheran musicians. I look forward to more interesting conversations as she joins me, and so many others, to 'proclaim the wonders God has done.'"

Professor Emerita Hennig and her husband, Professor Brian Hennig, are moving to Wisconsin, where Brian will serve as an editor at Northwestern Publishing House, and where Grace has accepted a one-year retirement call to Peace-Hartford WI, even as she makes more time for music composition and travel.

Her last message for MLC students: "I'll leave you with the same passage I shared with my grade 7-8 class as I completed my student teaching at Trinity-Brillion WI: 'But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:14-15)."



Dr. Robert Klindworth DMLC '70 served as a professor of education at MLC from 2004 to 2024. Prior to his ministry here, he served as principal at Minnesota Valley LHS (2001-2004), principal at St. Matthew-Winona MN (1993-2001), principal at Our Redeemer-Santa Barbara CA (1990-1993), teacher at St. John-Lake City MN (1985-1990), and principal at Immanuel-Hadar NE (1970-1973).

Bob holds degrees from Dr. Martin Luther College (BS), St. Mary's University-Winona MN (MA), and University of Minnesota (EdD).

Dr. Cindy Whaley, a colleague in the education department, appreciated Bob's servant heart:

"Bob Klindworth served his Savior humbly at MLC as a professor of education. With a servant's heart, academic prowess, and impeccable preparation for his courses, Bob taught psychology



Paul Schmeling
NWC 1974
Alexandria LA



Hyunje Chang
MLC 2014
Seoul, South Korea



Benjamin Blumer
MLC 1999
Orlando FL



Roland Helmreich
DMLC 1964
Pencunning MI

and curriculum and instruction courses at the undergraduate level and a school law course at the graduate level.

“Bob showed his humble, calm, dedicated leadership as an MLC representative both at the synod and state levels. He served for 18 years on the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools and for 24 years on the Minnesota Non-Public Education Council, where he was also chair of its accreditation subcommittee. I enjoyed all the time we spent learning together as we represented MLC at the Minnesota Association for the Colleges of Teacher Education meetings and as we taught Minnesota license renewal courses at the Minnesota District Teachers’ Conference.

“Bob’s kind, caring ways and constant guidance as a servant leader and consummate professional were a blessing to the entire MLC campus family. He always had time for anyone who stopped

in his office. Students, staff, and faculty all left with more wisdom and support than they could imagine.

“It’s a joy and privilege to have served with and learned from such a humble, dedicated servant leader, professor, colleague, and friend.”

Professor Emeritus Klindworth plans to stay in nearby Mankato, where he is active in his congregation and community. He also looks forward to fully reconnecting with his wife, Marti, in areas of mutual interest.

His last message for MLC students: “Fully embrace all that God has given you: your Christian faith; your Christian calling, whether in ministry or something else; and all of your opportunities to bring glory to God’s name. Until you and I meet again in heaven, God be with you.”



Professor Lori Unke DMLC '84 served at MLC from 2007 to 2024, first as a physical education professor and coach (2007-2009) and then as an admissions counselor. Prior to her ministry here, she served as a teacher at Trinity-Nicollet MN (2000-2007), St. Paul-Lake Mills WI (1995-1997), and Minnesota Valley LHS (1983-1984).

Professor Ross Stelljes, who served as an admissions counselor with Lori for about 10 years, notes the impact of Lori’s ministry:

“Lori consistently demonstrated a high regard for the public ministry of the gospel with her strong drive to represent her Savior and our WELS College of Ministry with professionalism and excellence. That, coupled with her ability to connect with the high school students she met, enabled her to make a positive impact on many to seriously consider the public ministry.

“Lori was not afraid to speak her mind with her colleagues, always looking for ways for MLC Admissions to improve. At the same time, she never hesitated to offer well-timed encouragement, which we all appreciated.

“Considering Lori’s many years as an admissions counselor, the word *stamina* comes to mind. Records show that she made

8,250 visits over her tenure—each visit an opportunity to help a student envision how they might use their gifts to serve their Lord. All that traveling and meeting with people can wear a person out. God be praised for the endurance he gave Lori to be a ‘road warrior’ for so many years!

“Finally, God has blessed Lori with a large and tight-knit family, serving their Savior in many locations and vocations. Her deep love and devotion to them is something to be admired.”

Professor Emerita Unke accepted a retirement call to serve as dorm supervisor and instructor at St. Croix Lutheran Academy for next school year.

Her last message for MLC students: “Thank you! Thank you for the sacrifices you make in order to attend MLC, for your diligent preparation to be the best pastor or teacher or staff minister you can be this side of heaven, for choosing the ‘one thing needful’ in this world and making it a daily priority in your lives, for someday diligently serving a multitude of people you’ll be privileged to touch in your ministry, and for always being thankful to God, no matter where or how you’re serving.”



Brandon Stubalt
MLC 2009
San Jose CA



Ryan Klatt
MLC 2014
New Hope MN



Arthur Koepsell
NWC 1969
Dakota MN



Lowell Smith
NWC 1959
Kenosha WI

FACULTY & STAFF NOTES



MLC Faculty at Commencement 2024

Celebrating Ministry Anniversaries



We thank the Lord of the Church for the ministries of these faculty members (from left):

- Professor Matthew Pearson MLC '97 (PE) - 25 years
- Professor Heath Dobberpuhl MLC '98, '09 (science) - 25 years
- Professor Brian Dose NWC '80, WLS '85 (English) - 40 years
- Professor Craig Hirschmann DMLC '84 (music) - 40 years
- Professor Daniel Balge NWC '80, WLS '85 (Greek, German) - 40 years

Faculty Concluding Service

- Alyssa Heckendorf (accepted a call)
- Brian Hennig (accepted a call)
- Jonathan Laabs (peaceful release)
- Mya Peshon (peaceful release)
- Grace Hennig (retired and accepted a retirement call)
- Robert Klindworth (retired)
- Lori Unke (retired and accepted a retirement call)

WELCOMING NEW FACULTY for 2024-2025

Dr. Susan Decker MLC '13
(West LHS)
English professor

Jon Hermanson MLC '05
(Minnesota Valley LHS)
Music professor, choir director

Janet Justice MLC '19
(Christ-Eagle River WI)
Admissions counselor

MacKenzie Holzbauer MLC '24
(New Berlin WI)
Admissions counselor

In Memoriam



Robert Averbeck
1937-2024



Gary Dallmann
1942-2024



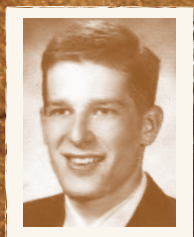
For full obituaries, go to mlc-wels.edu/history/professor-obituaries



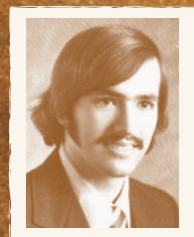
Joseph Gumm
MLC 2004
West Chicago IL



Anne Russell
MLC 2019
Holt MI



Kent Holz
NWC 1994
Belle Plaine MN



Paul Scharrer
NWC 1974
Hemlock MI



EVENTS

- Talent show
- Knights athletics
- Sprinter Fun Run
- Family Fun Zone
- *More Than the Score* Lecture Series
- Alumni mixer
- On-campus Homecoming worship service



MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

HOMECOMING WEEKEND

OCTOBER 4-6, 2024

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!



mlc-wels.edu/events/homecoming

Passing the Mantle

You are Elijahs! Pastors, teachers, staff ministers, ministers of the gospel of all kinds, as you share the Word of God, you are doing the work of Elijah. And somewhere in your circle of influence is an Elisha, a young person who will take up the mantle of gospel ministry from you (2 Kings 2). Even now, they are watching you, wanting to imitate you, and waiting for a word of encouragement from you. Many, many MLC students have an Elijah, someone who exemplified joyful ministry and encouraged them to consider ministry. Here are a few:

Lydia Krenke MLC '24
(Bethany-Appleton WI)

Katie Tauscher MLC '24
(St. John-Barre Mills WI)

William Costin MLC '24
(Mt. Olive-Lincoln NE)



HER ELIJAH
Matthew Doering MLC '96

At Lakeside LHS, Mr. Doering always encouraged me

to consider public ministry, both through his words and also through being a role model. He would mention MLC and ministry in funny and engaging ways that made ministry intriguing to me. He's very personable, and his passion for ministry was evident. He mentioned to me that I possess the gifts for ministry and helped me to see that. Thank you for your encouragement, Mr. Doering!



HER ELIJAH
Miriam Schlieve MLC '08

"Lord, let them see you in me."

These are the words I pray before I start each day. As a teacher, I'll strive to do all things while clearly reflecting the Lord I'm serving. Miss Miriam Schlieve, my grade 2-4 teacher at Christ/St. John-West Salem WI was this teacher for me. I remember joy and excitement, and she made me love learning. She shined and continues to shine her light for her students. I pray to be a light and to impact students as Miss Schlieve impacted me at such a young age!



HIS ELIJAH
Benji Wells MLC '09

Mr. Benji Wells was one of my English teachers at Nebraska Lutheran. Late into my senior year, I was still trying to figure out where to



continue my education. I wasn't sure I had the skills needed to become a teacher, but through some encouragement from Mr. Wells, when I least expected it, I gave MLC a try. Not only did his encouragement lead me to MLC, but Mr. Wells was always a great example of a called worker on fire for Jesus. Dedicating plenty of time and effort to the school and helping in any way possible, he set the bar for how I want to act as a teacher. Because of his example and encouragement, I get to share the good news of Jesus, now and for years to come!

Zach Klement MLC '25
(Christ-Pewaukee WI)



HIS ELIJAH
Phil Leyrer DMLC '80

While I was at Wisconsin LHS, Mr. Phil Leyrer came up to me one day and asked what I was thinking for college and proceeded to encourage me to attend MLC. He had mentioned that he thought my gifts and talents would be well used as a called worker. I appreciated his encouragement!

PROJECT
ELIJAH



Use our **Project Elijah** classroom resources to be an Elijah for your students! Our K-8 materials include two outstanding coloring books created by **Peter Schaeve** DMLC '87.

mlc-wels.edu/publications/project-elijah

