



Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary

914 Pine Street, PO Box 449, Hancock, MI 49930 • (906) 482-3337 • www.ilseminary.org
a Minnesota Corporation

May 2009

Dear Friends,

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Several years ago, I attended a seminar on grief and bereavement that was conducted by a local hospice organization. One of the most important things that I learned at the seminar was that when we counsel those who are grieving, we do not teach them to “get over” their loss, but rather to live with it. Our seminary and church family are learning to do just that as we grieve the death of Theresa Weidner, Pastor Jay’s wife and Adam’s mother. A summary of the recent events is as follows:

“On Friday, April 17th, at 2:12pm (CST) a head-on collision in Amberg, WI resulted in the death of Theresa Weidner. Theresa’s son, Adam suffered serious injuries in the accident and was taken to Dickinson County Memorial Hospital in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Theresa was driving Adam to Green Bay, Wisconsin (Adam was scheduled to be in a bowling tournament and Theresa was planning to do some shopping), when an oncoming car crossed the center line and collided head on with the Weidner’s vehicle. Both drivers were pronounced dead at the scene. The passenger in the oncoming vehicle died Friday evening from injuries sustained in the accident. After two surgeries to repair internal injuries and receiving treatment for pneumonia, Adam is recovering and hopes to come home soon.”

We pray that the God of all comfort will be with Pastor Jay and Adam during this very difficult time, and that Adam would be restored to full health very soon. Because the Weidner family has touched so many of us, we too are in the midst of grief. Even more so, the Apostle Paul teaches us that we are all part of the body of Christ and thus ***“...the members should have the same care one for another. ²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” I Corinthians 12:25-26***

As we grieve however, Paul tells us ***“...that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”*** This does not mean that we deny the pain of loss. We are simply not consumed by it. We are driven, not to despair, but to the cross. The scripture directs us to the One who ***“...hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows...”***, the One who walks with us through ***“...the valley of the shadow of death”***, the One who has swallowed up death in victory. Our grief is tempered by the certainty and glorious power of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Luther says, *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? This is so true that even Satan cannot deny it. Christ’s victory over sin, death and hell is greater than all heaven and earth.*

You can never imagine His Resurrection and victory so great but that in actuality it is far, far greater. For as His person is mighty, eternal, without limit, incomprehensible, so also is His Resurrection, victory and triumph mighty, eternal, without limit, incomprehensible. Were hell a thousand times more, and death ten thousand times more, it would all be but a spark, a mere drop compared with Christ's Resurrection, victory and triumph. But His Resurrection, victory and triumph Christ gives to all who believe in Him. Since we have been baptized in His name, and believe in Him, it follows that even if you and I underwent sin, death and hell a hundred thousandfold, it would amount to nothing; for Christ's Resurrection victory and triumph, which have been given me in baptism and in the Word by faith, and therefore are my own are infinitely greater. If this is true, and I most certainly believe it to be true, then let sin death and hell dog my steps and growl at me. What will they do to us? What can they do?..."

No matter how great our difficulties seem, the fruit of the Resurrection is far greater. Instead of sin, we have righteousness, instead of defeat we have victory, instead of death we have life. Christ has overcome everything for us. May God grant us grace to look beyond our sufferings and by faith, lay hold of the finished work of the Risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylkas



We also ask for your prayers on behalf of Dr. Al Saari and his family. Dr. Saari suffered a stroke on April 12th and is still in critical condition at St. Joseph's hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Saari is one of the co-founders of the seminary and has been actively involved since its inception.

In order to receive updates concerning Adam Weidner's and Dr. Al Saari's condition, please visit www.caringbridge.org and follow these instructions:

Website Names: For Adam - type in Weidner
For Al - type in Albertfinnish

You will need to have a CaringBridge profile to leave messages in the guestbook. Creating a profile only takes a minute and allows you to sign up to receive Journal update notifications by e-mail each time their Journal is updated.

If you have a CaringBridge Profile:

1. Visit <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit>
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CaringBridge® is a free, nonprofit web service that connects family and friends to share information, love and support during a health care crisis, treatment and recovery.



MEMORIALS RECEIVED

In memory of Helmi Kivisto
from Steve & Marilyn Dahlmeier

In memory of Anna Tauriainen
from Eugene & Eleanore Tauriainen

In memory of Nick & Alma Sorvala
from Eugene & Eleanore Tauriainen

In memory of Daniel Besonen
from Jim & Lorraine Besonen

In memory of Ruth Jukuri
from Tim & Sue Jukuri

In memory of Darlene Heikka
from Kenneth C. Heikka

In memory of Carl Maher
from Arvo & Ritva Onermaa

In memory of Carl Maher
from Eugene & Arlene Silkowski

In memory of Ed Hautala
from the Negaunee Carpenters – Richard, Tim & Joe



**In lieu of flowers, memorials in Theresa Weidner's memory may be given to the
Inter-Lutheran Seminary, P.O. Box 449, Hancock, MI 49930 or
Painesdale Apostolic Lutheran Church,**

Kenneth Hanninen, Secretary, P.O. Box 324, Painesdale, MI 49955.

****PLEASE NOTE****

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