

YES TO MICHIGAN CUW assumes management of Concordia University Ann Arbor, opening up new opportunities.

SAFE AT HOME A class project transforms a refuge for expectant mothers into a much more welcoming home.

THE LONG ROAD BACK After a mass shooting upends their lives, a professor and her husband are given time to heal.

Concordian

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN



Service

“Go, and do thou likewise ...”

SUMMER 2013



For Service ... to Christ

Recently I read Jon Meacham's biography of Thomas Jefferson, *The Art of Power*. The book was engaging and exceptionally well written. Of course, Jefferson was not too bad of a writer himself. It was no coincidence that he was called upon to be the primary author of the Declaration of Independence.

Important treatises like our nation's founding documents, or the defining symbols or carefully crafted theological statements of what the Church believes, teaches, and confesses, require particularly precise wording to leave no room for ambiguity or misinterpretation. Authors labor over language and fret over phrases to be sure that the words convey the exact intended meaning.

While Concordia's Mission Statement may not quite rise to the level of the Declaration of Independence or the Nicene Creed, words were carefully chosen to most clearly articulate the reason for our being. While every part of that Mission Statement is crucial for defining Concordia, the mission really boils down to the single phrase, "... for service to Christ"

Ultimately, this Lutheran higher education community exists "for service to Christ." Our students are developed in mind, body, and spirit, "for service to Christ." Service to Christ in the Church and the world offers us a lot of room to work! This issue of the *Concordian* offers glimpses of Concordia's mission coming to life as words are inspired into action and as service to others transforms their lives.

There are more than a few things that set Concordia apart. Among the most compelling, however, are frequent and consistent examples of servant-minded students, faculty, and staff who comprise the CUW community. Of course, it is Christ Himself who motivates the mission. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done: He came to serve, not to be served ..." (Matthew 20: 26-28).

For service – that's why Jesus came, to serve and save us. For service – that's why Concordia has been around since 1881 and remains relevant today, "for service to Christ in the Church and the world."

REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PH.D.
President

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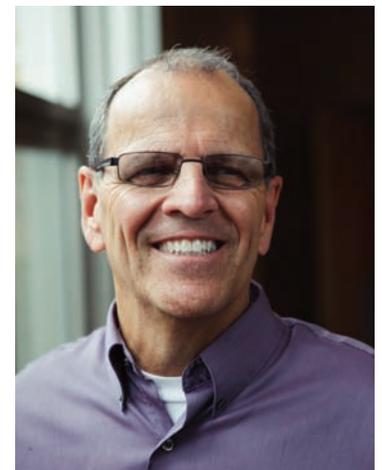
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@ QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Email us: Concordian@cuw.edu or tweet us: [@ConcordianMag](https://twitter.com/ConcordianMag)

New Faces

A World of Experience

Rev. Dr. David Birner adds a fresh global perspective to International Services

From the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea to the urban jungle of Hong Kong, Rev. Dr. David Birner has spent his entire ministry in the international arena. His latest call is to Concordia University Wisconsin, as the new Executive Director of International Education.

International outreach has long been a focus of the Lutheran Church. The Missouri Synod has been sending missionaries around the globe for more than a century. But only in recent years has so much of the world come to CUW. Students from almost 30 countries are currently enrolled. In addition, hundreds of students each year travel outside the United States for study-abroad programs, internships, sabbaticals, or mission trips, giving the CUW experience a truly international flavor.



Church's missions office in St. Louis.

"At the time we had operations in 14 countries in Asia," he says, "including all our missionary forces, partner churches, and other institutions. They were all my responsibility for about nine years."

As part of a restructuring plan in 2000, the Birner family moved to Hong Kong, where he worked with churches in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Philippines, as well as "partner institutions" in China. Three years later, it was back to St. Louis, this time to oversee the entire international office.

In February 2013, he was called to the shores of Lake Michigan, where his diverse range of international experience gives him a unique perspective on serving the needs of the increasingly international student population at CUW.

"I've found in my work throughout the world that the values of Lutheran education resonate extremely well with people in developing countries, as well as with people in the high-rises of Hong Kong," he says. "And all the way in between those 'bookends,' people resonate with the identity of those who are educated in a Christian, and in particular a Lutheran, environment. People understand they're educated to serve and to be part of the community to bring peace, joy, energy, vision, and hope to the world."

He sees his first priority as helping international students assimilate on campus. That goes hand-in-hand with helping the "domestic" students, along with the faculty and staff, benefit from the cultural diversity and worldly perspective the international students bring with them. This is something Birner feels is essential to a complete and proper Lutheran education.

"Right at the core of all of our work should be an understanding of the world around us," Birner says. "That includes an understanding that we're called to serve in this world, to actually be part of the work God is doing throughout the world."

He adds, "How we'll do that is through becoming a literally global community on this campus."

"... the core of all of our work should be an understanding of the world around us ..."

"The school now has so many international components, which have grown quickly and on their own steam," Birner says. "Now it's time to bring those efforts under one banner, one umbrella, so that we can more effectively connect and coordinate these international efforts and really get the synergy that comes from having a whole community at work."

Birner seems the perfect man for the job. In seminary, he served a one-year pastoral study abroad internship in Papua New Guinea, a small island country in the South Pacific.

"That's where I hit my fork in the road," he says. "That's where my life changed."

Birner's church in Papua New Guinea asked him to come back after graduation. His wife, Lois - whom he met and married while back home - felt the same calling. They returned together as newlyweds, expecting their time abroad to last only "a few years." But God had other ideas. It was 13 years and three children before they finally returned to the U.S. in 1991 for Birner's new job as Asia secretary with the



PHOTOGRAPH: MARK BRAUTIGAM



CUW Hosts Students From China

It didn't take long for Dr. Birner to get fully immersed in the international community at CUW. His arrival in February coincided with that of 25 students visiting from Shanghai Normal University (SNU), a teachers college in China.

The primary objective of the visit was to expose the students to the American educational system. But its larger purpose was to facilitate a two-way cultural exchange, with the students' hosts learning as much from their guest as their guest did from them.

The students, none of whom had previously visited the U.S., shadowed teachers at public and private K-12 schools in the Milwaukee area. On evenings and weekends, pairs of students spent time with local host families. On "American Family Sundays," the host families took the students to church, invited them to help prepare a family meal, and otherwise spent a "typical Sunday" with their Chinese guests.

"We wanted them to experience not just life in the classroom but life in America - Midwest style," says Christine Kao, director of the Asia-Pacific region for CUW, who led the project.

To give the students an even broader view of American life, the group also visited Chicago and Washington, D.C. They were even featured on Milwaukee's Channel 6 News after paying a visit to the studio.

More than a year in the making, the exchange was the result of collaboration between CUW's School of Education and Global Academic Operations within the Office of International Student Services at Concordia. Dr. Michael Uden, dean of the School of Education, helped develop the teacher-training program for the students.

"We're far more similar than we're different," Dr. Uden says. "And so it's exciting just to bring these groups together and see what happens."

"It was a great cultural exchange," Birner adds, "not just for our guests, or for CUW faculty and students and the educational institutions they visited. But also for the community at large."

Happenings

Feedb@ck

Loved the new look! It flows so much more and the large amount of pictures really give it a personal feel.

@KellieMW



Comments? Questions?
@ConcordianMag

50,000 Words in 31 Days

That was the challenge set forth by the English Department and Rincker Memorial Library in the University's first novel-writing initiative, "COW NOW" (Concordia Winterim Novel Writing). Eighteen writers participated and six completed the challenge.



Walk, Run, Give

CUW leverages its idyllic location to raise thousands of **charitable dollars**

Part of Concordia University Wisconsin's mission is to give back to the community through service and charitable contributions. Having a beautiful 200-acre campus overlooking Lake Michigan comes in handy for this. It's perfect for hosting numerous run/walk events that generate thousands of dollars annually for worthy causes.

Example: the second annual Gold Ribbon Run on April 20. The 5K event raised thousands of dollars for the I Back Jack Foundation, which supports research and development of new treatments for pediatric cancer. Sarah and John Bartosz, of Hartland, Wis., created the foundation in honor of their son Jack, who heroically battled neuroblastoma, a highly aggressive pediatric cancer, for nearly seven years of his life. Jack lost his battle with cancer on August 27, 2012, just short of his 11th birthday.

Michael Braden, a 2013 CUW Nursing School graduate, was the director of the Gold Ribbon Run and personally knows the Bartosz family. He saw the event grow from its first year and hopes it has continued success.

"My goal with this event was to not only raise money to help fund the trials at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, but to make a huge impact in the lives of all those families that are dealing with pediatric cancer," Braden says.

One week after the Gold Ribbon Run, on April 27, The Becky Werner Meningitis Foundation held its fifth annual Meningitis 5K Walk on CUW's campus to coincide with World Meningitis Day. The parents of Becky Werner, Bob and Dee Dee, of Mukwonago, Wis., started their foundation after Becky died unexpectedly of meningococcal meningitis on February 25, 2004 at the age of 20.

"Our mission is to educate other families so no one else will go through what we have gone through, and continue to go through today and for the rest of our lives," Dee Dee Werner says. "We know the dangers of meningitis first hand, and the importance of getting pre-teens and teens vaccinated against this potentially deadly infection."

While spring and summer are perfect times for campus runs/walks, they're not the only ones. In October, the CUW Physical Therapy program will host its third annual Scary Scamper 2 Mile Run/Walk for the Health of It. Proceeds of this costumed event will support physical therapy education at the University. Later this year, on November 9, the CUW Cross Country and Track & Field teams will host the annual President's 5K Run/Walk. This event is a community service project that raises money for Concordia teams and honors CUW President Rev. Dr. Patrick T. Ferry.

Spencerians Gather to Honor Their Late, Great Alma Mater

Sesquicentennial scholarship established

There was one Spencerian College sweatshirt. It was coveted. While school spirit was rampant at this alumni celebration, the absence of spirit-wear was understandable.

Their alma mater has been gone for nearly 40 years.

On a Saturday in May, 200 Spencerians gathered on the CUW campus to honor what would have been the sesquicentennial of their school, a famed business college founded by Robert Spencer in downtown Milwaukee in 1863. Despite the years, they easily reconnected with each other – almost as if no time had passed – while visiting the now-registered historic landmark Wright Street and other school locations, lunching at Turner Hall, and dining and dancing at a special evening reception.

Spencerian College was known for its rigorous curriculum and its practice of employing industry leaders as instructors, rather than full-time professors. Among its many innovations, Spencerian College pioneered the work-study program concept, developed the first tri-semester program, expanded educational opportunities for women, and offered innovative scheduling and finance options to accommodate working students.

The college boasted a woman president (and owner) from 1923 to 1965, Miss Ethelyn M. Bennett, who is credited for most of its innovations. Enormous post-war growth compelled the college to relocate to a larger campus on W. Wright Street in 1951. Despite much success and a second move to a larger campus at 35th Street and Kilbourn Avenue in 1973, Spencerian College closed just two years later. Neighboring institution Concordia College agreed to continue the Spencerian business curriculum, enabling Spencerian students to complete their degrees. The partnership led to what is now the CUW School of Business Administration.

While Spencerian College no longer exists, the 150th celebration demonstrated that its legacy is alive and well. A “Spencerian Scholar” endowment fund was created in honor of the sesquicentennial. Proceeds will be used to provide financial support for current CUW business students and to help keep the Spencerian name alive.

For more information about the scholarship or the celebration, please contact Lisa Liljegren at lisa.liljegren@cuw.edu.

Upcoming Campus Events

August

02 – Early Childhood Literacy Festival on the Lake

06 – “Get Started” Night, main campus and all Accelerated Learning Centers, 6-7 p.m.

06 – Graduate Information Session, main campus, 6-7:30 p.m.

24 – Opening Service, Chapel of Christ Triumphant, 5 p.m.

26 – First Day of Undergraduate Classes

September

07 – Augsburg at Concordia Football, Tomasini Stadium, 1 p.m.

14 – Macalester at Concordia Football, Tomasini Stadium (Homecoming), 1 p.m.

16 – Annual Falcon Day Golf Outing, North Shore Country Club, Mequon

29 – Faculty Organ Recital, Chapel of Christ Triumphant, 3:30 p.m.

October

04 – Family Weekend All Ensemble Concert, Chapel of Christ Triumphant, 7:30 p.m.

25 – Pops Concert (Symphonic Wind, Jazz, and String), Chapel of Christ Triumphant, 7:30 p.m.

November

17 – Christ the King Celebration (Kammerchor and Alleluia Ringers), Chapel of Christ Triumphant, 7:30 p.m.



Dozens of Spencerian alumni gather at the school's original campus in downtown Milwaukee during the 150th anniversary celebration.

School News

New Health Care Degree Offerings Address Growing Demand

Programs geared for **traditional** and **non-traditional** students

U.S. demand for health care professionals continues to greatly outstrip supply, but CUW is helping close the gap with three new programs: Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD), a new blended cohort for the Masters of Occupational Therapy (MOT), and a Physician Assistant program.

The offerings are part of a forward-thinking expansion by CUW into an educational field that will produce a steady harvest of new students well into the future.

The Doctorate of Occupational Therapy degree will first be offered in Fall 2014. Designed for already-degreed occupational therapists seeking to gain advanced skills, the program will admit 10 to 15 students a year and offer three specialization paths: Upper Extremity Rehabilitation, Pediatrics, and Education. Dean of the School of Health Professions Dr. Linda Samuel describes the program as a post-professional clinical doctorate that will focus on evidence-based best practices in occupational therapy. Production of original research is not required, which allows the learner to earn a doctoral degree in two years.

The new Masters of Occupational Therapy cohort, taught in a blended format, will begin in January 2014 with 15 students. The MOT cohort represents an outreach to another growing market: non-traditional students (in this case, those who already have a four-year college degree). It will combine online learning with classes on campus Thursday and Friday. That makes it perfect for working professionals returning to school part-time

to advance their skills – and careers. CUW developed the new blended MOT program to meet skyrocketing demand. “We’ve had so many qualified candidates we’ve had to turn some away because our traditional program has been full,” Samuel says. She adds, “We’re doing it primarily because we think it’s going to be the future of education. We think students will spend less time sitting in lecture halls.”

As this story was being written, 30 students who had won a very competitive battle for spots in the Physician Assistant program were arriving on campus and beginning orientation. The students, who already have four-year degrees, will complete their training and be ready to practice as physician assistants in 26 months, rather than the four full years plus residency required for a full medical degree. Of that 26 months, 15 are





“When Concordia does something, they want to do it well.”

-DEAN LINDA SAMUEL

spent on campus, 11 in clinical settings. “It’s a faster entry path, with more flexibility career-wise,” says Dr. Michelle Heinan, director of the program. Unlike traditional MDs, PAs can easily switch between specialties. Given the speed of entry, flexibility, and strong earning potential - median salary for Wisconsin is \$85,000 with less than a year’s experience - it’s no surprise physician assistant continues to be identified as one of the hottest career choices. With a shortage of doctors at present, PAs are filling a useful role. “They tend to go into medically underserved and rural areas,” Heinan says. And that dovetails nicely with Concordia’s mission.

All three programs stress inter-professional education, or “IPE.” In IPE, students of various health disciplines learn alongside each other to prepare for practicing in a collaborative patient-focused environment after graduation. “Individuals work together as a team to provide the best level of care,” Samuel says. “We’re seeing that a lot out in the health care arena.”

CUW’s Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy programs recently received their full 10-year reaccreditation and the Physician Assistant program its provisional accreditation.

“We’re reaching out to others, serving others in need,” Samuel says. She adds, “When Concordia does something, they want to do it well.”

BY THE NUMBERS

How We Worship*

Like Christendom itself, the CUW student body is both diverse and united: different expressions, same faith.

37%

Lutheran combined

23%

Roman Catholic

13%

Christian/
Christian general

9%

Non-denominational
(Community)

7%

Baptist

*Top five self-identified religious backgrounds, based on an 81% response rate. Does not include non-reporting students.



Campus News



Health Mobile Closer to Rollout

\$50,000 grant received

The Community Health Mobile is not out of the garage yet, but it's gaining momentum, thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Helen Bader Foundation in Milwaukee.

CUW's School of Nursing and School of Education joined forces to create the RV-based clinic, which aims to provide health education and chronic disease management to communities in Milwaukee and the surrounding area that lack accessible care.

"We also want to improve health literacy, and allow for inter-professional clinical educational opportunities and experiences for CUW students working with urban, underserved populations," Dr. Teri Kaul, dean of the School of Nursing, says.

Kaul already has an initial population in mind for Health Mobile care, once the additional funding necessary to complete it rolls in: the neighborhoods served by the Lutheran Urban Mission Initiative, a network of urban schools in Milwaukee. The area has the highest levels of reported poverty and resultant health disparities in Wisconsin.

One student eager to participate in the ministry is Linda Radder, currently working toward her Master's in Nursing at Concordia with the goal of becoming a nurse practitioner. Linda has 33 years of nursing experience, the last nine of it as a parish nurse at Cross Lutheran Church, where she serves the type of community the Health Mobile is designed to reach.

"The last numbers I heard were that over 100,000 adults in Wisconsin do not have access to health care," Radder says. "To me that is unacceptable, so any project or program that provides free health care to people is what I want to be part of."

She also likes that the Health Mobile is just that: mobile.

"That is so important to serving the largest number of people," she says. "While working in the Central City neighborhoods of Milwaukee, I have seen that physically being able to get to a place that provides health care is often difficult, if not impossible, for many."

Many in need of care lack transportation. The Health Mobile can meet them where they are.



BY THE NUMBERS

Where We're From

Before graduates leave CUW "for service to Christ in the Church and the world," they arrive as new students from a potpourri of destinations.

58

Countries represented at CUW*

47

Home states of current students**

28

Percentage of freshman class from outside Wisconsin**

*Over multiple years.
**2012-2013 academic year.

No Means No

Mock trial highlights problem of date rape on college campuses

The statistics are staggering: One in four college-age women report experiences that meet the legal definition of rape or attempted rape. To better inform and equip students, Concordia University Wisconsin hosted a mock rape trial on campus this past February.



"The Law and Sexual Assault: A

Date Rape Trial" traced a fictitious sexual assault from the incident through its legal repercussions. One group of students acted out the assault. A second group served as jurors during a mock trial, with professional members of the Ozaukee County Court System taking the roles of judge, district attorney, defense attorney, and bailiff.

"This realistic scenario highlighted and brought home the seriousness of date rape and sexual assault, especially on college campuses," says Dr. Andy Luptak, vice-president of Student Life at the University. He described the event as "relevant to all CUW students."

To maximize attendance, CUW professors were

encouraged to inform their students about the event. iPod Touch and gift card giveaways also helped boost attendance, which roughly totalled 200 people.

"It was a great experience," says Kristin Hauser, a CUW student.

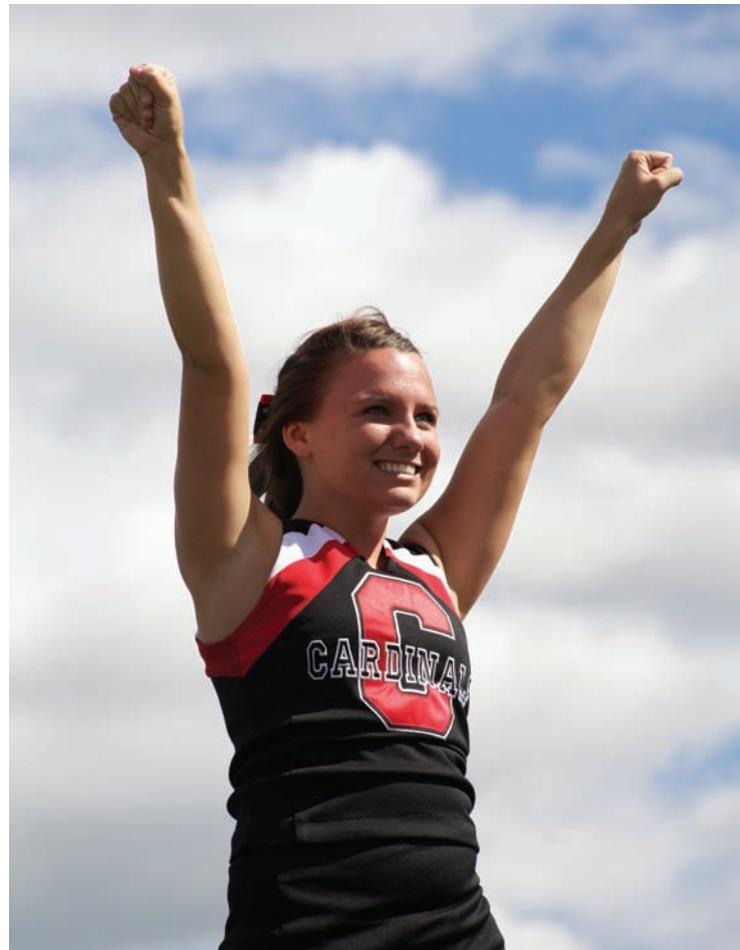
"My roommates and I talked about the importance of date rape and how crazy we thought all the statistics were the rest of the night."

Hauser is talking about statistics like these:*

- Someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted every two minutes
- 44% of victims are under age 18; 80% are under age 30
- 54% of sexual assaults are not reported to police
- 97% of rapists never spend a day in jail
- Approximately 2/3 of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim

Luptak would like to see the numbers drop. "It's stats like these that prompted the mock trial on campus," he says.

*Source: RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network)



The Cross-Lake Concord

CUW expands its mission and reach by adopting sister school Concordia Ann Arbor

An Ongoing Tradition CUAA, situated on 187 acres overlooking the Huron River, will maintain its own unique identity.

Concordia University Ann Arbor marks its 50th academic anniversary this fall with a campus-wide celebration the weekend of September 27-29. It'll be a big event, marking a significant milestone.

A milestone few expected the 600-student, southeast Michigan school to reach, given its recent downward trajectory.

Like many small colleges before it, CUAA found itself pinched between the rock of dwindling enrollment and the hard place of financial shortfalls. Turning things around

would require spending money on marketing, infrastructure, new professors, expanded course offerings, and more. With a \$19 million debt load, that was money the struggling school just didn't have.

"They were in a pattern of having to cut, cut, cut to make their budget," Concordia University Wisconsin President Rev. Dr. Patrick T. Ferry says. "And you can't cut your way to prosperity."

What CUAA needed was a whole new lease on life, financial and otherwise. And now it has one.

Thanks to a merger agreement approved in May 2012 by the CUW Board of Regents and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's Boards of Directors, CUAA will officially join the Concordia Wisconsin family this summer. The merger is scheduled to be completed July 1, pending



approval by the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission.

Even before the official merger, CUW is playing a major role in its Michigan sister school's operations. CUW and CUAA now share a president (Ferry) and board (CUW's). CUW deans cover both campuses. CUW is providing managerial and marketing expertise, plus IT support. And CUW has already begun revamping CUAA academic programs.

Many CUW staffers are now doing double-duty on both campuses. As a result, there's "a pretty steady stream," in Ferry's words, of high-level CUW staffers making the five-and-a-half-hour drive from Mequon to Ann Arbor every week to 10 days.

Turning the ship around is a big job, but it's one CUW knows can be done – from first-hand experience. In the early 1980s, CUW itself was a 500-student institution struggling with many of the problems CUAA now faces. Three decades and one successful course correction later, CUW is the flagship of the Concordia system, serving nearly 8,000 students at its thriving Mequon campus and satellite Accelerated Learning Centers, as well as through online and international learning programs.

Ferry believes the creativity and entrepreneurial energy that transformed CUW can resurrect CUAA as well.

"CUW is the largest and most successful of all the Concordia schools," Ferry says. "The idea now is to implement some of the things at Concordia Ann Arbor that we've done here to succeed."

He continues, "We've been a very entrepreneurial organization, and Ann Arbor fits into that model. In fairly short order, Concordia Ann Arbor will be a robust, thriving campus. A strong entity in and of itself that's part of this larger organization."

"We expect that to occur," he adds. "It's not wishful thinking."

One key to that happening will be the creation of a more robust campus life at CUAA. Efforts to that end include adding new academic programs (CUAA now offers only a limited number of majors), creating an expanded enrollment plan, and beefing up co-curriculars – including athletics, music, and drama. All with the goal of fortifying CUAA's residential undergraduate base.

"The traditional undergraduate population is the most labor-intensive part of higher education, but you need that center of operation," Ferry says. "From it radiates out other programs."

These include graduate programs, accelerated learning centers for adult students, distance learning, and an international presence. Paired with a strong undergraduate base, they create a diverse, mutually reinforcing portfolio of offerings that position a school like CUAA for success in today's competitive college market.

The CUAA merger gives CUW the opportunity to extend its geographical reach into Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

What CUAA needed was a whole new lease on life, financial and otherwise. And now it has one.

The region is home to a concentrated LCMS population – a ready market for Lutheran higher education and one eager for CUW's assistance.

But as promising as it is, the opportunity also brings risks. Including the possibility that diverting financial resources and staff attention to Ann Arbor could interrupt CUW's remarkably steady growth at home.

So why merge with CUAA? For Ferry, the reason is simple.

"It's a good place with a good mission, and we were simply going to lose that," he says. "If we hadn't stepped in, it would be closed already."

"I have a special heart for this," Ferry adds, noting that his own alma mater – St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas – faced a CUAA-like crisis and didn't survive.

Also, Ferry's not too worried about CUAA impeding growth in Wisconsin: "The momentum of CUW is really quite strong."

One worry on the CUAA end is that the school will simply be absorbed into CUW and lose its unique identity. That's something Ferry promises will absolutely not happen.

"We will be one organization, but the link will be administrative and invisible," he says. "We'll maintain the distinct brands."

So even as CUW and CUAA unite, they'll also remain unique: the Falcons and the Cardinals, with their own school colors, their own school spirit – and an ongoing athletic rivalry.

"Oh, we'll play each other," Ferry says. He doesn't note which team he'll root for, but as president of CUW and CUAA the answer is clear: both.

What will signify that the CUW-CUAA merger is working? When Ann Arbor is holding its own financially. When it's once again vibrantly contributing to the overall Concordia mission. And one more thing.

"The day we stop talking about the merger," Ferry says, "that will be the day we know it was successful." ■

Gimme Shelter

120 CUW students and one determined professor make a refuge house feel more like a home

By
Jay Sanders
Photographs by
Mark Brautigam





At best it's nondescript, at worst bland. A big beige and brown suburban box set deep in a wooded lot. If you saw it from the street you wouldn't give it a second glance. Which is kind of the point.

Because this is not so much a house as a sanctuary. A place where a woman with an unplanned pregnancy can transform a potentially destructive event into a chance for a fresh start.

Often the best way to turn your life around is to get away from it temporarily. Escape from an abusive boyfriend or husband, move on from friends who have led you in the wrong direction, leave behind bad habits and crushing circumstances that have robbed you of hope.

For women who need to drop off the map, just for a while, Place of Refuge awaits. Hidden in plain sight.

Yet somehow more than 120 CUW students found their way here in early March and kept returning most Saturdays into May, led by Tracy Tuffey, an assistant professor of clinical psychology. Not only did they find their way to the house, they found a way to transform it.

"I walked in the house," Tuffey says. "The carpet was dirty. The walls had drywall mud on them. I was sitting there in the living room, looking around thinking that there are babies crawling around on this carpet. We have to be able to do something."

Tuffey returned to campus and huddled with her peer leaders. She asked them what they thought about doing a Concordia home makeover. They loved the idea.

Tackling service projects is not a new concept for Tuffey and her students. It's part of the curriculum. Enroll in General Psychology 101, and you'll be given a choice: help out with a service project and write a reflection paper, or take a midterm exam. Not surprisingly, many students opt to roll up their sleeves rather than sharpen their No. 2 pencils. Why the service requirement? Tuffey's reasons are both academic and mission-focused.

Psychology as a discipline evolved in part from service traditions embodied in churches and communities, she says. Student service helps reinforce those roots. It also "creates a living classroom," in her words. One that gives students a chance to apply what they're learning in the ivory tower to problems out in the world: poverty, oppression, illiteracy, mental health issues, homelessness, and teenage pregnancy.

"This is not a textbook, this is real life," Tuffey says.

In addition to functioning as a practicum, student service demonstrates the bridge between psychology and theology.

"To say you care about something and then to demonstrate it are two different things. Some vocations lose sight of that," Tuffey says. "These service projects are a great way for the University to see that those of us in Psychology are just as passionate about the mission as those in Theology."

Serving others can also be a balm against depression, something psychology and theology both speak to.

"When you're feeling 'I'm not good enough, nobody needs me,' it starts to work on you. It's toxic language," Tuffey says. "What you're



Tracy Tuffey, assistant professor of clinical psychology, challenged students to take on the home makeover.

saying, you start to feel. You use all your energy on that. That's right where evil wants you. When you change that focus to serve God and other people, it gives you a sense of purpose, too. You're serving, but you're being served at the same time."

She adds, "It's a theology of empowerment that totally aligns with the Concordia mission."

For all the right reasons, then, renovating Place of Refuge was a perfect service project for the CUW Psychology department. One problem, though. Tuffey and her students had never taken on something this big. Previous spring projects had been more along the lines of making quilts for the needy not refurbishing a six-bedroom, four-bath house. One whose interior hadn't seen a paintbrush in the last 10 years.

"This place needed a makeover so bad," says Ronnie Murray, the house manager, who lives on site with her husband, Joe.

That need was something Tuffey couldn't get off her mind.

"I'd go to buy a Starbucks coffee and think, 'Do I really need this?'" she says. Or could I use the money to help Place of Refuge?

So Tuffey and her student leaders started where psychologists start: with an assessment. They sat down with one of the moms living at the house and found out from her perspective what needed to be done to make Place of Refuge more inviting and livable. Then they sat down with Ronnie to make a plan for doing it.

"I told the students, 'Let's focus on one room at a time,'" Tuffey says. "Then I told Ronnie we will do as much as we get funding for, starting with the living room."

Funding, it turned out, wouldn't be a problem.

Psych 101 is part of the core curriculum, so it draws students from all majors not just Psychology. This spring it drew record numbers, thereby providing plenty of volunteers to do the work (remember: service = no midterm). Many of those non-Psych majors got excited about the project, and went back and told their own departments about it. Then those departments got excited, too – and started collecting money and supplies.

Soon nearly every department at CUW was chipping in, from Psychology to Pharmacy, History to Political Science, Nursing to Athletics, Student Life, Maintenance, and more. The head of Campus Safety took up a collection from his people and brought it down.

Tuffey's office started filling up with donated toiletries for the Place of Refuge residents. One student's family donated a roomful of living room furniture. Another student who works at Piggly Wiggly started a food drive. And it just kept on growing.

REAL FIXER-UPPER

A team of CUW students joined other community volunteers on successive Saturdays to give Place of Refuge a much-needed rehab.





“I wish I could say this was deliberate,” Tuffey says, “but my vision going in wasn’t as big or collaborative. His will was evident throughout the project. He crafted this vision. We were instruments in His hands. That’s just how God works.”

A lot of other inspired hands pitched in, too. Roughly 70 or so CUW students showed up at Place of Refuge every Saturday over the course of the project, six Saturdays in a row. Some of their parents also pitched in, as did volunteers from Grace Lutheran Church, First Immanuel Lutheran Church, and Harley-Davidson. Hundreds of people hours, lots of hard work.

“I don’t think I really understood to what scale we would be helping,” says junior Caitlin Pilon, who served as the lead student coordinator for the project.

The result of all those efforts is striking. Dingy white walls are now bright with color, murals, and art. Worn-out carpet and cabinets have been replaced. Bathrooms spruced up. New furniture and new linens brought in. A children’s playroom revitalized with Disney characters on the walls, and chalkboards, books, and educational toys to enjoy. New plantings in the yard. Debris removed from the garage. Plumbing,

BUILD-A-BED WORKSHOP

Students tackled everything from assembling furniture to cleaning, painting, yard work, and maintenance. They even did windows.

electrical repairs, carpentry work.

“There are pictures of what the house used to look like,” Pilon says. “It’s eye-opening to see what it looks like now. This is something I would like to live in.”

The before-and-after difference is stunning. Place of Refuge is now a showplace. But that’s just the tip of the iceberg. The real impact of what Tuffey, her students, and the broader Concordia community helped accomplish here goes much deeper.

“I was really happy that they came ...” a former resident, now successfully transitioned to her own apartment, says, pausing to wipe her eyes. “Sorry, I get emotional. Because it’s just so pretty, and they put in a lot of time and effort, and the students were just sweet, and they cared about what they were doing.”

Before coming to Place of Refuge the woman was married, with two children and a full-time career as a teacher’s assistant. Then an unexpected high-risk pregnancy left her unable to work, and the departure of her husband left her unable to care for her kids alone. Place of Refuge gave her the breathing space and support to have her baby and get her life back together.

Place of Refuge in Brief

► **Mission** To serve the needs of women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy who have made a life-affirming choice for the child growing within them.

► **Accommodations**
Upstairs: Six bedrooms, four bathrooms, one playroom
Downstairs: Kitchen, dining room, living room, laundry room, manager’s apartment

► **Capacity**
 Four expectant mothers and up to six children (two bedrooms are reserved for families).



Ronnie's in the House

House Manager Ronnie Murray lives and works at Place of Refuge with her husband, Joe. Joe serves as handyman and frequent chauffeur for residents. Ronnie is equal parts manager, maid, rule enforcer, and spiritual guide. Mostly, though, she's a mom to women entering motherhood themselves, often unprepared.

- ▶ **On the challenge of her job:** "When you're trying to help so many young people who are parents, and they haven't been taught parental skills, it's difficult."
- ▶ **On results:** "When you see a mom properly taking care of her baby, it's so, so rewarding."
- ▶ **On Concordia students:** "They are the most well-mannered, hardworking students I've ever seen in my life. They are a joy! They're a Godsend. They work very, very hard."
- ▶ **On the benefit of service to the CUW students who serve:** "I think many of these kids are from upper-middle class or rich families, and most of the girls who come here are really poor. It's nice to let them see kids who are not as fortunate as they are."
- ▶ **On why Concordia students come to Place of Refuge:** "I think their dedication to Christ, one. Two, I think they want to give something back. And I figure third for their grade."
- ▶ **On the determination of Tracy Tuffey:** "I knew she'd get it done. But I didn't think she'd get it done so fast."
- ▶ **On what to say when someone asks, "How are you?":** "I'm blessed by the Lord."

"It's like you're in a whole other world here. And all the stuff that you have going mentally you kind of leave it, you know, out there," she says. "Because your surrounding here is nice. It's a calm place."

Another resident told Yolanda Davis, a sophomore double-majoring in psychology and social work, that witnessing the commitment of CUW students to the project was life changing for her.

"She really gave up hope. She felt like she didn't have anything," Davis says. "But after seeing the students put in work without having pay attached to it but because they want to do it, that inspired her. And now she said that she wants to reach out to others, as well."

An offhand student comment about "ruining my good clothes" painting the house prompted a resident to write Tuffey a letter. In it she talked about her horrible upbringing, about having a baby too young, feeling estranged from her family, and not believing in God. She said that every weekend she'd lie in her room, listen to the CUW students working, and cry. Not because she was sad but because she couldn't believe so many students would give up their weekends to help someone like her.

Then she asked, "Is there anything I can do to help replace that student's clothes?" »

▶ Length of Stay

A woman may come to Place of Refuge at any time during her pregnancy and stay for up to six months after her child's birth.

▶ Admission

Women age 18 and older of all cultural and religious backgrounds are welcome. An application, interview, drug test, and pregnancy test are required.

▶ Requirements

Active participation in house programs and community programs designed to offer opportunities for continual growth of the whole person. These include classes in parenting, budgeting, how to put together a resumé, and how to find a job. Women are also required to take part in daily devotions.



BALLOONS AND BRATS, SMILES AND TEARS

Work wrapped up with an emotional dedication ceremony on the final Saturday that included a balloon release honoring Cheri Kinas. Donations in her memory helped make the project possible.

Tuffey shared the letter with the student, who was incredibly humbled. Empathy. Grace. Love. All are at work here. And their effect is equally strong on those helping as those being helped.

“They’re seeing the world from a perspective outside their own,” Tuffey says of her students. Which, again, pays both spiritual and academic dividends.

Stereotyping people who don’t look, talk, and live like us is a basic human instinct. We judge and categorize almost subconsciously. But for someone preparing to be a counselor or therapist, it’s an impulse you have to get past.

“Part of what I want my students to learn is to be more understanding than judgmental,” Tuffey says. “Being in this setting, hearing the stories and journeys that have led these women here, that helps you understand.”

Tuffey’s goal is for students to articulate that new understanding, apply it to the subject matter, and then integrate it – into a reflection paper but more importantly into their daily lives.

They seem to be doing that.

“Before, I would never have thought of doing this. It would never have crossed my mind,” Cyndi Riedle, a senior student leader, says. “To devote every weekend to coming here, it really shows how grateful other people can be. If you get everyone together, and everyone just puts in a little bit of effort, you can really get a lot done.”

Another student leader, sophomore David Antoine, adds, “This has really been eye-opening for me. You hear about these people who need help, but it’s really something else to actually experience it.”

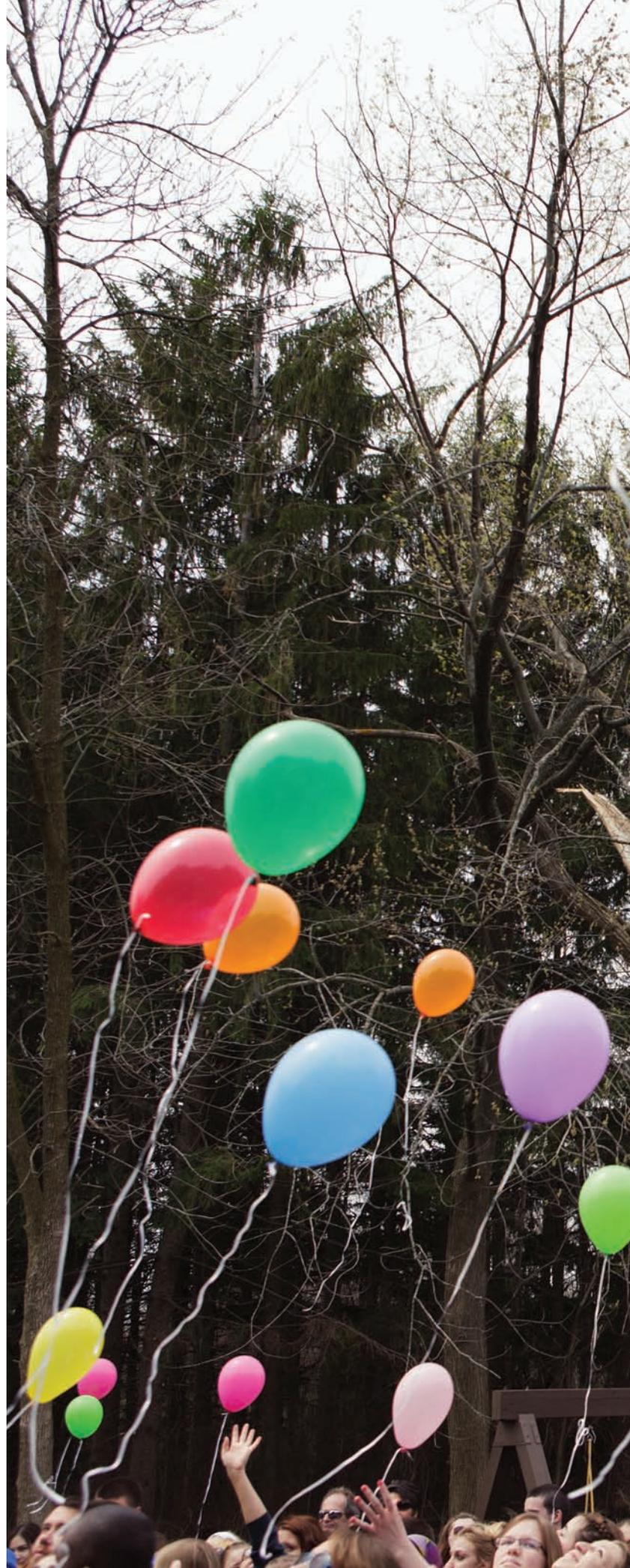
On Saturday, May 4, a couple hundred students, staff, families, and friends gathered at Place of Refuge for a dedication ceremony. Rain had been forecasted, but the day turned out partially sunny and pleasantly cool. Balloons, picnic food, and tears were present in equal abundance.

From a portable podium set up in the backyard, Pilon, the student coordinator, told the crowd, “You’ve all worked very hard for this day. I hope you love the results.”

Dominick Buchholz, a sophomore, up next, said, “What we’ve done in the past seven weeks is more than had been accomplished in the last 10 years.”

There was a short devotional, touching on the meaning of “refuge” – safety, shelter from pursuit and trouble – and on the call to Christians to be “the hands and feet of Christ” serving others. Then, through tears, Professor Tuffey poured out her thanks to all those who had made the day possible.

“When I asked how could I do this, God sent me 120 students,” she said. “In the 15 years I’ve been at Concordia, I’ve never been more proud of all the hard work and leadership and sacrifices you’ve made to make this happen.” ■



MORE PHOTOGRAPHS www.cuw.edu/concordian-gimmeshelter



To Mexico, With Care

My spring break medical mission

By Jillian Klopke

For my final spring break in nursing school, I decided to join fellow undergraduate and graduate nursing students on a mission trip to Ensenada, Mexico. I've been on quite a few throughout my life, but this was special because it was my first dedicated solely to providing medical care.

We teamed up with Agua Viva Ministries to provide medical clinics in three underserved remote villages surrounding Ensenada. As undergraduate students, we ran the clinic intake tables, where we assessed the health history of each member of a family. We also checked vital signs, and measured height and weight. Each family left the clinic with hygiene products (shampoo, soap, razor, deodorant, etc.), multi-vitamins for adults and children, prophylactic anti-parasite medication, flip-flops, t-shirts, toys, and other gifts.

One of my favorite parts of the trip was using Spanish to converse with the local people. We had six official translators, but they were mostly stationed with nurse practitioners to assist with in-depth health assessments. I'm by no means fluent, but I took Spanish throughout high school and for one semester at CUW. Through other trips to Mexico and Puerto Rico, I've become proficient enough that I was able to jump in and help my CUW classmates communicate during the trip.

On the first day I met a patient named Berta, who brought in several of her grandchildren for checkups. As I handed over some hygiene products, I smiled and greeted her in my limited Spanish. She lit up and reached across the table to give me a hug and kiss on the cheek. She then did the same for the other nursing students, dispensing hugs and kisses all the way down to the vitamin station. She was genuinely thankful for these items, but I could tell she would have been as loving without them. At the end of the day, I took a break from packing leftover supplies into our vans and had a longer conversation with Berta. Some things I understood; other sentences I just nodded and listened.



Warm Welcome Limited Spanish-speaking skills were no barrier to connecting with patients in Ensenada, Mexico for nursing student Jillian Klopke.



While there's much more to forming relationships with people of other cultures, **being able to converse with them is one of the first steps.**

I especially loved talking with local teenagers and children. Many times they wouldn't expect me to be able to speak their language. One group of girls I talked to was studying English in school, and I quizzed them on vocabulary words while they waited for their parents to go through the clinic. While there's much more to forming relationships with people of other cultures, being able to converse with them is one of the first steps.

When I decided to go into the nursing field I had a dream to become a medical missionary. I even took a few extra missions and theology courses at CUW to fully explore the possibility. At this moment I'm looking to gain stateside experience and knowledge in a fully equipped hospital as a first step.

Even if I never pursue long-term medical mission work, I'm thankful to have had the opportunity to go on this trip. It was a great experience. The nursing skills and knowledge I gained will serve me well on other short-term mission trips, and it's a good launch as I graduate and become an RN. ■



MORE PHOTOGRAPHS www.cuw.edu/concordian-tomexicowithcare

Spring Break- away

A CUW team skips the beach to rebuild houses

By Craig McCarthy

Ask CUW junior Christine Klug about her spring break getaway and she'll tell you, "I just loved the trip so much." Unlike the typical breaker, however, she didn't spend her time basking on a beach. She spent it building houses.

Klug joined a team of 62 students, faculty, staff, and friends of CUW and Concordia University Ann Arbor in New Orleans, March 23-29, helping rebuild three houses significantly damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"I am now a flooring queen," Klug says. "Well actually, not quite. But I did learn how to put in laminate flooring, grout tile, and calculate precise measurements to fit tiles in on a slant."

Klug was one of many students willing to tackle jobs "that were completely new to them, such as tiling a floor or installing drywall," says CUW Theology Professor and trip organizer Dr. Dan Paavola.

"We had people doing drywall, sanding and mudding, doing tile work, insulating, moving around walls and doorframes. Lots of projects," says another CUW junior Rebekah Karolus.

This is the 14th year for the CUW spring break mission trip and its second in New Orleans. The original mission trip destination was Juarez, Mexico, where CUW volunteers spent the week building houses for needy families through an organization called *Casas por Cristo* (Homes for Christ). Increased violence in Juarez led CUW to relocate the trip to Acuña, Mexico in 2009. After three years in Acuña, the trip moved once again, to New Orleans.

Even as the destinations change, one thing remains a constant: the transformative effect of serving.

"God brings people closer," Klug says. "Whether it's through accomplishing a project together, poking fun at one another, or telling stories, God uses all situations to build up faith through fellowship."

Volunteers were divided into three teams and assigned to homes in different parts of New Orleans. One, including



CUW Campus Pastor Steve Smith, helped rebuild the home of an 82-year-old man. The man was very involved with the students and even assisted in cutting down a tree.

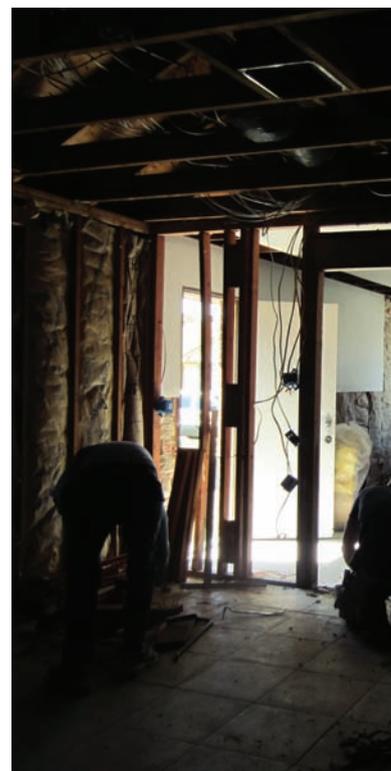
"At least two of the three sites had really strong connections with the homeowners," Pastor Smith says. "It impressed the students that there was so much good connection with the people this year."

CUW sophomore Katelyn Fink adds, "It was really rewarding to be able to help Al, the man whose house we were working on. He was so sweet and extremely grateful."

While the focus is on helping others and giving back, the mission trips also serve as bonding experiences for the students - including, for the first time this year, students from CUAA as well as CUW.

Deaconess Kim Bueltmann, a Campus Ministry Assistant at CUW, worked with several CUW and CUAA students at one of the New Orleans sites. She said the entire week was a tremendous blessing.

"It was so fun getting to know the students better as we





That's Not Sunscreen Sanding and mudding took on a whole new meaning for CUW's Spring Break Mission team in New Orleans.

Real help for those in need, a real sense of accomplishment for the students.



worked side by side, bleaching mold, scraping old paint, replacing siding, patching holes, painting, putting up door frames, and more," Bueltmann says.

The trip cost CUW about \$40,000, which included travel and lodging for volunteers and a \$15,000 contribution by the university to cover the cost of building materials. Students helped offset some of the expenses by organizing various fundraisers throughout the year.

As for next year?

"I think we're going to cast our nets a little wider," Pastor Smith says.

Rather than send one team of 60 to 75 people, as in the past, CUW could field smaller teams and cover more ground. Traveling in smaller groups would be quicker and easier, and could allow for serving areas where the need may be more immediate.

Regardless of where the next spring break volunteers end up, the outcome will likely be the same: real help for those in need, plus a real sense of accomplishment for the students and volunteers - who know they're not just doing the work, they're doing God's will.

"I would definitely go on this trip again, and I strongly encourage anyone who has the chance to go," says Karolus. "It's a spring break well spent." ■



MORE PHOTOGRAPHS www.cuw.edu/concordian-springbreakaway



OFFICER DOWN

History professor [Ann Murphy](#) survived a police wife's nightmare, with help from the Concordia community

She knew something was wrong the moment the police lieutenant approached her front door. Like those movie scenes where officers in dress blues arrive to deliver bad news.

It had been a very ordinary Sunday morning on a beautiful August day. Clear blue skies and not too warm – a relief in itself, given how hot the summer of 2012 had been.

Ann Murphy's husband, Lieutenant Brian Murphy of the Oak Creek Police Department, was working. Ann was at home, wishing Brian was too, making plans for the day and dreaming about their upcoming vacation, the honeymoon she and Brian, married just over a year, had not yet taken.

As her uniformed visitor introduced himself, she interrupted: "I know who you are. Tell me what happened."

Ann Murphy loves history. She loves teaching. But most of all, she loves her family. So she loves the flexibility she has as an adjunct instructor at Concordia, where she's taught for more than a decade. It gives her more time to spend with her two children, Simon, 10, and Jane, 7.

She met Brian, originally from Brooklyn, New York, while she was teaching at a different school a few years ago. They struck up a friendship, fell in love, and got married in June 2011.

Although the life of a police officer's wife was new to Ann, she never worried much about Brian's safety. Oak Creek, a suburb of Milwaukee, is generally peaceful, and Brian, with 22 years on the force, is a very experienced officer. When the lieutenant showed up that morning, her first thought was that it was probably a car accident.

Instead, she was told there had been a shooting at a Sikh temple that claimed six lives. Brian, first on the scene, had been shot multiple times by the lone gunman before backup arrived. The shooting was over, and the officer assured Ann that Brian's injuries were "not life-threatening." But when they arrived at the hospital, she could see in the faces of the staff how serious it really was.

Brian was shot 15 times. The most serious wound was from the very first shot, which struck him in the chin and tore through his larynx. He would recover, but it was clear some big challenges lay ahead.

As crisis moved into recovery, the Concordia community rallied around Ann and her family. History Department Chair Dr. Susan Mobley and her husband, Van, brought in meals. Emails, flowers, and other expressions of support and prayers poured in.

"It was all really nice," Ann says.

Perhaps the biggest help was to not have to worry about how to fit her teaching load into their newly disrupted life. When Ann told her boss, "I don't think I'm going to be able to teach this semester," Mobley immediately told her not to worry. "Just let us know when you're ready to come back," she said.



While this was a relief to Ann, it was a true Godsend to Brian.

"The ability to have Ann by my side, without worrying about any problems at work, was such a great thing," Brian says. "It allowed her to help keep our family together in such a trying time. And the thoughts and prayers given to her, to us, were invaluable."

Though he's still dealing with the effects of some of his injuries, Brian recovered quickly enough that Ann was able to return for the Winterim session and carry a full teaching load in the spring. And though the support she received while away was greatly appreciated, she was also grateful for how *little* attention she got when she returned.

"One of the best things about Concordia is that nobody's really made a big deal about it," she says. "People ask me how things are and say it's nice that I'm back, which I appreciate. But nobody's made it a focus of my life. I come here and feel like I'm just me, not the wife of that police officer who was shot. It helps me to get back to a regular life."

In February, that regular life was disrupted again – this time in a positive way – when President Barack Obama invited Brian to the State of the Union Address. At first Ann didn't want to cancel her Tuesday night classes to fly to Washington. But then she realized she couldn't pass it up.

"I tell Brian, 'You're a part of history now. Because you're in this speech. For anybody who ever wants to look at it, your name is there.' And that's pretty cool," she says.

These days, as Brian continues to recover (his throat injury has caused some ongoing breathing issues), their life together creeps ever so slowly back to normal. But what counts as "normal" has likely changed forever. Brian has retired from the police force. Their perspective on things is different. Little problems seem meaningless. Big problems feel more surmountable. A sense of gratitude is pervasive.

"We thank God every day that we were able to get through this," Brian says, "all with the love and support of our immediate and extended families, including our work families. From the bottom of our hearts, we just want to say 'thank you' to everyone."

They're putting it in God's hands to figure out what it all means. Brian is quick to dismiss the word "hero" (as true heroes are), so he was initially reluctant to draw attention to what happened. As time passes, however, both he and Ann are becoming more open to the idea that there may be a larger purpose to it all.

"How do you make sense of what you're supposed to do after having such a big experience?" Ann asks. "I can't imagine that God wouldn't want us to do something with it, but I don't know what exactly. I guess we're kind of waiting to see what will happen." ■

Advance



“...for service to Christ in the Church and the world.”

Anyone who has spent time around Concordia will recognize that phrase as the conclusion to our Mission Statement. In a holistic way of helping our students develop in mind, body, and spirit, we prepare them for lives of service; to be servant leaders in the Church and the world.

President Ferry often reminds our graduates that they’ll now be living our mission. It’s through our alumni that the mission of Concordia extends far beyond the limits of our campus.

It’s our joy to be able to equip our students for lives of service. But we must also be just as quick to acknowledge that we couldn’t do what we do without the selfless service that’s extended to us by our alumni and friends. We can serve because we continue to be served.

How is Concordia served by others? Let’s start with our boards. Concordia is blessed by servant leaders who are part of our Board of Regents and our Foundation Board. The men and women who serve on these boards come from around the country and give freely of their time, wisdom, and resources so we can further our mission through our students. Without the selfless service of our boards, Concordia wouldn’t be the university it is today. Our heartfelt thanks go out to current Board members and all of those who have served before them.

Additionally, our retired faculty and staff continue to find ways to bless our students. Some volunteer at our golf outings, while others assist with special projects throughout the University. These treasured veterans especially enjoy opportunities to reconnect with our students.

Finally, let’s not forget the thousands who make it possible for our students to engage in service projects through their generous financial support. I have heard so many times from faithful alumni and friends that they wish they could be personally involved in serving with us, but lacking that, they’re thankful they can financially support our students as they serve Christ in the Church and the world. They’re living the mission as they help our students learn it.

REV. DR. ROY PETERSON
Vice President of Advancement

Online Education

College, On Your Terms

Rise of online learning at CUW gives students more options

What does the future of higher education look like in a tech-savvy, rapidly changing world? The CUW Office of Continuing and Distance Education can sum it up in two words: mass customization.

“Maintain the quality, maintain the mission, but actually meet people where they are. That’s the goal,” says Dr. Bernard Bull, assistant vice president of Academics at CUW.

And where they are, increasingly, is online.

The 1990s saw a first wave of people starting to explore online learning, Bull says, and statistics show that by 2020 more students will be taking college courses online than face to face. CUW is dedicating a significant amount of resources to meet the demand, ensuring that students will get the educational experience they’re looking for, regardless of their physical location.

Sarah Pecor has served as executive director of CUW’s Office of Continuing and Distance Education since 1998. During that time she has seen the online program explode. Her staff has grown from a single assistant to 17 staffers focused on creating and designing hundreds of online courses. At the same time, enrollment has grown from a few hundred students to more than 2,000, divided among offerings in 19 different programs, from the associate to doctorate level.

“It’s nursing students on third shift, it’s MBA students who travel for their work, it’s teachers who are having to coach and do cheerleading and everything else after school who can’t meet those expectations,” Pecor says. “It’s someone in Alaska, Wyoming, or northern Wisconsin who has no school near them.”

And while that might seem like mass education, Pecor is committed to delivering the full Concordia experience. “We want to make sure our online students are connected,” she says.

To that end, each is given a student services contact to deliver the level of support face-to-face students take for granted. “Whether it’s questions about the library, financial aid, the Business Office, daily chapel, student or career counseling, we can assist with just about anything,” Pecor says.

She adds, “It is important to make sure they get a face, a name, and voice – all the good things that Concordia has to offer.”

In another effort to provide a wide array of learning options for students, the University partnered with Canvas.net to offer its first massive open online course – or “MOOC” – this May. Dr. Bull taught

the eight-week course *Understanding Cheating in Online Courses*, which examined different aspects of cheating to help students cultivate a culture of honesty, integrity, and accountability when taking courses online.

“We were excited to provide this open course as a way to promote a global conversation about the many aspects of academic integrity in the digital world,” Bull says.

Another option – one that Bull believes a vast majority of students will gravitate toward in the future – is “self-blending” programs that combine online and face-to-face learning to fit individual needs.

His office has seen online enrollment for such programs grow 36 percent last year alone.

“Most people don’t realize that at any given time over a fourth of our students are taking an online course,” Bull says.

Nursing is one of CUW’s most popular online programs, with more than 500 students enrolled. Online enrollment gives

Registered Nurses the flexibility to earn a BSN, MSN, or even Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree at their own pace, exiting at any level.

“Dr. Teri Kaul, dean of the School of Nursing, has not only been a champion for nursing, but also for leveraging online learning to meet the needs of current and future nurses,” Bull says. “The same is true for much of the academic leadership at the University.”

Dr. David Borst, dean of the School of Business Administration, has played a key role in the online expansion at the

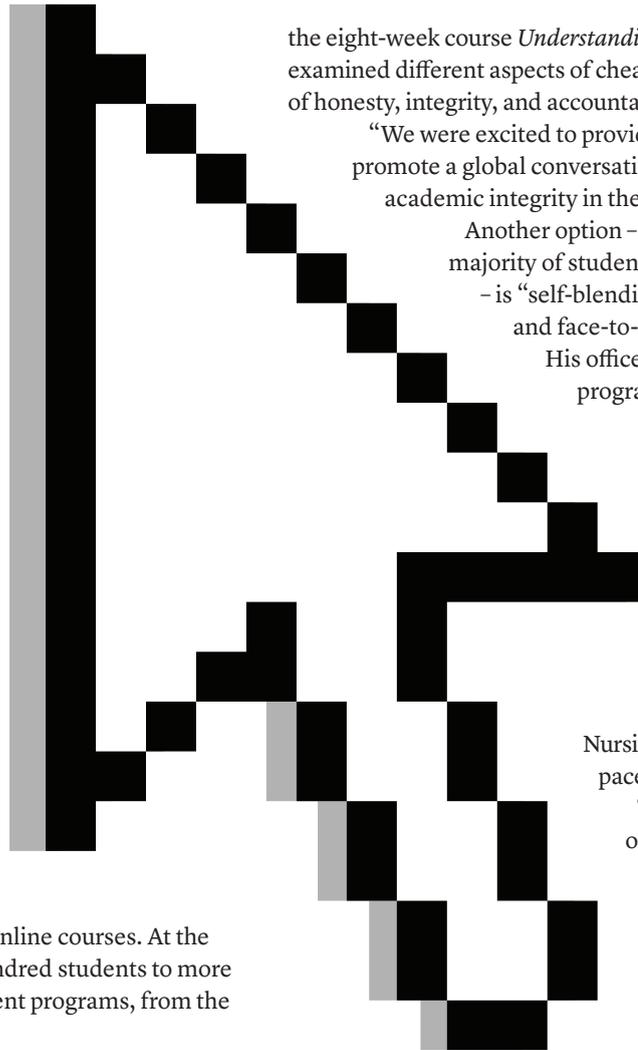
University over the years. He has embraced the changing technology, and applied it to the MBA program and other offerings in his School, according to Pecor.

She also acknowledges that Dr. Michael Uden, dean of the School of Education, and Dr. Linda Samuel, dean of the School of Health Professions, have been instrumental in making online learning successful and viable for students. CUW’s President, Rev. Dr. Patrick T. Ferry, says the University has invested considerable resources in order to be in front of these changes.

“Our online courses will be driven by our mission and our continued quest to offer the very best in Lutheran higher education,” says Ferry.

To learn more about the online programs and courses that CUW offers, visit <http://online.cuw.edu/about/contact-us/>.

–Craig McCarthy, Editor



Serving

Written With Purpose

Prison pen pals send hope to the hopeless



Servant Leaders Jenn Clausing (left) and Kate Fink head a group of about 70 CUW students who regularly exchange letters with prison inmates.

Ten hand-written letters in hand-addressed envelopes sit on the desk of Rick Riehl, CUW director of Donor Relations. It's unusual to see such letters at all these days, but it's not uncommon for Riehl to get so many at once. Because these come from inmates in southeast Wisconsin prisons, addressed to CUW students in the Prison Ministry Pen Pal Program he oversees.

To many of the inmates involved, the letters are a lifeline.

Says Dustin, an inmate and the program's primary prison contact: "It is hard to get anyone to hear the cry of a man in prison and have sympathy, but that's just what the students of Concordia do through the prison ministry."

Riehl believes ministering to those in need is something every Christian is called to do. It's not something you do just to feel good about yourself. It's a sacred responsibility. Loving others, especially those in dire circumstances, is just as important as loving God.

"There's nothing about being Christian that's haughty," Riehl says. "If you're a Christian, you're saying, 'Man, I screwed up, and I need help.' And this is just another way Concordia kids can fulfill that obligation to help others."

Before coming to CUW in 2003, Riehl taught and coached at West Bend East (Wis.) High School for 32 years. It was there he met Dustin, who he describes as "the most other-directed kid" he ever taught. After he graduated, Dustin went to work for Habitat for Humanity before making a mistake that would change the course of his life. He's currently six years into an eight-year prison sentence.

Life in prison has not hardened his heart, however. It was there he got to know a fellow inmate striving to build a brighter future by earning a college degree – but was struggling to

navigate the complexities of pursuing a higher education from behind bars.

"I contacted Rick and explained the situation," Dustin says. "And I asked if he could line up a pen pal for this deserving individual, someone to help him figure things out. But Rick doesn't do anything on a small scale, so he countered by asking if I could find enough other inmates to pair up with every student in the class he was teaching at the time."

From the beginning, student leadership is what has made the program work so well. Julianne Slane, a 2013 Education graduate, was instrumental in getting the program started in 2008. Patrick Tuma (13) took it from there, before handing the reins to Jenn Clausing and Kate Fink, the current co-leaders.

The idea is simple. Each student is matched with one inmate, and they each write the other as often or as little as they like, using aliases and following certain

5

Years the prison ministry has existed

70

Approximate number of students participating in the program

200

Approximate number of inmates served

guidelines. For instance, inmates are not allowed to ask for anything material, or to request to meet their pen pal in person or by phone. Beyond that, they're free to write about whatever they choose.

About 70 students currently take part in the program. They write letters on their own time, while Clausing and Fink meet regularly with Riehl and Dustin (by phone). Dustin sometimes relays physical needs a particular inmate may have, but mostly he just makes sure there are always plenty of inmates lined up to take part. In fact, there's a waiting list.

"I have plenty of stamps and envelopes, but no one to send them to," says one would-be pen pal.

The thought of writing to a prisoner can be intimidating at first. *What could we possibly have in common?* But it doesn't take long for students to realize the inmates are eager to talk about just about anything. And how meaningful the program is - not just to the inmates but to themselves.

"I got started at the co-curricular activities fair my freshman year," says Fink, a rising junior in the Nursing program. "I saw the words 'Prison Ministry' on the board and felt nervous. I hesitated for a minute and then kept walking; but something pulled me back, and I signed up. And I'm so glad I did. The Prison Ministry has become one of my passions. In fact, someday I'd like to play a part in prison reform efforts."

Clausing, who will be a senior in English this fall, was

drawn to the program because she loved the idea of "being a light to someone whose life was so obviously different from my own."

"I love this ministry," she says. "One of my favorite parts is talking weekly with Dustin. He is always so positive about the impact our letters have on the lives of the inmates in the program."

Riehl says the program gives students valuable perspective, as most have never given much thought to all the advantages they've had growing up. "Kids will say, 'Oh, my gosh, I can't imagine being in that environment when I was younger, with an addict for a mom and no dad. How would I have reacted? Where would I be?'"

This idea is something Riehl can certainly relate to, having discovered later in life that his very existence was the result of him being born out of wedlock to a single parent. If she hadn't placed him for adoption ... if he hadn't entered into a loving, stable home ... "What would have been my chances?"

Dustin shares the story of an inmate who was on track for a college basketball scholarship when he robbed a pizza place with some friends. Despite being a star on his high school basketball team, he had lost hope that he mattered to anybody other than himself.

"I figured if no one else cared about me, why should I?" he writes. "And that remained my attitude for a long time when I got locked up. Then someone from Concordia started to write me, and my outlook began to change. For the first time in my life I learned about *agape* love: a genuine, Godly love. My pen pal showed me that there *are* people out there who care about me and what happens to me."

"These men just want somebody to communicate with; they want to hear about the world," Riehl says. "They aren't 'bad people.' They are people who have been given a horrible shake of the dice, you know? Just a horrible shake.

"I know that I have not deserved any of what I've got. It's just been good breaks, one after the other. And this prison ministry is a cool thing for a lot of guys who didn't get those breaks."

-Mike Zimmerman



By the Grace of God Rick Riehl says the prison ministry offers students a chance to reflect on how easily their lives might have turned out differently. He invites interested students to contact him directly at 262-243-4544.

AlumNotes

2000s

Achievements

Lydia L. Gallup (12) is serving as the parish music director, and art and music teacher at St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Munster, Ind.

1 Anna Gruen (12) started her first year teaching as a missionary in Taiwan. She leads senior high Bible study, plays guitar at a local church, and teaches English worship songs at youth events.

Christopher Marshall (12) is the director of music at Bethany Lutheran Church and School in Vacaville, Calif. He teaches grades K-4 general music and 5-8 band, and directs the adult and children's choirs. Christopher belongs to the Sacramento Choir Society and Orchestra.

2 Robert E. Gutsche, Jr. (08) earned a doctorate in Mass Communication at the University of Iowa in December 2012. He's an assistant professor at Florida International University's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. He's writing a book about black diaspora in the upper Midwest, due to publishers in July 2013.

Lannon R. Martin (08) is serving as pastor of Alive in Christ Lutheran Church in Big Spring, Texas, where he's also the police and fire chaplain.

Brock E. Stafford (08) graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy of History from Olivet Nazarene University. He and his wife, **Julia (Wakeland) (08)**, moved to Indianapolis, Ind.

3 Steven P. Peterson (01) graduated from the University of St. Thomas Opus College of

Business in St. Paul, Minn. with an MBA in Finance and was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma. He's working at Thrivent Financial as a Commercial Loan Analyst. His wife, **Kim (Rebber) (01)**, is teaching junior high English/Literature at St. John's Lutheran School in Chaska, Minn. The couple has two children, Claire (6) and Grant (2).

4 Rev. David Stevens (00) has been named a ministry consultant for Bethesda Lutheran Communities, a national provider of support and services for intellectually and developmentally disabled people and their families, located in Watertown, Wis.

Marriages

5 Heidi Von Brauschitsch (10) became engaged to Ben Bush. She lives in Milwaukee.

6 Lori (Rever) Kelling (10) and **Christopher Kelling (currently attending CUW)** on December 22, 2012, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Reedsburg, Wis. Alumni in the wedding party included **Christi Rever (13)**, **Katie Alexander (10)**, **Sarah Schultz (10)**, **Darci Fraker (10)**, **Abby Dunt (10)**, **Elena Pfeiffer (10)**, **Kerrie Roesler (11)**, **David Roesler (10)**, **Matthew Oldenburg (10)**, **Benjamin Simmerman (08)**, **Keith Neff (09)**, and **Matthew Berauer (06)**. Lori teaches 5th grade at St. Peter's Lutheran School in Reedsburg, and Christopher is a paramedic at both Baraboo and Reedsburg Ambulance Services.

Births

7 Valerie Worrall (07) has a son, Samuel Christian Worrall, who was born on January 14, 2008.

1990s

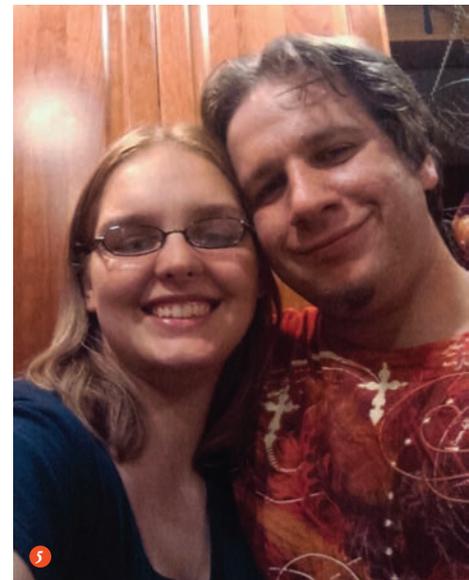


John Marrs (97) wrote the e-book *A Better Way Piano Method Book 1* released through the Apple iTunes Bookstore. His book teaches people how to play piano, and includes music, video clips, and interactive elements. John is a director of music at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas.

Adam A. Smith (94) was appointed assistant vice president for student success at the University of Akron. He and his wife, Linda, reside in Copley, Ohio.



Greg A. Batiansila (91) completed the first season of "Leaving Eden," a Web series about the day-to-day life of a pastor. The show stars CUW alum **David Sapiro (92)** and has garnered more than 8,000 views.





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Your Serve

*“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
(Matthew 20: 28)*

I’ve never played competitive tennis and would really consider myself a novice, but every spring when it gets warm I feel like it’s a great activity to do outside. Just hitting the ball back and forth over the net with family or friends is enjoyable.

As I watch really good tennis players, I feel like one huge difference between them and me is their ability to serve. Top players have serves that go well over 100 miles per hour. Being able to return a serve that fast is something few can do. Players alternate serving, and who will win the match usually comes down to who can “break” the other person’s serve.

But it’s different if you watch novices play. Sometimes consistently being able to land serves in the court is a challenge, regardless

of the speed. You could say that being able to serve well is a big factor in playing tennis.

You could say the same about faith. **Being able to serve well is a big factor in our Christian lives.** The first, most important point is that our actions, good deeds, service projects, kindnesses, faith in action – or whatever we call them – are not some way of earning God’s love or earning our way to heaven. Only the life and death of our Savior Jesus makes payment for sin. It was His

humility (as referenced in the verse shown) that brings us the promise of forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

Serving as Jesus did has a lot to do with humility. I think sometimes in faith we serve like novices and sometimes like pros. Sometimes we serve in ways that are seen as very effective, and use our gifts and talents well. Sometimes we’re not sure how to serve or what to do. But doing something is always of value. God can use it all for the ultimate purpose of bringing as many as possible to trust in Him.

Maybe after looking through this issue of the *Concordian*, or as God’s Word touches your life, you’ll be inspired to serve in some new or more significant way. The ball’s in your court.

REV. STEVE SMITH
Campus Pastor





Concordian Summer 2013

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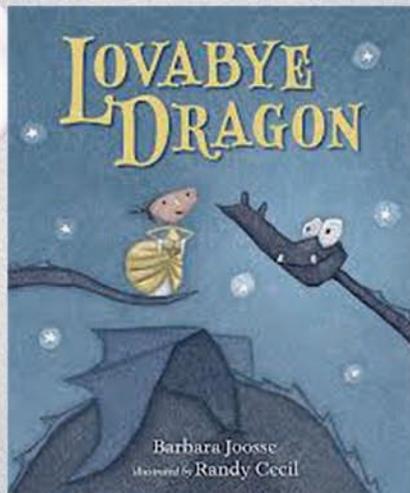


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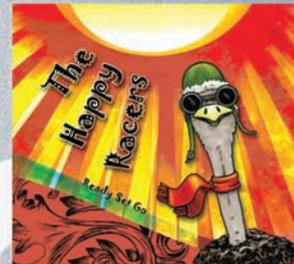
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