



SOUTHERN BULLETIN

SPRING 2022

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GET IN TOUCH

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In fall 2022, the seminary will expand its academic outreach by offering divinity graduate students the opportunity to complete the curriculum in a hybrid format. (Photo credit: Jennifer Shimota)

Seminary Launches Hybrid Master of Divinity Program

Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary is expanding the reach of its Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program beginning fall 2022.

As an alternative to residing on or commuting to campus, M.Div. students will have the opportunity to complete the curriculum in a hybrid format. It will combine remote learning with face-to-face educational experiences, including the required semesters of supervised field experience and on-campus gatherings twice per year. The hybrid option still offers students opportunities for fellowship and formational events with faculty and residential students.

Answering the Call

Brent Driggers, LTSS associate dean for academic programs, says the seminary wants to recognize how God calls people to ministry in different circumstances. He is hopeful this program will

“We want to bring more structure to this experience and to spread the word, because we don’t want to miss out on the formation of people whom God is calling to public ministry.”

**BRENT DRIGGERS,
LTSS ASSOCIATE DEAN**

allow students to follow God’s call even if they cannot relocate to Columbia.

“They’ll be taking the same classes as our residential students,” Driggers said. “And they’ll be practicing the same forms of parish ministry—worship leadership, preaching, teaching, pastoral

care and visitation. All the things that pastors do, they’ll be doing while they are students. But they won’t be limited to the Columbia area.”

Due mainly to the COVID-19 pandemic, Driggers and the rest of the LTSS faculty have had plenty of time to practice online forms of instruction and livestreaming students into their classrooms.

“We already have a handful of students who consistently livestream classes,” Driggers said, “and we have seen how the right kinds of pedagogies can cultivate pastoral formation and lasting friendships. We want to bring more structure to this experience and to spread the word, because we don’t want to miss out on the formation of people whom God is calling to public ministry.”

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Pursuing the Call to Serve

Moving from a career in finance to a seminary student, E.P. Martin gives testimony to the work God is doing in his life and the process of discernment.

“Being involved in ministry was always in the back of my mind,” Martin said. “I’ve always been involved in church, including Bible studies and a homeless ministry, which kept that flame flickering inside me.”

Set to graduate with his divinity degree in May 2022, Martin pursued his call to serve after unexpected perils in his life.

“Our mother died in 2005 at the age of 69, and then I lost my sister in 2013 to a brain tumor at the age of 51,” Martin said. “Those events were difficult. They solidified for me that I don’t want to be in my dying days and realize I never pursued my calling.”

In 2018, Martin entered the seminary at LTSS, affirming those events impacted his call to serve as a pastor after working 25 years in finance. God guided him to discern that it was time to enter the candidacy process.

“I’m a dad. I’m a husband. I’m a brother and a son. And I had a career vocation in finance,” Martin said. “I wanted to be in the church, and I knew God was calling me to do more. There are

different stages of our life during which we can serve, and the clarity to preach and teach and serve a congregation happened later in mine.”

After Martin made his decision, he also credits God for providing financially in the form of scholarships so he could attend seminary.

“If I ever doubted, God removed the boundaries to make way for this vocation,” Martin said.

Throughout his seminary education, Martin says the LTSS community has been a constant in his life.

“When I say community, it means together as the body of Christ,” he stated. “The seminary focuses on us growing together and serving together. Even if I individually don’t feel worthy sometimes, it is life-giving to know that we are going to take what we’ve learned together in our classes and carry the Word to others.”

After graduation, Martin plans to seek a ministry position in Upstate South Carolina.

“I love the church environment,” he said. “I love being around the people. I love doing the work that the church does. That’s the good news about God’s call for everyone; we all can serve others in some way.” ●



After 25 years in finance, E.P. Martin has changed his life through a process of discernment. He is now pursuing a graduate degree in divinity. (Photo credit: Charles Uko)

RECTOR'S LETTER



The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore
Rector and Dean (Photo credit: Charles Uko)

Who is God calling to ministry? When Amos heard the call to preach, he was “a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees” (Amos 7:14). Jeremiah was apparently quite young when he was called (cf. 1:6). Rahab was a prostitute when it fell to her to keep Israelite spies out of harm’s way (cf. Joshua 2). In the New Testament, Jesus calls fishermen—and a tax collector—to be among the twelve.

Those who are discerning a call to seminary today come from all ages, incomes, races, and cultural backgrounds. They come with vocations as children, parents, spouses, friends. They may also be serving their neighbor as air traffic controllers, like Lynette McSpadden (Virginia Synod), consultants like Clair Minson (Delaware-Maryland Synod), or church organists, like Spence Robertson (North Carolina Synod).

How can our seminary help students to study in a way that fits their call? The LTSS faculty has answered that question by developing M.Div. Connect, a pathway to ordained ministry that links students across the church to an education at Southern Seminary. Features of M.Div. Connect include:

- Intensives on campus during the first week of each semester
- On-site experiential learning through local field education
- Study in the same classes, with the same faculty, as M.Div. Columbia students

- Flexibility for those whose study hours are mostly evenings and weekends
- An academic advisor from the LTSS faculty
- Support from the library, writing center, counseling center, campus ministry, candidacy coordination office, and more

M.Div. Connect joins what we are calling M.Div. Columbia, the pathway for students who either live close enough to campus to commute, or who move to Columbia and form the residential community on campus. With more than 40 campus apartments and additional dorm rooms, LTSS is uniquely positioned to build thriving communities both on campus and online.

M.Div. Connect helps students to study in a way that honors their multiple vocations. M.Div. Columbia offers a deep dive into theological study in a multicultural urban neighborhood. Both pathways are designed to foster Christian community and provide an education that challenges and equips the next generation of those answering God’s call to ministry. ●

Grace and peace,

Mary Hinkle Shore, Rector and Dean



Students, alumni and friends gather at Alumni Day, lifting their voices and hearts together in celebration of the common bond they share in Jesus Christ. (Photo credit: Charles Uko)

Alumni and Friends Pay It Forward

Thursday, Feb. 17, marked the second annual Day of Giving for Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University and the seminary’s annual Alumni Day.

Alumni Day is an opportunity for graduates to return to campus, visit with faculty, classmates and friends and participate in activities throughout the day. More than 70 alumni and friends were in attendance on campus, with another 20 attending events via Zoom. This year, Dr. Susan Wilds McArver MAR’80 was the Yost Lecturer and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther Quick M.Div.’14 offered a workshop on his book “e-Vangelism: Creating and Implementing a Social Media Ministry for Outreach.” In addition, the Rev. Leroy Cannon ’89, who leads Christ Mission Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina, received the J. Benjamin Bedenbaugh Award. The award is presented to an ordained minister who has demonstrated leadership and exemplary service.

This year’s Day of Giving was launched with a goal for 100 donors to make a gift to the seminary in honor of this

day. Anonymous donors stepped up to inspire support by offering \$25,000 in matching funds and an additional \$40,000 in challenge support to meet the 100-donor goal. Alumni and friends rose to the occasion, with 138 donors giving a total of \$140,745.

“It was wonderful to see people on campus and to know others were joining us online for Alumni Day,” said the Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, LTSS rector and dean. “At worship, alumni of all different generations joined current students in prayer, in song and at the table. People across the church made their mark for the seminary’s ministry throughout the LTSS Day of Giving, too. I am filled with joy and gratitude.”

The day’s events were recorded and are available at lr.edu/alumni/ltss-alumni. Next year’s Alumni Day and Day of Giving will be Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023. ●



The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, LTSS rector and dean, presents the J. Benjamin Bedenbaugh Award to the Rev. Leroy Cannon ’89, who leads Christ Mission Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina. (Photo credit: Charles Uko)

IN MEMORIAM

The Rev. John L. Satterwhite '53 3/9/2020

The Rev. L. Crockett Huddle '54 1/11/2021

The Rev. Frank E. Lyerly '55 12/6/2021

The Rev. Carl Gomper '56 12/5/2021

The Rev. John H. Ohsiek '56 10/17/2021

The Rev. Dr. Daniel Murray Shull '56 9/16/2021

The Rev. James C. Stirewalt '56 11/1/2021

The Rev. Herman G. Fisher '57 10/14/2021

The Rev. John Henry Bollinger '58 12/1/2021

The Rev. Everett R. Price '59 12/20/2021

The Rev. Dr. Joseph M. Wagner '63 10/21/2021

The Rev. David H. Herbertson '67 10/23/2021

The Rev. Charles J. Thomas '67 12/24/2021

Mr. Randy S. Robbe '73 1/28/2021

The Rev. Dr. John David Keister '75 11/24/2021

The Rev. Franklin R. Baz '76 4/13/2021

The Rev. Hugh L. Mozingo '77 9/8/2021

The Rev. David E. Ridenhour '84 10/29/2021

The Rev. Henry Brett Collins '00 10/13/2021



The seminary is a place of rich history and excellent theological education, including conversations with faculty members. At its first event on Feb. 24, students engage in conversation with the Rev. Kermit Moss, professor of theology. (Photo credit: Charles Uko)

Coffee and Conversation Offers a Window on Professors' Faith and Vocation

Coffee, conversation and Christianity go together like cups and saucers.

The blend of the three has brewed a new series, Coffee and Conversation, recently launched at the seminary and intentionally designed for everyone.

Created by the Rev. Antoinette Gaboton-Moss, director of Center for Lifelong Learning, the program encourages students, staff and faculty to connect outside classrooms to discuss their faith and vocation. Offered in an informal setting in the Price House living room located at the Columbia campus, the series also extends to Zoom, allowing for an interactive discussion with alumni or other participants.

"I wanted to create an opportunity for students, alumni and those interested in LTSS to engage with faculty so they could learn what drew them to Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary or their ministry," Gaboton-Moss said. "I want students to know why their professors love teaching in this space."

Each month, a faculty member speaks at the event. Participants engage through conversation about the seminary's programs, asking questions to get to know the presenter.

"This series supports growth for our students because it offers

an opportunity for them to engage with the professor and connect on a different level," Gaboton-Moss said. "They learn what it means to go out into the world as clergy, and they get to see a different side of the professor, learning about their ministry or research interests."

At the first event of the series, the Rev. Kermit Moss, professor of theology, spoke and shared stories about his childhood, ministry and current role at LTSS. In addition to theology, Moss teaches courses on methodology, urban youth and hip-hop culture.

"Through this opportunity, the students see a different side of that person," Gaboton-Moss said. "Even after it ended, everyone was still talking, and it just was happening organically. They were hearing more stories and talking about different genres of music and how that ties in with theology."

Gaboton-Moss is excited for the series to build closer relationships and vital communication outside the classroom.

"Coffee and Conversation is inclusive to everyone," Gaboton-Moss said. "I think it's important, particularly in a community that is ecumenical and welcoming to all."

To learn more about the series or to register for an event, visit calendar.lr.edu/coffee-and-conversation. ●

Hybrid Program, continued

Driggers said the program would officially launch in late August, with the first on-campus gathering scheduled for the first week of fall classes. The faculty have agreed to adjust their course schedules during that week so that all LTSS students can participate in scheduled events.

Accessible Ministry

Spence Robertson, a second-year M.Div. student at LTSS, is grateful for the opportunity to pursue his seminary studies while residing in his hometown of Hickory, North Carolina. Because of the hybrid element of the program, he can continue serving as a musician in a full-time capacity at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation.

"I appreciate the seminary's flexibility in allowing me to remain at the congregation I love and enjoy serving," Robertson said. "Being able to participate in a hybrid learning environment has worked well for me. I thank the seminary and all the professors that have made this option available to those near and far away."

For more information about the hybrid-online M.Div. program, visit lr.edu/mdiv or contact the Rev. Jennifer Shimota, coordinator of seminary enrollment, at jennifer.shimota@lr.edu or 803.461.3297. ●

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

15

Passover/Good Friday

APRIL

17

Easter

APRIL

21

Coffee & Conversation
The Rev. Justin Nickel, Ph.D.

MAY

4

LTSS Baccalaureate

MAY

5

Columbia Campus Commencement
Columbia Convention Center

JUNE

15-18

Spiritual Direction Certification
Program

JULY

28-30

LTSS Religious Arts Festival

AUGUST

22

Fall Semester Begins

OCTOBER

26-27

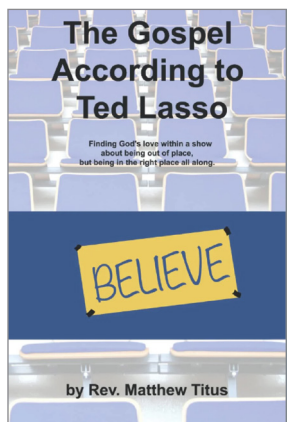
Advisory Council

* Events are subject to change as university schedules, policies and safety measures evolve.



Students Macy Kennedy and Spence Robertson talk with Kirsten Beth Starr on Zoom. (Photo credit: Jennifer Shimota)

THE RECTOR READS



(Matthew Titus' "The Gospel According to Ted Lasso" Chapin, SC: Pinnacle Leadership Press, 2022. Paperback \$10; Kindle edition \$2.99. 112 pages.)

Like a few million other Americans, I have enjoyed the Apple TV comedy "Ted Lasso," about an American football coach hired by a British football (soccer) team even though he does not know the game of soccer. The show has adult themes and language. At the same time, the coach is relentlessly positive, and the writing is smart and funny. Even though the series is not explicitly religious, it is concerned with themes of grace, forgiveness, grief, hope and other things we talk about in church.

Pastor Matthew Titus '11 noticed these themes as well, and he has published a book that draws connections between Ted Lasso, the Bible and Christian discipleship. About the show, Pastor Titus says, "Ted

Lasso' helps us see that appreciating others, listening to people and lifting up others' strengths are wonderful ways to engage life and those around you" (pgs. 5-6).

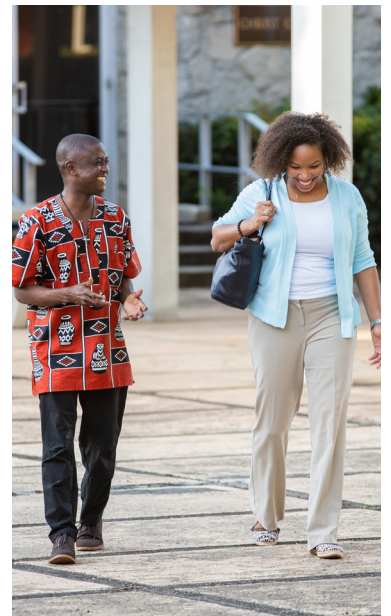
After two introductory chapters ("How to Engage this Book" and "What is Ted Lasso?"), the author offers a chapter on each of the 10 episodes of season one. The chapters are divided into sections that begin with a scene in the episode and then relate that scene explicitly to a biblical story or a situation in Paul's letters. This is my favorite element of the book: Pastor Titus's imagination has been thoroughly shaped by Scripture, and the connections he makes opened familiar Bible passages to me in new ways.

The book, which Pastor Titus calls a

devotional, can be used either as a study guide for a small group or for individual reading. All readers will benefit from having also watched the show. Every chapter (except "Biscuits" in my Kindle edition) concludes with discussion questions that prompt participants to relate the episode's themes to their own life experiences. The combination of television, Scripture and experience offers an excellent way to engage people in reflection and conversation about their faith. ●

SCENES FROM SOUTHERN

Catch glimpses of beautiful scenes from Southern by following LTSS on Facebook at [facebook.com/LutheranTheologicalSouthernSeminary](https://www.facebook.com/LutheranTheologicalSouthernSeminary).



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lr.edu/ltss



THANKFUL FOR YOU

Gifts to the New Life Fund, the seminary's annual fund, impact the lives of seminarians at LTSS each day. Through the New Life Fund, those committed to the mission of LTSS can make a major difference in the training of future servants of the church.

Join the many supporters of LTSS in making sure the needs of the seminary and our seminarians are met. Please make a tax-deductible gift prior to May 31, 2022, our fiscal year-end.

LTSS is truly thankful for the loyalty and support of the ELCA's seminary in the South. A gift of any size expresses faith in the seminary's continued prosperity and demonstrates the value and commitment LTSS and its supporters have for its students.

Visit lr.edu/IGive2LTSS.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS: SEMINARY SNAPSHOT

LTSS students who...

are parents of school-aged children **19%**

live within an hour of LTSS **56%**

serve as pastor/deacon in a congregation **18%**

are in seminary as a second career **69%**

receive veterans benefits **6%**

are 40 years or older **34%**

INSIDE THE NUMBERS: GIVING

138

DONORS FOR SECOND ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING

\$140,745

RAISED ON SECOND ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING

\$350,000

GOAL FOR 2021-22 LTSS NEW LIFE FUND

\$184,159

GIFTS RECEIVED AS OF JAN. 31 FOR THE NEW LIFE FUND