

**2007 Bulletin of Reports
Delaware-Maryland Synod**

AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

**EASTERN CLUSTER OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES
Synods of Region 7, 8 and 9**

As I write this report, I have just returned from New York City after attending a historic meeting of the Network Coordinating Council for Life-Long in the East. Eighteen representatives of the expressions of the ELCA and its institutions attended the meeting. There were representatives of church-wide, synods, the three regions, SMOs, camps, campus ministries, colleges, the Eastern Cluster Board, directors of life-long learning at the seminaries, and a faculty member from the seminaries. I attended as Executive Director of the Cluster. Dr. Nelvin Vos, who served as the convener, will make a formal report to the Cluster Board, but it is important for me to thank him and all those who helped to plan and facilitate this two-day event that we pray will produce wonderful outcomes for life-long learning for theological education in the East. Launching this new network was a courageous and visionary step that came out of the Cluster retreat last year and organized by the Cluster's Planning Committee.

Since our last Board meeting President Marcus Miller was installed as President of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) and is now fully engaged in his role. Although not technically a Cluster program we said good by to Bill Bixby, the Director of the TEY program. Bill served us well in his leadership role making TEY a model program among all the programs along this model, and expanded it from its original location at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP) to collaboration with Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (LTSG) and the Bishop's School at LTSS.

The Project Connect program directed by Don Johnson has also blossomed under his leadership. The report by Connect to the Lilly Endowment in January was breathtaking in its scope and data detailing the hundreds of college-age students who have identified themselves as interested in the ministry. Connect has also developed an elaborate network of individuals and institutions that are committed to identifying, nurturing and sustaining candidates for ministry. The three seminaries are already seeing those cultivated by both TEY and Connect in their prospective student visits. I am proud to say that the admissions directors of the three schools are models of cluster collaboration. Rick Summy and Jim Cobb left LTSP and LTSS, but Louise Johnson and Mark Olson have picked right up collaborating with Tom Henderson at LTSS where they left off.

It is important for the Board to realize how deep the collaborations are among the Cluster faculty and staff. In the diaconal ministry program representatives of the three faculties regularly serve together as instructors. This is also true of TEY and Connect. The faculties are working together in recommending purchases for the One Library in three locations. The Library staff seems to be functioning well and a new culture of

collaboration is setting deep roots. The faculties have also done serious work on the three common projects, as we will see in the Academic Committee's report. One faculty of the three has even proposed that the three faculties meet in retreat.

At the last board meeting I was asked to appoint a committee that would develop the guidelines for the ELCA supported financial assistance fund for Lutheran graduate students who are persons of color. Members of the committee to identify a candidate or candidates are Philip Krey (ex officio), Stephen Ray (chair), Marcus Miller, Nelson Strobert, and Nelson Rivera. One of the early recommendations is that we may support one or two promising students who are early in their M.Div programs so that they will be prepared for graduate study upon completion of their M.Div programs.

I am grateful to our outgoing chair, Bishop Don McCoid, the other officers of the Board and my two colleague presidents and the deans who have made this past year a relatively smooth one for the Cluster. I am grateful to President Cooper-White who continues to pay close attention to the details of our collaborative agreements and I welcome President Miller's frank and clear questions about our Cluster processes. We have a strong and visionary board, and I am delighted to be a part of this wonderful collaborative effort. Of course, we must always thank Tricia Casto, our coordinator, and Lois LaCroix, the administrative assistant to the executive director for their expert help and leadership.

We need to remind ourselves as a Board that as the Cluster matures we cannot forget to share our mission and values with those who assume leadership positions in the three seminaries. It is the responsibility of those of us who have been around for awhile to share with those who are new about our mission, tradition, and values. We will also have to be open to changes and new beginnings. By way of a beginning I will share a summary report that the presidents took to the Teagle and Luce Foundations during our annual trip in December 2007.

An Eastern Educational Network: The Next Stages

A decade ago, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS) was incorporated by Gettysburg, Philadelphia and Southern (Columbia, SC) Seminaries. During its first decade, the ECLS has created a common *One Library Under Three Roofs*, developed a wide range of shared endeavors (including advanced degree programs, diaconal ministry formation, Afro-centric education in Atlanta, theological education with youth, and the most comprehensive network of vocational recruitment that exists today - *Project Connect*). In addition to the considerable financial and personnel resources invested by the seminaries and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Cluster's development has been facilitated in major measure through the generosity of three foundations - Lilly Endowment, Luce and Teagle - who have funded various developmental phases with a total of nearly \$5 million. We estimate that these collaborations have saved the three seminaries over \$500,000 per year in formerly duplicative budget expenses. For example, by pooling their library acquisitions each seminary has saved over \$30,000 in periodical and serial acquisitions. Each seminary has reduced overall work force by at least five administrative positions, as work is carried out by a staff person in one seminary for the

whole Cluster. We are truly at the point of no return in our collaborative model, and we are deeply grateful that the Teagle and Luce Foundations have made this possible.

An Emerging Eastern Network

What began as a limited vision for three seminaries working together has evolved quickly into a much broader "network" of educational providers. In the process of developing the foundation for *Project Connect*, an eastern network involving 5 colleges, 6 campus ministries, 6 camps, the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Lutheran Services in America, and the largest eastern social ministry organization, *Diakon*, banded together. Building on the strong foundation laid by the most recent Teagle Foundation grant, a lifelong learning (continuing education) platform was organized and is poised to support a vast array of courses and educational offerings (for both classroom and online/distance delivery). A Network Coordinating Council for Lifelong Learning has been formed under the initial leadership of a highly regarded senior educational professional. Its membership spans eastern Lutheran leadership and may be expanded ecumenically as opportunities arise. Thus we are taking the model of savings and expanded service to new levels of collaboration with colleges and other institutions through which we hope to model the collaboration we have developed over the past decade, thanks to the generosity and encouragement of the Luce and Teagle Foundations.

Next Steps: Opportunities Unlimited!

In recent months, additional opportunities have emerged and positioned the forming network to launch pilot programs. An *Intersections Institute* involving the seminaries and colleges, partnering with Johns Hopkins and Temple universities, will soon offer first courses toward degree and certificate programs for those serving at the intersection of church and society (particularly current or aspiring executive leaders for social ministry and other non-governmental service organizations). In the summer of 2006, Gettysburg Seminary acquired the Washington, D.C.-based Luther Institute. Recently, it was designated the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's fourth international continuing education center (together with centers in Bethlehem, Mexico City and Wittenberg). This positions the network to "go global" with programs serving international as well as U.S. constituencies. LTSP was also awarded a modest planning grant by the Luce Foundation to develop an Asian Studies program for graduate students in *diaspora*. Asian faculty and graduate students from the East coast will be gathering in Philadelphia to provide mutual support and guidance in graduate education and research.

The Rev. Philip D. Krey, executive director