



Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary

914 Pine Street, PO Box 449, Hancock, MI 49930 • (906) 482-3337 • www.ilseminary.org
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April 2010,

Dear Friends,

“Then when Jesus came, he found that he (Lazarus) had lain in the grave four days already.¹⁸ Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:¹⁹ And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.²⁰ Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.²¹ Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.²² But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.²³ Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.²⁴ Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?²⁷ She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” **John 11:17-27**

In this beautiful Gospel, we see the patience and tender compassion of Jesus as He addresses a grieving Martha. Jesus had heard that Lazarus was sick, and yet he delayed coming to Lazarus for two more days, because He knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. When Jesus finally arrives at Bethany, Martha anxiously comes out to meet Him. At first, Martha complains to Jesus *“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”* Many of us can identify with Martha’s frustration. When we experience a tragedy, such as the loss of a loved one, our first response is often to ask God *“Why?”* *“Why did you allow this to happen? Why did this have to happen to me?”*

But hidden within Martha’s complaint is a glimpse of her faith. In her very words, Martha implies *“You have the power that could have prevented this from happening.”* Her faith is further expressed in the next phrase *“But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.”* In other words, *“It is not too late. You can still help us.”* Jesus patiently listens to Martha and then assures her *“... Thy brother shall rise again.”* Martha already knows this. She knows of the great event that is promised on the last Day. *“But what about the here and now? What can help me deal with the pain of this loss?”*

“Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live...” Jesus gives Martha the answer to all of her problems, even though she is asking the wrong questions. The question Martha should be asking is not what, when or why, but *“Who?”* *“Who can help me in my time of need?”* The Resurrection is not merely an event that will happen in the distant future. The Resurrection is embodied in the person who now stands before Martha. It is Jesus Christ Himself. He is the One who shed His Blood on Calvary’s cross for the forgiveness of our sins. He is the One who swallowed up death in victory. He is the One who continues to help us in every time of need. All those who by faith embrace the Crucified and Risen Lord Jesus have life; right here and right now. May God grant us grace to continue believing in the One who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylkas



Memorials received...

In memory of Theresa Weidner

from Joel Hendrickson & family
from Richard & Joyce Lehto

In memory of Elden & Mildred Tikkanen

from Verna A. Hendrickson



**Spring 2010
Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary
Service Schedule – 7 p.m.**

April

4th Easter – No Service
11th – Dennis Hannu @ Laurium
18th – Marc Tumberg @ S. Range
25th – Dennis Hannu @ Zion

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans introduces *new* Thrivent Choice Program

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans discontinued their GivingPlus[®] matching funds program at the end of 2009. This summer Thrivent will launch a new program called *Thrivent Choice* that can result in charitable gifts to organizations or congregations of your choice helping you further your important ministry. Through the Choice Dollars component of the Thrivent Choice program, eligible Thrivent Financial benefit members (age 16+) will be able to direct dollars to thousands of Lutheran nonprofit organizations and Lutheran congregations including the Inter-Lutheran Seminary. The details of this new program will be communicated to you as soon as we receive them.