

June 2020

Dear Friends,

*“For it pleased the Father that in Him (Christ) should all fulness dwell; <sup>20</sup> And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. <sup>21</sup> And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled <sup>22</sup> In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight: <sup>23</sup> If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; <sup>24</sup> Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church: <sup>25</sup> Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; <sup>26</sup> Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: <sup>27</sup> To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: <sup>28</sup> Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: <sup>29</sup> Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.”*  
**Colossians 1:19-29**

It is not uncommon to hear pastors repeat certain bible verses in the course of preaching a lifetime of sermons. It is not that other passages are less important, but rather there are some that resonate more strikingly with us as we read and meditate on God's Word. I had the distinct privilege of serving with Pastor Rodney Johnson for over six years. He was not only a wise mentor for a young pastor fresh out of seminary, he was my brother and friend. Pastor Rod was like a second father to me, welcoming me not only into the Laurium church family but into his own family as well.

In the six years I spent listening to Pastor Rod's preaching, the phrase I remember him quoting most vividly is found in this passage from the Apostle Paul's epistle to the Colossians: *“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”* What a profound thought! Even though Jesus Christ died for us, rose again for us and ascended on high for us, our God is not a distant God. Christ dwells among us *and is in us*. We do not find our hope in any other place than in the person and the work of Christ Jesus, our Lord. As the hymn-writer Edward Mote aptly puts it, *“My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness...”* Even more, the Bible does not define hope like the world does. It is not weak or uncertain. Our hope is founded upon the most decisive act of human history: the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. *“On Christ the solid Rock, I stand...”* Thanks be to God for faithful pastors like Pastor Rod who point us to Jesus Christ. May God be ever praised for this marvelous truth; *“Christ in you the hope of glory.”*

As always, thank you for remembering the seminary with your thoughts, prayers and gifts during these trying times. God bless you for your kindness!

*“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, <sup>5</sup> For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; <sup>6</sup> Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ....”* **Philippians 1:3-6**

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Chuck Bylkas



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Several years ago, the Seminary board of directors established the Inter-Lutheran Seminary Endowment Fund. Funds contributed to the endowment are not used for current day to day operations. Only the annual earnings of the endowment will be used for the seminary's needs thereby ensuring the continued existence of this funding source. This is the preferred method used by many non-profit entities, especially ongoing religiously focused organizations such as seminaries.

While this is an excellent strategy, it has proven a challenge for us to actually meet the minimum funding requirements. Until now, the fund has existed but remained unfunded. By the Lord's grace we have been blessed with a large contribution to fund the Inter-Lutheran Seminary Endowment Fund. We would love to build on this generous contribution to grow our endowment into a major source of ongoing seminary support.

Although the seminary still needs the financial ongoing regular contributions of our supporters, please consider the endowment fund for your planned giving needs. The seminary has chosen the InFaith Community Endowment Fund (the renamed Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation) to administer our endowment fund. They will provide experienced legal advice to help guide you with any contribution questions done through estate planning in addition to lump sum contributions, IRAs, property and securities. For more additional information, please contact Kirk Otto, Jr. at (715) 294-4343 or Cheryl Hendrickson at (906) 482-3337.