

Arbor Light

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY ANN ARBOR



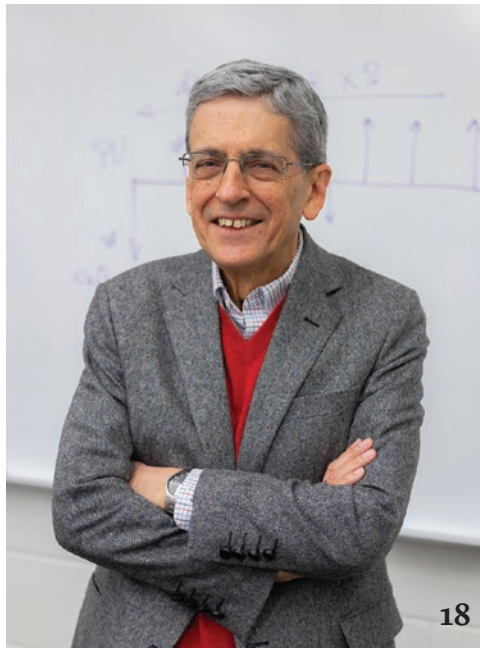
TRUE COLORS

The cornerstone of
Concordia endures

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

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SPRING/SUMMER 2020



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ARBOR LIGHT is the official magazine of Concordia University Ann Arbor. It shares the stories of exciting advancements on campus; notable accomplishments of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni; and the life-changing service Concordians undertake for Christ in the Church and world. The biannual publication is sent to tens of thousands of alumni, parents, and stakeholders each fall and spring.

The Office of Strategy and University Affairs is responsible for the production of *Arbor Light*. The magazine's editorial team welcomes your feedback. Please send comments or queries to Arborlight@cuaa.edu.

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Go green! If you would like to subscribe to our email edition instead of receiving a copy in the mail, please email Arborlight@cuaa.edu.

This was not my original introductory letter. We were all set to take this edition to print when my previous message, while still relevant, became slightly less pressing. My intention was to discuss the challenges that colleges and universities like Concordia are facing in light of the announced closure of our sister school in Portland, Oregon. Of course, I wanted to ease the concerns of readers who care so deeply about Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor. Recently our Board of Regents joined members of our senior leadership team to look forward together at the future for Lutheran higher education and the leading role that Concordia is well-positioned to assume. All of that remains true, of course, but the whole world has changed in ways that none of us imagined a few months ago.

This revised letter is being written during the first week following spring vacation. Normally, this is a wonderfully busy week on campus. Classes resume, choirs are back from tours, athletics teams return from trips, and everyone is refreshed and ready for the homestretch of the academic year. These are not normal days. As I walked on to campus today, I saw only a few people, and we were careful to keep a safe distance from one another. I met with our same Board of Regents via interactive video utilizing Zoom technology. By this same method our leadership team has been meeting twice each day for a couple of weeks. Faculty and students have also been convening their regular classes through distance learning—a plan that no one expected to occur when everybody scattered for the break.

To say the global pandemic, Covid-19, has been disruptive would be a huge understatement. Obviously, you do not need me to tell you that because your own lives have certainly been disrupted in no small way. At Concordia all of the things we look forward to in the spring semester—including Commencement—have been cancelled. We are doing our best to make sure students are able to complete their courses and to care for them as best we can from a distance, but the rest has been laid to the side out of an abundance of caution and an abundance of care.


Since we are still in the midst of this situation, it is not easy to see how everything will eventually turn out. It would be disingenuous for me to suggest that I have no concerns for Concordia, or for the future.

Nevertheless, our faith is in the One who did not distance Himself from our perilous predicament. Christ came to bear our sins and carry our sorrows. Concordia belongs to Jesus—as it always has, and as it always will.

We commend ourselves and our future to the Lord.

We also remain committed to the fulfillment of our extraordinary mission, and we look forward to the prospect of brighter and better days ahead. My hope is that upon reflection of our response to this extraordinary crisis we will see that it was our finest hour. As I have watched my colleagues in action in recent days there is already evidence for that. I also hope that these days will draw us nearer to Jesus who draws near to us even when everything else around us crumbles. “In the world you will have tribulation,” Jesus warned, “but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

God bless and keep you.







REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PHD
President



ON THE COVER:
Natalie Shawl ('22) poses in The Chapel of the Holy Trinity, a hallmark of the CUAA campus.
Photography by Plum Media

social scene

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SERVING UP SMILES

Retweet for the true MVP, Chris the sandwich guy!



GOD'S HOUSE

Check out this gorgeous photo taken by student, @msfleurr. Want one of your photos to be featured? Post on Instagram using #CUAA!



MEGA MEMORIES

Remember when THIS happened at #CIT2020?



Digital age degree

Have you heard about our new digital media design major combining art, marketing, and communications? Learn more at blog.cuaa.edu/digital-media-design.

MURAL WITH A MISSION

Two CUAU art students had a special idea for a way to bring life to an otherwise less-than-lively corner of campus. Meet the student artists: blog.cuaa.edu/mission-mural.



Hero for the homeless

Once homeless himself, Stanley Stinson ('19), CUAU nursing alumnus, makes it his calling to give aid to those whose shoes he once was in. See his story at blog.cuaa.edu/fox2detroit-stanley-stinson.



Here's to those who champion Concordia through social media.

Every tweet, every post, every "like," every comment, and every share—we notice you, and we appreciate you!



**CONNECTED CLERGY
BILL ONDRACKA**

Bill has taken a very active part in the life of our page. Because of his continual engagement, Facebook has named him a top fan for over 3 months! "Through social media, I am reminded of how God has blessed me through this journey and how He has used the staff there and others to help groom me for service. I can stay connected to all that is happening at the place I miss so much."

THE MORE THE MERRIER

All our platforms' audiences have grown between 2019 and 2020. We give our biggest thanks to everyone who has chosen to keep us in their social loop!

FOLLOWER GROWTH 2019–2020

FACEBOOK **996**

TWITTER **339**

INSTAGRAM **514**



Zach Yoder is an eager member of the Cardinals esports team.

VARSITY ESPORTS IS ON THE ROSTER

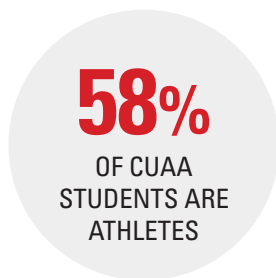
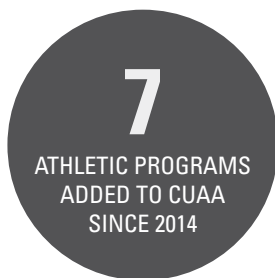
Concordia University Ann Arbor has announced esports to its athletics roster, the 25th varsity sport for the Cardinals. The organized, competitive video gaming team starts its competitive season in fall 2020.

As of early 2020, Concordia is one of 10 esports programs offered in the state of Michigan, one of 50 offered in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and one of nearly 200 programs in the country as recognized by the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE).

“The addition of the esports program has the potential to welcome more students to our campus and into our athletic program,” said Director of Athletics Lonnie Pries. “As with all new programs and initiatives, our goal is to develop servant leaders who strive for excellence in academics, athletics, and personal growth while maturing as Christians together.”

In November, Concordia hired Anthony Scala to direct and lead the new program. Since his start, Scala has focused on recruitment, helped with the renovation of what will be CUAA’s esports arena, and secured the needed equipment for the team’s debut.

Learn more about CUAA’s Esports team by visiting blog.cuaa.edu/esports.



CARDINALS APPAREL IS NOW ONLINE

Introducing Cardinal Closet, an online spirit wear shop for Concordia University Ann Arbor apparel.

Concordia has transferred apparel to an online presence, making it more accessible to Cardinals fans of all ages, stages, and locations.

The store is easily accessible at shop.cuaa.edu, thanks to university partners and Ann Arbor custom apparel mogul Underground Printing.

“The Cardinal Closet will give more Concordia fans an opportunity to support and sport their Cardinals gear wherever they go,” said Vice President of Administration Rev. Dr. Ryan Peterson. “We are also excited to give current students more space on campus and greater accessibility to apparel.”

What was once known as The Egg, operating as a physical spirit wear store in The Nest in CUAA’s Student Union, has been transformed into a student lounge, providing much-needed study and hangout space for Concordia students.

Show off your Concordia Cardinals spirit! Find CUAA spirit wear at shop.cuaa.edu.



Students take advantage of the additional lounge and study space in The Nest.

CONCORDIA RECEIVES \$2.6 MILLION DOLLAR GRANT

Concordia University is a recipient of a Title III Strengthening Institutions Program Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, totaling over \$2.6 million over the next five years. It is one of the largest grants in university history.

Concordia's grant application highlighted a desire to improve student outcomes and financial efficacy, with an emphasis on serving low-income and first-generation students.

"These funds will help us build on our strong foundation as a Christ-centered, mission-driven, student-focused institution," said Vice President of Administration Dr. Ryan Peterson, who serves as Title III project director. "We're thrilled for the ways that these resources will bless CUAA, and we're eager to invest our collective energy in assuring excellent service to our students."

Realized project outcomes include:

- A renovated academic resource center (will begin summer 2020)
- Additional support services
- Improved purchasing procedures and policies
- Increased scholarships to middle-low income students
- Increased diversity of faculty and staff
- Additional funding for university endowments

Concordia immediately began to receive an allotment of the funds following the announcement and has already seen a positive impact. CUAA established the office of multicultural engagement and hired a director, Shanitra Cheff, who has overseen the formation of the office and is responsible for assessing campus needs in the areas of multicultural engagement, mentoring and advocating for students from underrepresented populations, and creating an advisory council of stakeholders representing students, faculty, and staff.

Read more about this story at blog.cuaa.edu/strengthening-institutions-grant-2019.

Shanitra Cheff is CUAA's inaugural director of multicultural engagement.



Jesús Hernández joined Concordia in November 2019.

ADMISSIONS ON THE UP AND UP

Concordia University Ann Arbor's new Director of Enrollment Jesús Hernández has taken the helm of the admissions department.

Hernández brings over 20 years of experience working in higher education institutions, including endeavors involving new student programming, student conduct, compliance, organizational behavior, and training and development.

"My relationship with Christ is paramount, so I'm excited to be at Concordia because I can talk about that, express it, and share it with others who may be willing to listen," said Hernández. "Concordia is unapologetically a Christ-centered institution. That is consistent with who I am as an individual, and is a driving force and the primary lens for my relationships, my family, and my work."

Hernández was no stranger to Ann Arbor's campus before starting this enrollment leadership position. As an adjunct instructor in CUAA's graduate education program since 2015, he has taught courses on legal issues in higher education and leadership in higher education administration.

"Having been in higher education for so many years, I've learned that it's a very interpersonal business. In this role, I have the opportunity to connect with people where they're at, and that's what excites me the most," said Hernández. "We're here to help people not only earn a degree but gain an education. What's important to me is navigating where I can fit into that bigger picture of helping a student in this valuable experience."

Do you know a student who might be interested in CUAA? Encourage them to apply at cuaa.edu/apply or connect them with admissions@cuaa.edu.

You can't miss it

Whenever visitors come to our Ann Arbor campus and they ask how to get to a certain building on Central Campus (before sending them a map!), I like to say: “When you are at the circle drive, look ahead toward the river, and you will see our chapel. You can't miss it.”

If you have been to campus, you know that “you can't miss it.” Located at the center of campus with the cross towering toward the sky, The Chapel of the Holy Trinity is a can't-miss feature of our beautiful campus. It is a highlight of the prospective student admissions tour. Our student ambassadors guide families into the Chapel and give some historical perspective, but focus on describing the daily chapel services and other opportunities for student spiritual growth. After greeting prospective students and families in my office, I watch them walk into the Chapel and then exit it a few minutes later to spend time at Chapel Point, the incredible outdoor place where many enjoy a view overlooking the Huron River and beyond.

This edition of Arbor Light brings to life the impact many have experienced through time spent in the Chapel. Concordia alumni have shared with me the real ways they have struggled with and also celebrated God's goodness and faithfulness in that sacred space. Our beloved Chapel has seen moments of pure joy and extreme sorrow through weddings, funerals, chapel, communion services, and quiet times of prayer. Over the past nearly seven years that I have had the privilege of serving at Concordia, I have witnessed many of these moments. Such is the nature of faith.

The apostle Paul writes, “He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, **that in everything he might be preeminent**” (Colossians 1:15–18).

You can't miss the Chapel. It is stunning. It tells a story. It celebrates Christ. More importantly, you can't miss what happens there. It is life-giving and life-changing, because it is all about Jesus.

REV. DR. RYAN PETERSON

*Vice President of Administration
Chief Liaison to the Office of the President*



CONCORDIA EXPANDS HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAMS

Concordia University Ann Arbor's fifth academic school, School of Health Professions, continues its positive momentum and development toward an exciting future in preparing the next generation of health care professionals.

Directors have been hired for the School of Health Professions' newest graduate professional programs, Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) and Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT). These graduate-level offerings add to a growing list of health professions degrees offered at CUAA, including bachelor's degrees in social work, diagnostic medical sonography, and radiologic technology. Concordia is also currently in the professional accreditation process for a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.

Julie Chreston, CUAA's director of occupational therapy, brings with her 25 years of experience in the field. Chreston received a certificate in occupational therapy from Wayne State University before earning her Master of Science in Health Education from the University of Michigan-Flint, and then going on to earn a post-professional Doctorate of Occupational Therapy from Chatham University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Chreston will lead the state of Michigan's first Christian-based occupational therapy program when launched in fall 2022, pending successful candidacy status by Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®). As a three-year program, including 24 weeks of clinical fieldwork and a 14-week capstone experience, the program will incorporate interprofessional collaboration, clinical simulation, and community engagement.

“Occupational therapists are experts at analyzing the tasks we need to do to fulfill our roles as a student, employee, son, daughter, or Christian, along with our unique personal skills and abilities and the environment to find solutions that allow us to function in the best way possible,” said Chreston, who is eager to familiarize the CUAA community with the field of occupational therapy.

Robert “Dr. Bob” Frampton, director of physical therapy, comes to

New faces in School of Health Professions



**JULIANE CHRESTON,
OTD, OTRL**

*Program Director of
Occupational Therapy*



**ROBERT M. FRAMPTON,
PT, DHCE, MPT**

*Program Director of
Physical Therapy*



**JACQUELINE C. KAZIK,
MA, PA-C**

*Program Director of
Physician Assistant Studies*

CUAA's North Building, three miles directly north of central campus, houses most of Concordia's health professions programs including nursing, athletic training, health and human performance and now, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant studies.

CUAA from Alliance, Ohio, where he served as the director of physical therapy at the University of Mount Union. Frampton earned his Master of Physical Therapy and Doctor of Health Care Ethics degrees from Duquesne University of the Holy Ghost in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He also received a graduate certificate in medical ethics from Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio.

With a tentative start date for fall 2023, pending professional accreditation, students can expect an accelerated program that runs 12 months of the year. Along with a focus on acceleration, Frampton says that interprofessional practice will be a hallmark of the program.

Frampton advises students interested in pursuing a Doctorate of Physical Therapy to work hard to meet the prerequisite requirements, primarily those in the natural sciences, as well as observe physical therapists to ensure this is the right field of study for them.

Along with working with the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, Frampton is leading the charge on developing the DPT program coursework and syllabi before he begins the search for qualified faculty.

"I have enjoyed meeting faculty from across the campus," said Frampton. "I look forward to collaborating with others as time progresses."

Learn more about CUAA's School of Health Professions programs at cuaa.edu/programs.

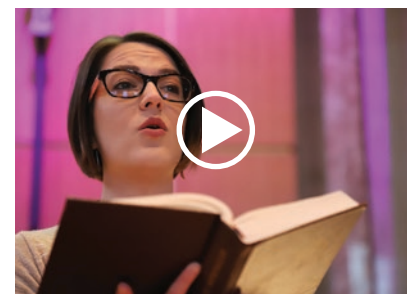


The doctor is in!

THE NEW DPT AND OTD PROGRAMS
MARK THE FIRST DOCTORATE DEGREES
TO BE OFFERED BY THE CUAA CAMPUS.

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

In the midst of the uncertainty of COVID-19, Concordia University Ann Arbor responded with care and reminders of the One who is steadfast.



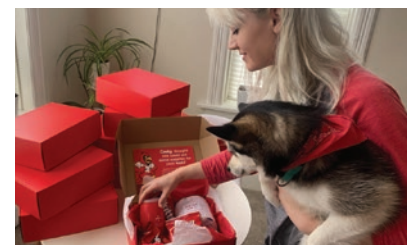
Doxology chorus

A video-recorded chamber choir made up of students and employees kicked off an entirely online semester following spring break. The choir led Concordians as they joined together—from afar—in singing the Doxology. Hear the choir sing at blog.cuaa.edu/Doxology-chorus.



From P. Dunc's House to Yours

"Home Chapels" debuted the day after spring break, giving students a daily opportunity to come together in worship.



Pick-me-up packages

Concordia mailed reverse care packages to students with personalized messages and reminders of their home away from home.

Why I Teach

By **Rachel Thoms**, *Strategic Communications*

The first 15 minutes of the school day are MacKenzie Drinan's ('17) favorite part of the day. As her middle schoolers arrive each morning, settle into their seats, and get situated for another day of learning, Drinan has the chance to catch up on her young pupils' lives.

"Are those new shoes?" "What'd you do last night?" "Are you feeling better?"

The conversation prompts might appear trivial on the surface. In fact, the questions aren't what's important; it's the fact that Drinan truly cares about the answers.

"I had no idea I would love these kids so much," said Drinan, who first had the revelation during her student teaching semester. "You feel a responsibility for the students, for their growth. Because you know them so well you see their hurts and strengths, and that makes you love them even more, which in turn makes you want to get to know them more."

Drinan has served as a middle school English teacher at Our Savior Lutheran School in Lansing, Michigan, since she graduated from Concordia University Ann Arbor in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and language arts.

Throughout the country, there are fewer and fewer individuals like Drinan. Enrollment in teacher-prep programs in colleges and universities nationwide has been declining for years. In Michigan alone, enrollment decreased by 66 percent between 2009 and 2016, according to a February 2019 study by Citizens Research Council of Michigan. Similar numbers reflect throughout the country.

Multiple factors play a role in this decline. One thing is clear: Classrooms need qualified

teachers to care for the next generation of leaders.

"Teaching is a very noble and rewarding profession. Most people can look back and attest that at least one teacher had a positive impact on them," said CUA School of Education Campus Dean Dr. Sandra Harris. "It's also a very demanding profession. Because of this, it's important for educators to recognize the profession is more than just a career; it's a calling."

Even early in her career, Drinan is feeling some of those rewards.

"Teaching is the most meaningful thing that I could imagine myself doing, and I get to do it every day. It's a blessing, and it's so cool to watch my students grow," said Drinan.

Drinan particularly enjoys integrating her passions with her daily lessons. As an English teacher who loves to read, she tracks all of the books read by the middle schoolers. In the first semester, the students read 1,000 books,

averaging 21 books per student. The goal for the end of the school year is 2,000, averaging 42 books per student.

"We are reading tons, we are reading all the time. It's important because the more we read the better we get at it. We improve fluency, write better, and understand more," said Drinan. "Reading teaches lessons that combat our culture of instant gratification and quick input. They have to work for it. I want them all to be lifelong readers."

As a worship leader during her time at Concordia, Drinan continues to share her love for guitar by teaching individual lessons every day after school. She also started a worship club that helps lead the school's morning devotions.

Drinan didn't necessarily expect that she would be a middle school teacher, but then God made it clear that's where He wanted her. She said she remembers reading a study that most people hold on the faith that they have as a 14-year-old.



CALLED TO THE CLASSROOM



MacKenzie Drinan ('17) teaches English and literature for 6-8th graders at Our Savior Lutheran School in Lansing, Mich.
Photo courtesy of Our Savior Lutheran School

"I said to myself, 'That's it. That's the time.' I knew that middle school was a prime age for faith growth, and I wanted to be a part of it. I also figured that I was patient enough for the quirks of that age, and so far I've endured them."

Drinan said that she was inspired to become a teacher because it allows her to be with the same kids every day, building connections with them and telling them about Jesus.

"My students have bad days, and so do I. Because we know each other and trust each other, we can forget the bad. God gives us grace, and we try to give each other grace, too," said Drinan. "God placed these kids in my life, in my room, for a purpose."

TRANSFORM INTO A LEADER AMONG LEADERS. LEARN MORE ABOUT CONCORDIA'S GRADUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT CUAA.EDU/EDUCATION AND JOIN US FOR THE 2020 SUMMER INSTITUTE WORKSHOPS. REGISTER TODAY! CUAA.EDU/SUMMER-INSTITUTE



DAVID KUSCH ('84)
ROCHESTER HILLS,
MICHIGAN

I became a teacher so that I could tell my students about the love of Jesus and because I love the subjects that I teach.



NATE LOUISIGNAU ('19)
EKALAKA, MONTANA

I see teaching in a public school as not just my calling, but as my mission field. There are so many students who don't have strong role models and I strive to be that role model for them.



RACHEL ABRAHAM ('04)
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN

I teach to instill a solid foundation in another generation of God's children!



SCOTT KAMMAN ('86)
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

I teach because I feel it is my God-given talent and calling, because I enjoy working with kids, and because I love to be able to share my faith through my teaching and music.



COURTNEY WERNER ('18)
WALTZ, MICHIGAN

I teach to help solidify the invitation that Christ offers in Matthew 19:14. Every child should feel they have a place of belonging where they are safe and loved. This is what God has called me to help do. My heart is filled each day when I see my students' sweet smiling faces!



DR. SANDRA HARRIS
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CAMPUS DEAN

Every profession is possible because of a teacher.

Why do you teach?

More alumni share their education inspiration at blog.cuaa.edu/why-i-teach.

We want to hear from you, too!

the *Formative* *Years*

*The architecture of
The Chapel of the Holy
Trinity is deliberate in its
intention for Concordia*

By **Kali Thiel**,
Strategic Communications

Photography by
Allie Milot ('21)
and Plum Media

Concordia University Ann Arbor may look a lot different than it did in 1962 when stakeholders broke ground on a brand-new campus at 4090 Geddes Road. Since the merger with the Wisconsin campus in 2013, the university has added more than a dozen new programs, undertaken significant facility renovations, and celebrated a student count beyond any enrollment record ever seen before in university history.

And yet much is still the same.

Concordia's inaugural building, The Chapel of the Holy Trinity, set the tone and function for the campus, and remains a powerful visual reminder of the university's focus today. Intentionally situated at the center of the main campus, the chapel rises to a height of 62 feet; its spire with a cross atop adds another 45 feet and can be seen from nearly every vantage on campus. The chapel's cornerstone bears a vital reminder: "That in all things Christ might have preeminence."

This foundational charge has had staying power for Concordia. CUAA students are testaments of that fact. While individuals from all walks of life and at all points in their faith journeys come to Concordia, time and again they leave with a deepened Christian worldview and greater appreciation for what it means to be a servant of Christ in their future vocations.





Becky ('20)

Becky (Sarver) McCracken had a list of “must-haves” when she began her college search. Any school that would give her the chance to play softball at the collegiate level would receive a first look, and she needed a school that offered a special education major with strong field experiences. Something near her boyfriend (now husband), Mackenzie, who was enrolled at the University of Michigan at the time, was icing on the cake. Not on her list: a faith-based school.

Nevertheless, Concordia checked all of her other boxes, and in 2016 she found herself recruited, enrolled, and ready to step foot on the Lutheran-rooted campus.

It’s not that Becky was turned off by religion. She simply never had anyone encourage it before. Even though he didn’t identify as an atheist, her father, in particular, would quickly shut down any conversations about God.

At Concordia, she became immersed in an entirely different culture. Her team regularly attended chapel, and her professors eagerly tackled subjects from a Christian worldview. Midway into her junior year, Becky attended Daily Chapel to fulfill an assignment for her requisite Christian Faith class. Campus Pastor Randy Duncan delivered the message that day. The Holy Spirit worked through Pastor

Duncan’s message to spark faith in Becky as he encouraged students to resist the urge to bear life’s burdens themselves.

“I remember him saying, ‘There’s a reason God is our Savior,’ and that really resonated with me. I’ve struggled with anxiety my whole life, and I remember thinking, ‘Wow, you’re right. I don’t have to put everything on myself,’” Becky said. “I walked out of chapel and texted my fiancé and said, ‘I think I want to start going to church.’”

Concordia staff members helped to connect Becky and Mackenzie with University Lutheran Chapel, a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation in Ann Arbor.

“It just kind of took off from there,” Becky said. “We felt like it was home. We wanted to express our faith and be welcomed into God’s family.”

Ahead of their July 20, 2019, wedding, Becky and Mackenzie were baptized at University Lutheran Chapel.

“It was the public expression and confirmation of my faith—connecting with God through the Holy Water and washing away of my sins,” Becky said. “I’m thankful to Concordia for helping me find my place among His people.”



It's hard not to root for Alex Hinojosa. In virtually everything he does, the stand-out CUAAscholar-athlete reflects the blue-collar work ethic and Christian values in which he was raised.

Already in his sophomore year, Alex has contributed significantly to the success of a young Cardinals football program. During his introductory year at CUAAs, he helped the team finish the season with a 10-3 record that included an NAIA Football Championship Series quarterfinal appearance. In his sophomore season, the likeable defensive lineman was named Defensive Player of the Week two weeks in a row, first by the Mid-States Football Association Mideast League and then by the National Christian College Athletic Association.

Yes, it's easy to cheer on a talented athlete with a good head on his shoulders, but his family, friends, and the Concordia community are rooting for Alex for an entirely new reason as of late: Alex has realized the call to become a Lutheran pastor.

It took a full year of testing the waters with various majors before he arrived at the pre-seminary track—first mathematics with the intent to become a civil engineer, then nursing, and then back to mathematics. The summer after his freshman year, Alex still felt lost. He reached out to Vice President of Administration Rev. Dr. Ryan Peterson and, after a heartfelt and honest conversation, Alex felt at peace.

"I felt this overwhelming sense of relief once the decision was made," Alex said. "It's kind of funny because everyone gets really, really

happy when they hear I'm going to become a pastor. They're all really enthusiastic about it."

Had he not been at Concordia, Alex's career trajectory likely would have looked much different.

"You get a different experience with your faith at Concordia because you always have that encouragement on you," Alex said. "Whatever I ended up doing, I know I would have been honoring God, but I'm so happy that Concordia did have that influence on me because not only is becoming a pastor God-pleasing, it's genuinely what I want to do with my life."

Photography by Ashley Kilgas



Rachel ('21)

Concordians regularly cite move-in day as one of their fondest times of the year. The excitement of the day is palpable as belongings are hauled into students' home-away-from-home, and parents' pride is put on full display. For most, move-in day brings the anticipation of good things to come.

For Rachel Olson, however, her sophomore move-in day was a stark reminder of what she had recently lost. Just months before her return to campus, her father, a pastor at First Lutheran Church in Charlotte, Michigan, tragically died in an auto accident. A distracted driver had run a four-way stop.

The loss upended Rachel's sense of security and identity, and forced her to reckon with her faith in a way she had never done before.

"I loved being a pastor's kid growing up. For so long, that was who I was," said Rachel, who will graduate in 2021 with her bachelor's in family life and minor in youth ministry. "This past semester was very tough, and I struggled a lot, but at the end of it God showed me that He's the only one who can provide me true security. My identity is in being a child of God."

Worship opportunities at Concordia, several of her professors, and a close-knit group of Christian friends at CUAA helped remind her of that truth time and again throughout the year.

"It's sometimes hard to praise when you're in the midst of the hardships, but it definitely focuses you on Christ," Rachel said, "and Concordia just kept putting those opportunities in front of me in the best way possible."

Even through the pain and wilderness of her grief, Rachel has been able to clearly see how God has used the results of the accident for His glory. Most notably, the woman involved in the crash has come to faith in Christ. And Rachel, with Concordia by her side, has begun to heal.

"Concordia is not just a place where I go to school," said Rachel. "I have brothers and sisters in Christ with me every day, and they share with me in my rejoicing and in my suffering. Concordia has been a place of safety."

INSPIRED DESIGN

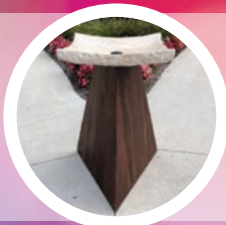
The Chapel of the Holy Trinity packs a walloping figurative punch. Woven into the fabric of the CUAAs campus' crown jewel is the symbolism of God's almighty provision, Christ's undeserved sacrifice, the Holy Spirit's sustaining presence—and how they ignite us to give glory through our studies, our work, our lives.



THE ARCHITECTURAL FORM OF THE CHAPEL The unique triangular shape, symbolic of the Holy Trinity, sets the chapel apart from other buildings. The north-facing plane provides a unifying axis that ties the principal elements of campus together, while the apex (which contains the altar) points symbolically outward toward the world ahead for the students. The interior is a single space, typifying the priesthood of all believers.



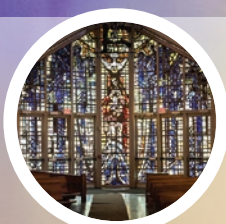
THE CHANCEL AREA The altar, pulpit, and lectern each bear a symbolic inscription: "IC XC NIKA (Jesus Christ Conquers)," the text of Psalm 85:8, and the text of John 14:23, respectively. The pulpit's missal stand features a burning bush (like Moses, God speaks to us through His Word and preaching), while the lectern features a ship, an early symbol of the Holy Christian Church (as the Church is like Noah's ark, a safe ship in life's storm).



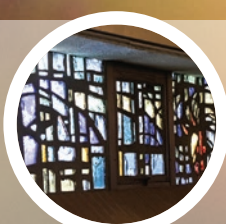
THE BAPTISMAL FONT Created by Nate Harris ('19) and commissioned by CUAAs Student Government Association, the newest addition to the chapel is typically placed in the center of the nave, where the aisles merge, to represent baptism's central part in all believers' faith journey. Harris says his goal was to incorporate the aesthetic of the chapel in the design and reflect the symbolism.



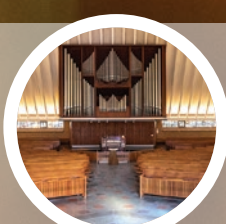
ALTAR AREA STAINED GLASS One of three scenes depicting the obedient Christ carrying out the ministry assigned by His heavenly father, the stained glass behind the altar shows the triumphant Lord clad in the raiment of His kingly, priestly, and prophetic offices. Christ is the one who ever lives to make intercession for those whom He has redeemed with His blood. In His hand He holds the scroll of the elect, the sum total of those whose names are written in the Book of Life.



EAST AND WEST ENTRANCE STAINED GLASS The east portal shows the obedient Christ in the moment of His baptism by John, while the west portal depicts the Great Commissioning. At commencement each year, CUAAs students symbolically enter via the east entrance and exit through the west to remind them of the Lord's command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."



CLERESTORY STAINED GLASS Throughout the chapel, the clerestory windows (the high, skinny glass) show the Liberal Arts in the service of the Church. The north clerestory windows present the fine arts, the east windows point to the social sciences, and the west windows honor the natural sciences. All of the stained glass was produced by the studio of Gabriel Loire of Chartres, France.



THE ORGAN The Schlicker Organ Company, Inc. of Buffalo, New York, built the 1967 organ, which consists of three manuals, four divisions, 34 stops, 46 ranks, and 2,525 pipes. The organ pipes rise dramatically to one of the roof planes, forming a striking counterpart to the chancel.



Worldly Wisdom

PROFESSOR SHARES
IMPORTANT LIFE LESSONS

By **Lisa Liljegren**, *Strategic Communications*

Professor Jorge Gonzalez brings tremendous experience to the classroom. The Harvard-educated business professional, who was born in Colombia and has held leadership positions at multinational companies and in government, is a beloved professor within the Haab School of Business at Concordia University Ann Arbor. In between the facts and figures, Gonzalez shares his personal stories, and he carefully curates case studies, videos, and texts in an effort to prepare his students to not only be successful leaders, but to be wise and humble people, as well.

“Even though he has so many students, he still tries to get to know each one individually,” said Esther Schulze. Schulze had him for five classes, and speaks about her professor with respect and appreciation. “Here’s this successful person who has done so many big things, but in class he’s this nice, soft-spoken professor who openly shares his personal failures and talks about how he’s still working to please God.”

Humility and honesty are trademark traits of the business professor who teaches courses in the areas of management, finance, international business, and economics. A knack for business was a gift that Gonzalez discovered while pursuing a different path.

“I share with my students that I failed two courses in engineering and that my failure helped me discover that my passion was in something else ... business. I remind them that each step in their journey, positive or negative, is an opportunity from God, and we have to take advantage of them.”

Gonzalez eventually obtained his degree in industrial engineering at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia, but by that time he already knew where he was going.

On his oldest brother’s encouragement, Gonzalez accepted a budget analyst position within the Colombian National Planning Department and pursued a Master of Economics degree at his alma mater. However, Harvard University lured him away before he completed his thesis. Gonzalez moved to Boston, Massachusetts, and earned his MBA from the Harvard Business School.

After Harvard, Gonzalez worked in several multinational organizations headquartered in Colombia and Mexico, and in the U.S. in Chicago, Illinois, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. He held positions ranging from corporate planning director, to director—finance and planning, before becoming a principal at Iberian American Associates. He and his wife Clara Ines have



A Harvard-educated business professional, Jorge Gonzalez is a favorite among CUAA students.

been married for 44 years, and have two grown daughters and three grandchildren.

During his corporate run, he taught college courses now and then, and enjoyed it so much he became a full-time professor at CUAA in 2008.

“I love teaching,” said Gonzalez. “The students keep me stimulated.”

There are many things Gonzalez imparts on his students (see sidebar), but the two main points he always comes back to are wisdom and humility.

“Wisdom is so much more important than intelligence. Wisdom comes over time and from experience, and is reflected in good decisions and sound judgement,” said Gonzalez. “You can learn a lot through books and classes, but it’s your mistakes and what you learn from them that will make you wise.”

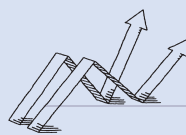
Sound advice from a humble man who pivoted his career after making mistakes in the classroom.

Learn more about Concordia’s Haab School of Business at cuaa.edu/business.

“I TELL MY STUDENTS ...”

JORGE GONZALEZ HAS A TALENT for dropping memorable little lessons and profoundly simple wisdom into his everyday conversations. Whether in the classroom or during a happenstance meeting on the sidewalk, Professor Gonzalez greets people by name and leaves them a little better than he found them.

A sampling of Professor Gonzalez’s advice:



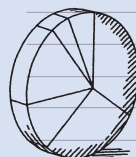
ON EDUCATION

“It’s not so important what you study, it’s what you can learn and how fast. If you exercise your brain, you can learn things more quickly.”

“Whatever you end up doing in life will probably be very different than you thought.”

“Your brain is like your body. You have to keep it fit.”

“I think it’s best to be as general as possible in your education. Work on your soft skills, learn to work in teams, strengthen your communication skills, and don’t be afraid of numbers.”

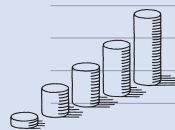


ON ECONOMICS

“Economics is not just a science. Everything in economics involves moral decisions. The market is best for making everybody better off, but when it doesn’t work for everybody you have to fix it.”

“God doesn’t deal in the aggregate like an accountant. He can see everything and will judge us for what we did for each individual not society as a whole. If you want to change the world you can do that one individual at a time.”

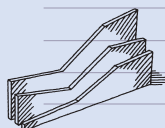
Regarding investments: “Choose your companies carefully. Use common sense, wisdom, and intelligence to avoid making foolish decisions. Don’t be part of the herd.”



ON FINANCE

“Finance is all about stewardship. You must use the resources that God gave you for His purposes.”

“It starts with money because money allows you to get the other resources you need.”



ON LIFE

“Novels and stories teach you about human nature. You need that to be a good manager.”

“Study history because it always repeats itself in one way or another.”

take five

Get to know one of our *uncommon* Concordians on campus, athletic training major **Julia Palushaj ('20)**

By **Rachel Thoms**, *Strategic Communications*



For Julia Palushaj ('20) the Concordia University Ann Arbor commencement ceremony on May 17, 2020 is a celebration of both firsts and lasts. Palushaj is the fifth and final member of this generation of her family to complete a degree at CUA—following in the footsteps of her older sister, Monica ('13), and three of her cousins: Lora Palushaj ('17), Maria Lulguraj ('18), and Nina Palushaj ('19).

But she is the first—ever—to complete a Master of Science in Athletic Training from CUA as a member of the first graduating cohort for the five-year dual degree program.

Learn about Palushaj's Concordia family legacy, some of the peaks and valleys of her collegiate experience, and the motivation behind her athletic training career choice.

1 What was it like to attend Concordia with so many family ties?

We're so close. They're like my best friends and my cousins all in one. We went to high school together, too, and then not only college together but also all playing on the soccer team. That was one of my favorite things: being on a team with my cousins and being a part of helping the soccer program to grow to what it is now.

2 What led you to study athletic training?

Speaking of soccer, I was still a little unsure about what I wanted to major in, plus athletic training was a new program at the time. But then I tore my ACL during pre-season of my junior year, and that was really hard. My athletic trainers had a huge impact on my recovery not only physically but also mentally.

Then, only a year and four months later, I tore my ACL again. I was devastated. I was already in the athletic training program at the time, but it was through that really rough period that I got to

experience the athlete side of injury and will be a better athletic trainer because of it.

3 Can you share more about your experience in the athletic training program?

Our facilities at the North Building are awesome, and we have so many tools to learn from. Our professors' knowledge is insane, and our program director is in the athletic training hall of fame. We have two more universities in town where we can go to get our clinical hours in addition to Concordia, which is a great advantage for us.

My favorite classes were probably palpatory anatomy, and orthopedic management and assessment.

4 What were some of your most memorable moments as a Concordia student?

Going on the Holy Land trip to Israel in January 2019 was life-changing. After that trip, I thought, "This is real." We saw things in the Bible where they happened, and it really opened by eyes and made my faith so much stronger. I read scripture now, which I never really did before; and I'm not afraid to pray in group settings, which I have no problem doing now. I had friends go that raved about it, and I thought that I probably wouldn't get a chance to do something like this again and really wanted to grow in my faith, too.

5 What should people who are unfamiliar with Concordia know about it?

People need to know that here it's such a close family place. Your professors' doors will always be open. You just walk in, and they say, "Have a seat, what do you need?" I think the caring aspect of everybody is huge. It's so easy to get the help that you need. Faith is first in everything, too, and that's really different from other places.

alumni notes

10s Jessica Hecht ('19) is engaged to Andrew Briggs ('15). Andrew proposed at Chapel Point on CUAA's campus. They will marry in August 2020. Jessica has a position as a sixth grade teacher at Trinity Lutheran in Utica, Michigan. ▼

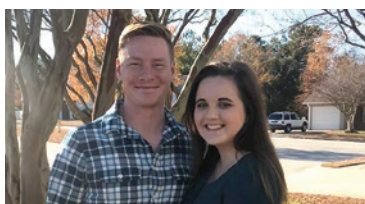


Sabrina Welch ('19) has launched her own furniture company, Kraken Creations Custom Handmade Furnishings, just months after graduating from Concordia with her degree in art. View her creations on Facebook: /Sabrina.Welch.18. Reach her at krakencreationshmf@gmail.com.

Sarah (Koch) Myers ('18) married Nicholas Myers on June 14, 2019. The two are teachers and live in Kendallville, Indiana. ▼



Amy (Bennett) Beffrey ('17) and husband, Trent Beffrey ('17), are living in North Carolina at Fort Bragg where Trent is stationed in the U.S. Army. Amy teaches middle school science. Together they have two dogs and are expecting a boy on June 25, 2020. ▼



Norman Cyr ('17) is a chemist and lab manager at Accurate Analytical Testing in Romulus, Michigan. ▼



Andrew Gardner ('16) graduated from Palmer College of Chiropractic in February 2020. Andrew and his wife, Tyler (Shepherd) Gardner ('18), reside in Davenport, Iowa, and Andrew's chiropractic practice is in Moline, Iowa. ▼



Karyn Darnton ('10) taught for a few years in the metro Detroit area and is now on a new career path in education. She works for the Greater Michigan Construction Academy (GMCA), ensuring that instructors and students are successful, and that the day-to-day operations run smoothly. ▼



00s Rev. Adam Barkley ('08) has been serving as pastor at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, since 2017. He and his wife, Sarah ('07), have five children together.

River Sounds

IN THE KEY OF A²

A free performance by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra on Concordia University Ann Arbor's campus

Saturday, June 6

4090 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Free A²SO Instrument Petting Zoo

8:00 p.m.
Concert

Select food and beverages available for purchase before the concert, or bring your own snacks to enjoy.

SPONSORED BY:



Announcements

UNTIL NEXT TIME

Out of an abundance of caution and concern for others throughout the coronavirus outbreak, Concordia University Ann Arbor made the decision to cancel or reschedule several of its spring events. For the latest information on events being hosted on campus, please check the CUAA upcoming events page at cuaa.edu/events.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE LATEST?

We'd love to stay in touch with you and share the latest news about what's happening at CUAA! Please take a moment to provide us with your current information; visit cuaa.edu/alumniupdates to fill out a simple form. And don't forget to follow us on Facebook: /CUAAAlumni, Instagram: /CUAnnArbor, or Twitter: @CUAA.



mission minded

Catherine Bolzman Lick ('68) combined her theology degree from CUAA with a career in nursing.

By **Rachel Thoms**,
Strategic Communications

Catherine Bolzman Lick ('68) has been around CUAA since its beginning: as one of the thousands in attendance at the cornerstone laying for The Chapel of the Holy Trinity in 1962, in fact. Decades after earning her associate degree in 1968, she remains just as invested in the institution, passing on the gift of a CUAA education to others by creating an endowment for nursing scholarships.

Even though she graduated from Concordia with a theology degree, Concordia also helped awaken in her a love for science through courses offered by Dr. Wilbur Rusch. Lick went on to earn her bachelor's degree in nursing and then was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, where she served as a nurse for five years on active duty. She then served 25 years in the Air Force Reserve, ultimately retiring in 2002 at the rank of colonel.

Lick's theology background, combined with her nursing acumen, later blossomed into a vocation as a parish nurse, a career she didn't even know existed until she saw an article for

a parish nursing retreat in an LCMS Michigan District publication.

"The spiritual aspects of care are so central in parish nursing," Lick said. "God knew that my theology background would prepare me for the many difficult situations I encountered when ministering to parishioners."

When Lick learned that Concordia would launch a School of Nursing in 2016, she was thrilled. She first toured the nursing program's home during her 50th class reunion. She has returned more times since, connecting with Dean Fenske, checking out ever-expanding new technologies, and observing cutting-edge class simulations and teaching methods.

"I pray that the light of Christ would shine through the Concordia nursing students in their work and that their faith is the motivation for their profession—that they don't see it as just a job, but as a ministry."

Read the full story at blog.cuaa.edu/mission-minded-Lick, and learn more about Concordia's School of Nursing at cuaa.edu/nursing.



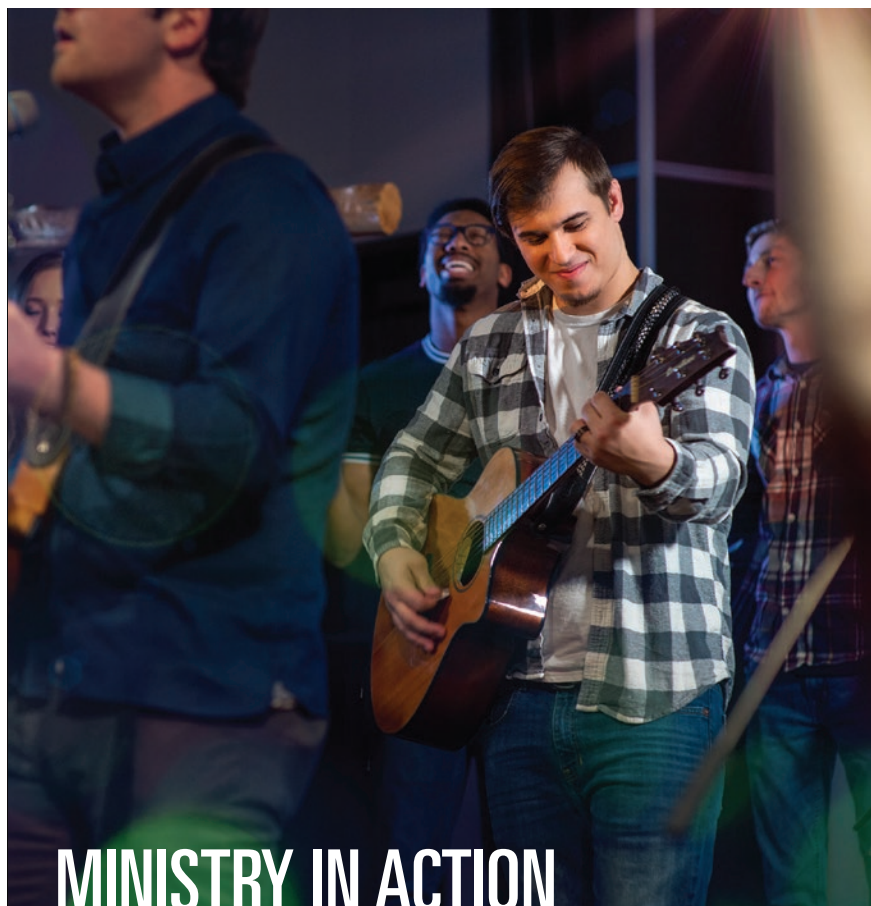
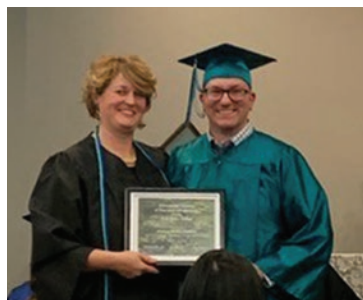
Christopher A. Jung ('04) was installed as senior pastor of St. Paul Community Lutheran Church in Pontiac, Michigan, on Jan. 5, 2020.

Rev. Matthew Peters ('03), pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Petoskey, Michigan, was one of four 2019 recipients of the prestigious Fr. John B. Zwiers Award. Given by the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools Board of Trustees, the award recognizes clergymen with a strong history of support for faith-based schools. ▼



Ruth Hessler Meyer ('00) recently established an online presence for her successful Christian fiction books. Learn more: ruthmeyerbooks.com.

'90s Rob Meyer-Kukan ('98) is currently enrolled in the four-year Naturopath program at the Naturopathic Institute of Therapies and Education in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. In November, Rob graduated from the first year of the program, earning the credential "Natural Health Educator" and rebranded his business, 7 Notes Natural Health. He continues to offer massage therapy, sound therapy, and natural health consultations in the new location, as well as classes, workshops, and community events. Learn more: robmeyerkukan.com. ▼



MINISTRY IN ACTION

Jonah Grimm ('20) is a student leader for CUA's Tuesday Night Worship. Photography by Plum Media



"What I learned at Concordia set me on a path that has now brought me to 48 years of pastoral ministry. I continue to be blessed by the experience I had at my alma mater."

—REV. DR. DENNIS GLICK ('65)

By **Jonah Grimm ('20)**, Student Contributor

Concordia University offers many great worship opportunities during the semester and throughout the week. One of my very favorites is Tuesday Night Worship, which we call TNW.

TNW is a weekly worship opportunity that starts at 10 p.m. on Tuesday nights and lasts for about 45 minutes. It's a time where students gather in prayer and praise to our gracious Lord. Each week we're blessed with a student-led worship team that leads us in song and the reading of God's Word.

As the coordinator of TNW this academic year, I'm blessed to see each week the impact that worship has on the attitude of every person who walks into the room. During my freshman year at Concordia, I attended TNW for the first time during the second week of classes, and it completely changed my life.

As the community of Concordia sang and prayed, I broke down in tears because I had never seen a room filled with so much of God's good grace and love, and I immediately felt God calling me to lead people in praise to Him through song. Having never touched music before, I switched my major from business to worship arts. Now, four years later, I'm blessed with the role of TNW coordinator. What a life change!

Each week we end with the theme blessing for the school year—this year's is "Embraced"—and students can approach their busy schedules and stress with the reminder that they're *embraced and forgiven in the arms of the Father*. So if you're a Concordia student and have never heard of TNW, or maybe you've been hesitant to come, please check it out. God may just use it to change your life or draw you closer to Him.



IN THE CHURCH

Mandi Ressler ('19) nurtures children's faith all the way in South Africa. She's completing her family life internship at Saint Peter Christian College in Middelburg. Photo courtesy of Mandi Ressler



grad on the go

Caleb Mims ('15) has big goals for his public affairs career. Photography by Kelly Cieslak ('13)

By **Rachel Thoms**,
Strategic Communications

Making connections comes naturally for Caleb Mims ('15).

Since graduating from Concordia University Ann Arbor with a bachelor's degree in communications, Mims has worked for the State of Michigan as an eligibility specialist, connecting people in need with the applicable public assistance programs.

Mims has big goals for his public affairs career and is applying lessons he learned as a Concordia student to his career trajectory.

"One of the biggest blessings of Concordia is the friendships that I made and the friendships that I still have," said Mims, who was a member of both the CUAA football and track and field teams, and participated in Athletes in Action. "I had friends from many diverse backgrounds, both low-income and high-income families, different races and personalities, which taught me a lot about myself but also how to respect the people around me, be patient with them, and understand their point of view."

Mims recently earned a Master of Arts in Public Relations & Organizational Communication from Wayne State University, motivated by his desire to continue to work for the government and use his talents to speak on behalf of people and organizations that need advocacy.

'80s **Paula Myers ('87)** was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2020 Distinguished Lutheran Middle School Teacher Award. She teaches at Trinity Lutheran School in Utica, Michigan. During her 33 years of teaching, she has also served Michigan Lutheran schools in Saginaw and Port Huron. ▼



Rev. Joel Sarrault ('84), pastor at St. John's Lutheran in Adrian, Michigan, received a grant administered by Christian Theological Seminary toward a four-month sabbatical in 2020. Joel and his wife, **Dawn (Goodrich, '84)**, will spend June through September relaxing, writing, fishing, visiting apiaries at congregations in the Midwest, and on a trans-Canadian trip.

Mims attributes much of his success to the value of mentorship. He's had several of them—from an adjunct instructor at CUAA who opened his eyes to career opportunities in his field to a professor in his graduate degree program who connected him to his current mentor, a chief of staff for the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C.

"It's important for me to have mentors in the public affairs realm who are also strong in their faith," said Mims. "Faith is always in the back of my head, while also being front and center. I felt that way at Concordia, too, and often thought, 'I really feel like I'm supposed to be here' because of how Concordia kept me on track spiritually."

Mims encourages current Concordia students to not be afraid to ask professors questions and seek their guidance with career questions, to get involved with community organizations and causes that they are passionate about, and to not underestimate the power of internships.

"Most of all, take advantage of your close connections. Connect with the people you see every day on campus, engage in conversation, get to know them. You never know how your relationships might be helpful in the future."



Jim Geyer ('73) is a longtime meteorologist for WLNS-TV, which broadcasts to the Lansing, Michigan, area. Photo courtesy of Jim Geyer

By **Lisa Liljegren**,
Strategic Communications

Jim Geyer ('73) always had a thing for weather. For as long as he can remember, the Michigan native was captivated by nature's extreme and mercurial conditions that are unique to the Midwest. Yet when it became time for Geyer to make college decisions, he chose to follow in the footsteps of his parents and older brother and enrolled at Concordia University Ann Arbor to become a Lutheran educator.

"I have so many fond memories at Concordia," recalled Geyer. "It was the right place for me because it straightened me out, and helped me figure out who I was and what I wanted to do." What he wanted to do, he realized, was forecast the weather. Geyer explained that he tried to become a teacher but "was called in a different direction."

Geyer earned an associate degree from CUAA and, soon after, his Bachelor of Science in atmospheric and oceanic science from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Within months, he was hired as a meteorologist doing weather forecasts for several radio stations, then moved to television, and is now at a local station as a beloved and trusted forecaster in the Lansing area; all adding up to over 40 years.

He loves his job, and it shows in the genuine smile on his face and in the humor that he brings to the set

Joy McLaughlin ('83) now works as event coordinator for a conference center's food service company and has become a volunteer ambassador for Dogs for Better Lives.

'70s **Jim Wonnacott ('76)** has worked as a chaplain and manager of spiritual care at Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk, Nebraska, for the past 15 years, and volunteers as a member of Nebraska Critical Incident Stress Management. He and his wife, Mary Jo, enjoy bicycling. They have been blessed with six children, 14 grandkids, and, this past year, their first great-granddaughter. ▼



every day. But Geyer is quick to point out that he takes very seriously his responsibility to get the forecast right because "the good Lord gives us a new day every day, and it's my job to figure out what it is."

While he isn't a teacher, his Lutheran roots and Concordia education remain an important part of his life. Geyer and his wife of nearly 40 years, Jane Orewiler, live in the Flint area and are active members of St. Paul Lutheran Church. Geyer also enjoys the youth outreach that his television position affords him and frequently volunteers in various classrooms.

In honor of his father who taught in Lutheran schools for 43 years, the Geyer family established the Harold J. Geyer Scholarship endowment fund at CUAA to help support a student interested in becoming a Lutheran teacher.

Concordia honored Geyer with an Outstanding Alumnus award in 1996.

To learn more about opportunities to support Concordia University Ann Arbor visit cuaa.edu/give or contact Rev. Dr. Roy Peterson at 262-243-4533.

'60s Rev. Dr. Doug Janetzke ('69)

and his wife, Marguerite, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 28, 2020 and currently reside in Midland, Michigan. ▼



Michael Wyss ('68) received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM). The award recognizes the critical roles mentors play outside of the traditional classroom setting in the academic and professional development of the future science, technology, engineering, and math U.S. and worldwide workforce. Michael is a Professor of Medicine and directs two centers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and also serves as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Birmingham.

Advancing the mission



"There are so many things I loved about Concordia, but the dorm devotions each night were really special to me. We prayed together, sang together, read the Bible together, and encouraged each other. My friendships that I made at Concordia have been lifelong friendships. Praise God!"

—REV. PAUL APPOLD ('84)



None of us knows what the future holds, especially in light of this year's pandemic. Yet despite the very real concerns that this global epidemic has caused, I admit that I am optimistic about the future. There are two reasons that inform this optimism. The first is a trust in God and His care for us no matter what may be happening in the world around us. The One who gave His Son for us will certainly not abandon us. We have every reason to remain hopeful knowing that God is with us.

The second reason for this optimism about our future comes from the students, alumni, and friends of Concordia whom I know. What an amazing group. Their energy, joy, and love for our mission is indeed inspiring. While we often hear and read about young people abandoning the church, the faith that I see in so many Concordians reminds me that the Lord's Church will endure until Jesus returns. In times of crisis, the Church is often at its best.

Students come to Concordia to receive a great education and to deepen their faith. None of them though would have ever anticipated what that would look like this year. Following the Spring Break, students started attending class virtually, that is, online, because of the corona virus outbreak. While this was a significant change for students and their instructors, both rose to the occasion and the Concordia mission of developing students in mind, body, and spirit, for service to Christ in the Church and the world continued. Not even Covid-19 could stop the Lord's mission from being live out at Concordia!

But while the mission continues, the economic impact on Concordia has been significant. Because students were not able to continue living on campus, it was only right and proper that they be compensated for unused services. This has created a significant and unexpected funding gap of over \$2 million.

Even in the face of this shortfall, we remain grateful and blessed that alumni and friends who care deeply about seeing the Concordia mission continue strong, have stepped forward to help us address this financial need. If you have not already done so, we ask that you prayerfully consider standing with us during these challenging days. You can help us fill the gap with your gift at www.cuw.edu/give. On behalf of our students and faculty, we all thank you.



Alumni spanning the decades turned out for Homecoming 2019. Save the date for this year's festivities: Homecoming 2020 will take place Oct. 10!

HAVE YOU HAD A SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENT OR EXCITING ACHIEVEMENT THAT YOU WANT US TO INCLUDE IN THE NEXT ARBOR LIGHT? PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION AT CUAA.EDU/ALUMNIUPDATE. PHOTOS MAY BE SHARED, AS WELL. PLEASE SEND A HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGE, IF POSSIBLE.



REV. DR. ROY PETERSON
President, Concordia University Foundation



“I’M SO THANKFUL TO BE ABLE TO PREPARE FOR THE SEMINARY AT CUA. I’VE BEEN INCREDIBLY BLESSED BY THE PROFESSORS AND FRIENDS I’VE MET HERE. DONORS LIKE RUTH MADE THAT POSSIBLE FOR ME.”

Logan ('22),
Pre-Seminary

Giving just got personal

WHAT IS ADOPT-A-STUDENT?

You will be matched to a student who will benefit directly from your gift. The student will send you a personal letter, sharing their progress, challenges, and joys of life at CUA. This is a partnership that, by God’s grace, helps students overcome financial limitations so they can attend Concordia.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

With a gift of \$1,000 or more, you can change the life of one of our students. You will fill out a simple form that allows you to specify certain preferences such as major, grade point average, or year in college. Concordia then selects a student for you who has a demonstrated need and who matches your giving specifications.

“OUR FAMILY HAS BEEN RICHLY BLESSED BY THE TEACHING AND DEDICATION OF LUTHERAN TEACHERS AND PASTORS. KNOWING THE NEED FOR LUTHERAN TEACHERS AND PASTORS, WE HOPE TO BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO STUDENTS ENTERING CHURCH WORK FIELDS.”

Ruth, Chris, and John
Adopt-a-Student donors

Adopt-a-Student *Today*

Gifts may be made online, over the phone, or via mail.
Contact the Office of Advancement to get started: cuaa.advancement@cuaa.edu or 734-995-7317.



STOP BY AND SEE US
this Summer!

THE BEST WAY TO DECIDE IF CONCORDIA
IS RIGHT FOR YOU IS TO SEE IT IN PERSON

PERSONALIZED VISITS

Any day Monday through Friday, all summer long

- Customize your experience
- Meet professors, tour the campus, chat with a few current students—you decide!

*Schedule your
visit today:*

cuaa.edu/visit