

## Section 10 – Report of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary



### **WATERLOO LUTHERAN SEMINARY REPORT TO EASTERN SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2012**

#### **Report from the Chairperson of the WLS Board of Governors**

From October 2010 to October 2011 the Seminary Community was busy celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Eastern Synod. At the Seminary there were a number of exciting events including the play “Remembering for the Future,” a joint meeting of the Boards of Governors of the Seminary and Wilfrid Laurier University, the dedication of a plaque along the Heritage Walk, a special program honouring Dr. Leopold’s life and music, an art exhibit, a study tour to Germany to discover our Reformation roots, and a gala party, to name a few.

Along with all of the celebrating, we accomplished a lot. During the past biennium, the Board took the following actions:

1. A “Future Directions Task Group” was established to examine possibilities for the rejuvenation and/or development of our property.
2. A resolution was passed setting broad parameters for the development of the property including the imperative of respecting the heritage and history of WLS as well as its mission, vision and values.
3. Sabbaticals were approved for Dr. Allen Jorgenson, Dr. David Jacobsen and Dr. Kristine Lund.
4. Rev. Dr. David Pfrimmer’s contract as Principal-Dean was renewed for five years, ending April, 2015. Dr. Pfrimmer was commended by the Board for his outstanding leadership as an administrator, teacher and pastor.
5. Sheila Hamilton was appointed to the Wilfrid Laurier Board of Governors as a Seminary representative.
6. The WLS constitution and by-laws were changed making Board Membership a process of appointment by the Eastern Synod Council, rather than by election.
7. Policies were adopted governing on-line or web-based meetings of the Board, as well as enabling it to pass motions by email. The May 2011 Board Meeting took place by video-conference.
8. With regret, but also good wishes for his future, The Board said farewell to Dr. David Jacobsen who has accepted a position at Boston University. A Search Committee was appointed to fill the vacancy and also to select a new faculty member to lead the new undergraduate program. At the time of the writing of this report, both searches are underway.
9. At its fall, 2011 meeting, Board Members engaged in a day of strategic planning. A new three-year plan will be before the Board at its March 2012 meeting.

The Board has encouraged and supported the faculty and staff as the graduate programs have been redesigned and renamed. We are also excited about the new undergraduate program, Christian Studies and Global Citizenship.

During the past two years we have said good-bye to Board Members, Marianne Thornton and Franklin Famme, with thanks for their years of service. We welcome Darryl Huras, Rod Kruger and Bishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada as new members. Thanks goes to all of the Board Members and especially to Darryl Huras, our new Treasurer, Kevin Baglole who continues as Vice Chairperson and David Peirson who continues as Secretary. Not to be forgotten is Rev. Dr. David Pfrimmer, the Principal-Dean. His vision, wisdom, integrity and engaging friendliness have been on-going gifts to the Seminary.

The Women's Auxiliary continues to provide generous service to the Seminary Community by keeping the building and grounds looking beautiful and appropriately decorated for each season. They have donated new projection equipment for the classrooms, hosted a number of receptions and continued their practice of providing bursaries and lovely quilts to M.Div. students. We appreciate the faithful and thoughtful support they have offered over the years.

The Board of Governors owes a debt of gratitude to many people who share in the ministry of the Seminary. WLS could not continue its work without the commitment of our Bishop, the Synod Council and the members of the Eastern Synod who have provided support and encouragement in so many ways. The faculty and staff of the Seminary deliver excellence in both their teaching and care for our students. The continuing upward trend of enrollment is evidence of their skill, dedication and enthusiasm. The students make the Seminary come alive and their formation as leaders in ministry is our purpose. The Board appreciates the commitment and hard work of all these people, and we extend to each one of you our heartfelt thanks.

It is truly my privilege to be serving as Chairperson at this time and in this context. We have an exciting future ahead of us as God leads us into new ways to be in mission for others.

Marge Watters Knebel, Chairperson  
Board of Governors

## Report from the Principal-Dean

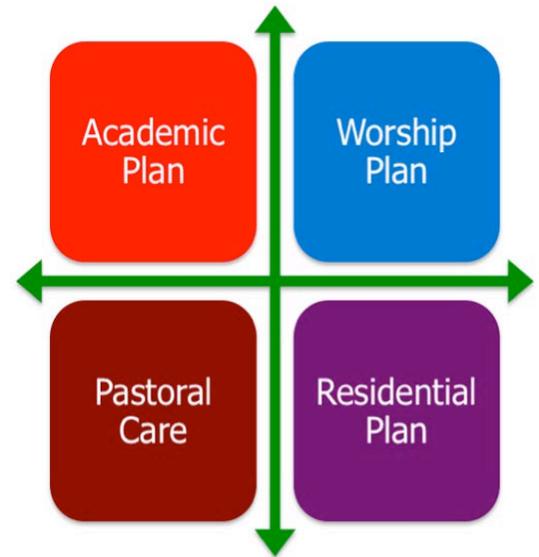
### Introduction

The Centennial celebrations in 2010-2011 provided an important moment in the life and mission of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. Founded in 1911 with four students and one faculty member in a house on Albert Street, WLS has come a long way. The Centennial was an opportunity to honour our forbearers in the Eastern Synod, at WLU and the Seminary for their commitment, hard work and creative collective imagination. We are grateful for many who participated and made 2011 such a special occasion. The celebration began with a gala opening of *Remembering for the Future*, a wonderful play written and directed by Dr. Leslie O'Dell. Thirty six people participated in our Study Tour to Germany led by Dr. Robert Kelly in April 2011. We are grateful for the wonderful hospitality of the people of Lunenburg County who hosted Luther Hostel in June 2011. The festivities concluded with a performance of the Bach Cantata "A Mighty Fortress" on October 23, 2011. I want to thank Debbie Lou Ludolph, Karen Kuhnert and Karen Gastmeier for their commitment and dedication to making these events such a memorable experience for us all.

"Remembering for the Future," however, was more than a unifying theme for the Seminary festivities during this past year. In many ways it became hermeneutic for WLS in discerning a renewed future "in mission with others" - church, Laurier, community, and the public - in inspiring lives of leadership and purpose in the church and in the world through post-secondary education. Over the course of the year we had the opportunity to recognize many who exemplified leadership. Bishop Michael Pryse was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity and ELCIC Bishop Susan Johnson along with other WLS graduates were recognized among the 100 Alumni of Distinction.

During the past two years the Board and faculty at the Seminary were keenly mindful of the many changes and challenges in the current context in which post-secondary educational institutions are charting their future. Together they have been engaged in ongoing discussions with stakeholders (e.g. Synod Council, Laurier senior administration and faculty, partner organizations, Lutheran Campus Ministry, and others) in considering the future of WLS. In response the Board has developed a *Mission Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This plan includes four basic elements that will help WLS reinvent itself and chart a path for the future.

Essentially there are four elements to the Mission Plan; the Academic Plan, the Worship Plan, a Pastoral Care Plan, and a Student Residential Plan.



### The Academic Plan

Over the past two years, WLS has reorganized its graduate degrees. The primary goal was to increase the flexibility the degree offerings and to enable them to integrate more easily with other post-graduate degree offerings in the Graduate Faculty at Laurier. WLS now offers a Masters Degree in Theology in two streams (Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy as well as Christian Studies). WLS has also begun a second field for its Doctor of Ministry in the area of Pastoral Leadership. In

2010, WLS received approval from the then Ontario Council for Graduate Studies to make these changes.

WLS continues to offer a contextual and non-contextual stream in its Master of Divinity program. In June 2012, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) will be approving new standards for the Master of Divinity degree. The Principal-Dean has participated in the ELCA/ELCIC seminaries discussions about possible changes in the curriculum that will arise from these new standards. This past year Dr. David Jacobsen accepted a new position at Boston University creating a vacancy in our faculty. David made an important contribution through his teaching and research in homiletics over the past 15 years at WLS. While we were sorry to see David move on, we were all delighted to see his work and contribution in the field of homiletics recognized through the appointment to such an internationally renowned school. While this was an important opportunity for David, it was also an important opportunity for WLS to rethink our faculty complement. A faculty search resulted in the WLS Board appointment of Dr. Mark Harris to the position of Assistant Professor of Functional Theology and Director for Leadership in Ministry effective July 1, 2012. We are delighted to welcome Mark to the WLS faculty.

At the April 2011 WLU Senate meeting, WLS was given approval for a new undergraduate program in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship. This is an exciting development. The aim of this program is to help encourage a greater sense of vocation for that pursuing university education in a variety of fields. Students will now be able to apply for admission to this program through WLU and take it in conjunction with other programs or other courses. WLS is in the process of organizing and implementing this new programs and hiring an additional faculty to support this initiative.

WLS remains deeply committed to Continuing Education for clergy, lay people and other professionals. Luther Hostel and the Marvyn Dubrick lectures has been a centrepiece of the continuing education efforts of WLS. WLS in partnership with the Synod and Laurier's Learning Service is exploring how the continuing education program at WLS might be expanded and broadened.

## **The Worship Plan**

Waterloo Lutheran Seminary is an academic theological community of learning and preparation. Central to that purpose, WLS is a worshipping community. There has been renewed interest in exploring new ventures in worship, music and the arts. Under the leadership of Debbie Lou Ludolph, the Kanata Centre continues to offer a range of opportunities and events (e.g. Sing Fires of Justice, Art and Vespers, Lenten Lunches etc.) to participate and develop new approaches to worship, to learn and celebrate “global song” (hymnody) from the churches from the Global South and North and to nurture and showcase local artists. Inshallah, the Seminary choir, has grown to over one hundred members from the Seminary, the university, and the wider community.

Building on this experience, WLS is exploring how it might become an Alternative Worshipping Community that supports local congregations, furthers these creative activities and reaches out to the university community.

## **A Student Residential Plan**

A WLS implements a new undergraduate program and recognizing the shortage of residence on campus, the Seminary is looking at ways to help provide what is called a “Living Learning Community” for students on campus. Students in our programs would learn in class together and live together. The University is already using this model in many programs. WLS in cooperation with the University would look to how we might create residential learning facilities that would afford this opportunity for students in the Christian Studies and Global Citizenship program, for graduate students, and students in other programs.

## **A Pastoral Care Plan**

There is a growing need for counselling services for university students. University counselling programs are being overwhelmed with requests for services. As well, Waterloo is currently underserved by counselling services. As enrollment continues to grow in counselling programs at WLS, consideration is being given to developing a teaching counselling centre that would help meet this need for services and provide a place for the supervised training of professionals in spiritual care and psychotherapy. The Province of Ontario has established a new College of Psychotherapy. Dr. Tom O'Connor was appointed by the government to serve on the Transitional Council that is developing this new Council. Those wishing to provide counselling services to the general public will be required to be accredited by this new College. Such a teaching centre would provide a leading edge centre that could help both the community and students requiring such an experience for accreditation.

## A Master Plan

In considering the implementation of this *Mission Plan*, it was apparent to the Board that consideration also needed to be given to the state of the current facilities. Would our current building be able to support this direction? At minimum extensive and expensive renovations would need to be made just to address the approximately \$1.5 million in deferred maintenance needs on the current building.

In 2011, the Board appointed a Taskforce on Development with representatives from the Seminary Board of Governors, the Seminary faculty, Wilfrid Laurier University, and other stakeholders to consider what other options were possible on the current property. At its meeting in March 2012, the Board approved a Master Plan developed by the IBI Group for how the Seminary might exercise greater stewardship for the three and a half acre property that the Seminary owns as it pursues this mission in higher education. On behalf of the Seminary, I want to express our appreciation to all those who served and participated in the process of developing this comprehensive plan. It was a vibrant and dynamic group of people who together captured the potential and excitement of the possibilities.

As with any plan of this nature, circumstances and events that were unforeseen will continue to shape and reshape the plan. Nevertheless taken together with the *Mission Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, this *Master Plan* offers a roadmap for the future for Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

## Enrollment

Enrollment at WLS has grown by 70% since 2005 to a total of 136 full and part-time students (89 FTE). Most of the increase has come in our counselling programs. Growth in the Master of Divinity program has remained relatively flat as the corresponding chart indicates. This reflects the worrying trend across all ATS as the “peer average” in the corresponding chart illustrates.

Recruitment of new students remains a

continuing priority. We have been actively promoting our counselling programs. These programs are attracting students to such an extent that our program is now a competitive program whereby we do not provide offers of study to all applicants. Our undergraduate program will take some time to grow and may help encourage graduate theological study. Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the stagnant interest of prospective students in the MDiv program. We also are concerned about the continuing education of clergy.

The following chart provides an overview of enrollment during the past biennium.

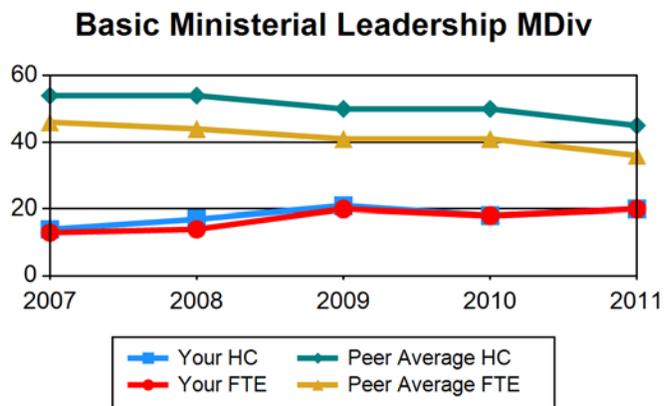
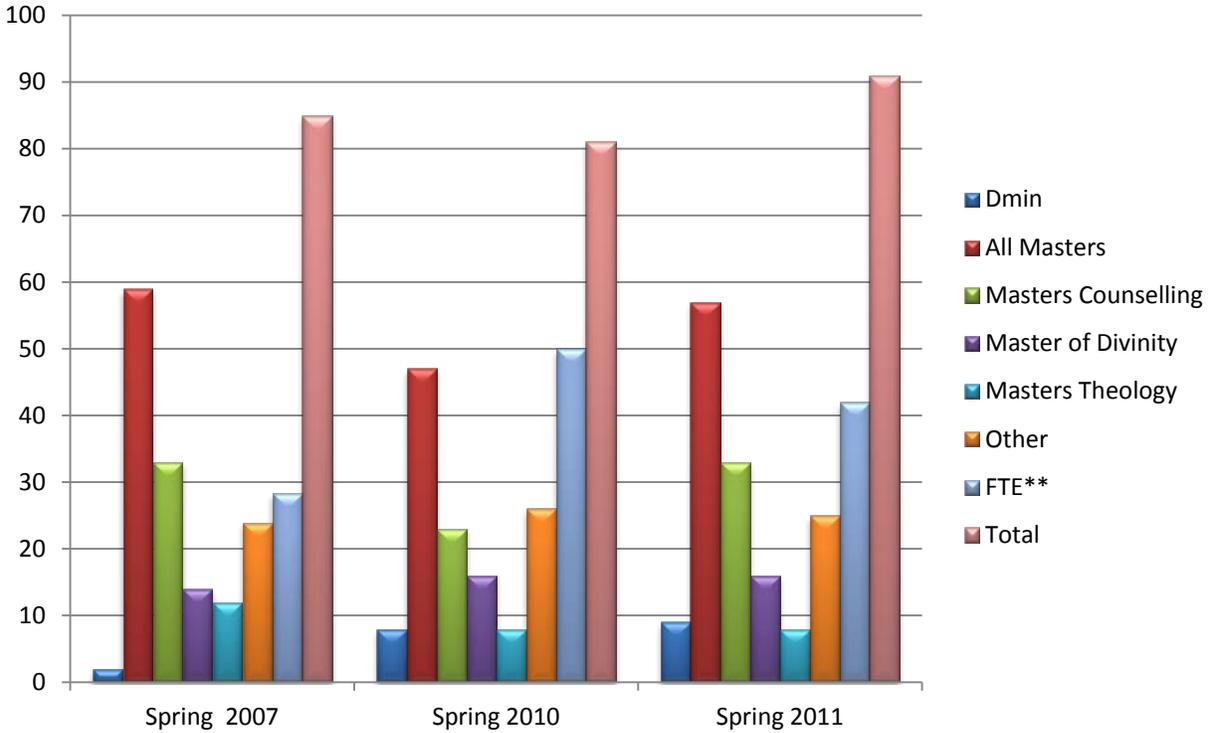


Figure 2 Master of Divinity Growth Compared with Peer Schools



WLS remains a small but growing school. We are optimistic about attracting new students. Given our ecumenical and multifaith character, WLS has a reputation for being a wonderful community in which to study. Our Spring-Summer term in 2011 has as many students registered as in the Winter Term. We hope that you will help us by encouraging students to discover what WLS has to offer for their life's work.

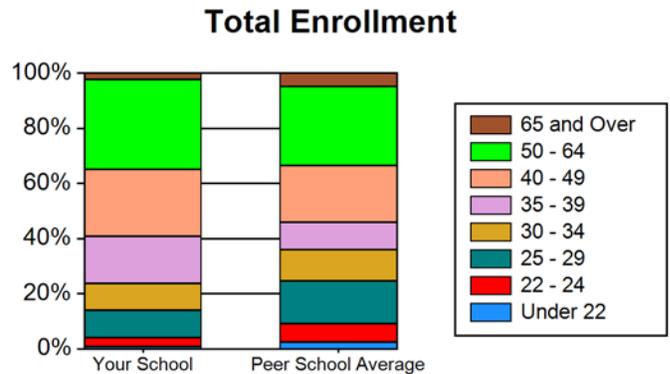


Figure 3 WLS Student Body Compared to Peer Schools

**Financial Stability**

Financial stability remains an important goal for WLS. As you will see in the attached audited financial statements, WLS has been demonstrating stronger fiscal responsibility and generating modest surpluses over the past few years. The economic meltdown in 2008 was a serious challenge to this objective. We have had to make up the negative impact on both our operating income and endowments, and are working on eliminating the accrued deficit as represented as the "Unrestricted net assets" in the financial statements. Implementing our Academic Plan as part of our broader *Strategic Mission Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* does requires some strategic investment to increase our academic capacity. This means that WLS will be investing some resources in one new faculty position for the undergraduate program. Likewise there may be some additional start-up expenses. We are also looking to increase of faculty capacity in the counselling program. This will

involve working with our community partners in creative ways. But these are investments to help reposition WLS for the future.

WLS also continues to have ongoing structural issues with its current Pension and Post-Retirement Benefits. Markets have not been kind to pension plans and university plans in particular. The Board continues to address these ongoing concerns and is considering ways to address these structural problems.

## **Partnerships**

WLS continues to develop partnerships with organizations and institutions important to our mission. WLS remains an affiliate member school of the Toronto School of Theology (TST) consortium. TST is currently undertaking a restructuring of its governance structure. WLS students do enjoy the academic privilege of taking courses at TST schools.

WLS has had a long standing partnership with the St. Joseph's Health System in Hamilton and Kitchener (St. Mary's). Tom O'Connor continues to teach a course as part of their Residency Program.

WLS has continues to work with the Grey-Bruce Health Services and the churches in Owen Sound. We are very grateful for a grant from Lutheran Outreach Ministries in Owen Sound that has made possible the continuation of the WLS programs for pastors and lay people. We are experimenting with other opportunities to provide educational experiences in this region.

WLS is developing an agreement with the Grand River Hospital. This agreement will enable the Seminary to hire an additional faculty person. This person will teach two courses at WLS. The remainder of the time, this person will provide chaplaincy services. Students will be placed at the Freeport location and some additional programming may be developed.

WLS has placed students at Trinity Village for the past four years. Students have appreciated this opportunity. WLS is also in discussion about an arrangement similar to Freeport for Trinity Village.

## WLS Faculty

**Brice Balmer** chaired the Integrated Drugs Strategy taskforce for the Waterloo Region for the past two years; the strategy is now approved as the regional approach to enforcement, prevention, education, harm reduction, recovery, and rehabilitation. Currently Brice is on the steering committee for Interfaith Grand River and is the liaison person between seminary and Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition. He is on a regional government taskforce looking at an approach to poverty reduction with many regional services involved.

**Tim Hegedus** represents the ELCIC on the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation, the National Muslim Christian Liaison Committee, and the Canadian Council of Churches Interfaith Reference Group. At WLS he has developed a new credit course on the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). For the past three years he has helped to organize the "Abrahmic Faiths Forum" series at WLS, which has been very well received by the community. In 2010 Tim received training as a facilitator in "Scriptural Reasoning" (a process of reading Scriptures of the three Abrahamic faiths) and began a Scriptural Reasoning group at WLS in 2011. Tim served as theologian in residence at the Theological Institute of the Niagara Frontier Conference of the Upper New York Synod of the ELCA in 2010. He published an article in Biblical Theology Bulletin and has articles forthcoming in the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Ancient History. He served as Bible Study leader at Luther Hostel (held in the Atlantic Conference) in June, 2011, and also at the Seaway Cluster Pastors' Retreat at Camp Lutherlyn in November, 2011. Tim arranged "Meeting our Muslim Neighbours" events for the London Conference at St John's, Aylmer, and also at Christ, Waterloo. He led adult education forums at Trinity, New Hamburg, St Paul's, Bridgeport, St Mark's, Kitchener, and Christ, Waterloo, and has preached at St Mark's, Kitchener, Christ, Waterloo, and Redeemer, London. Tim serves as president of the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies and was elected to the Board of the Canadian Friends of the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem. He co-led the WLS Study Tour to Turkey with Brice Balmer in April, 2012. He is co-editor of the Lutheran theological journal Consensus which is now available online at <http://www.consensusjournal.ca/>

**Allen G. Jorgenson** serves as Assistant Dean and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology. Allen sits on the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission and the Examining Committee of the Eastern Synod. Allen received a Lilly Theological Scholar's Grant from the Association of Theological Schools for his sabbatical project entitled "Taking Space Seriously: Luther, Schleiermacher and Indigenous Insights." Recent publications include "Awe and Expectation: On Being Stewards of the Gospel" (Wipf and Stock, 2010), translation with Iain G Nicol of Friedrich Schleiermacher's "On Election" (Westminster John Knox, 2012), article "The Great Commission" in Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception (De Gruyter, 2012) and a Book Review on William Cavanaugh's The Migration of the Holy for Dialogue. Allen will also present a paper entitled "Luther on Reserve: Reading the 'Torgau Sermon on Christ's Descent into Hell and Resurrection'" at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL at the Lutherrenaissance Conference April 12-14. Allen is a member at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Kitchener.

In the past two years, **Debbie Lou Ludolph** has been involved in planning worship throughout the academic year for Keffer Chapel, with the cooperation of faculty, students, local clergy and ecumenical guests. In addition to worship throughout the week, each year she planned Opening and Closing worship at the seminary and a global carol sing, as well as Luther Hostel 2010 worship, and the WLU Homecoming Service. Debbie Lou taught courses at WLS in Worship & Global Song, and co-taught courses in Theology & Song, and Worship & Pastoral Care. As Director of the Kanata Centre for Worship and Global Song, Debbie Lou coordinated and led events in the wider community, including Sing Fires of Justice (raising money for Kairos and Pathways for Education),

Art and Vespers (local artists and musicians), and the Lenten Lunch conversations (series of presentations centred on Worship and Mission, and Worship and Pastoral Care). Debbie Lou directed Inshallah, the seminary's global song choir which has grown to involve over 100 singers, which raised money and awareness for CLWR, local downtown ministries and women's shelters, and inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue. Inshallah also travelled to Eastern Synod conferences in London and Georgian Bay to do workshops on global song and lead services. Debbie Lou was the chair of the WLS/Eastern Synod Anniversary committee, produced the Anniversary play and DVD, secured funding for the Leupold Legacy event, served on the committee and hosted Amy Fagin in a joint Inshallah/WLU Beyond Genocide evening, and coordinated the team that planned the Anniversary Closing Service. Debbie Lou was the presenter at Bishop retreats for clergy in the Atlantic and Northern conferences, as well as the Synodical Lay Retreat and workshop leader at Luther Hostel 2011. She presented the work of Sing Fires of Justice at the Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium in St John's, Newfoundland in July, 2011.

**Kristine Lund** serves as the Assistant Principal with primary responsibilities for the Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy degree programs and Contextual Ministry placements. She presented the early results from her research on the Impact of Professional Ethics Education on Clinical Practice at the CAPPE National Convention in 2011. She has had a sermon published in Consensus. Kristine has made presentations on Worship and Pastoral Care, Lay Pastoral Care, Leading for Tomorrow and Forgiveness.

**Tom O'Connor** had an article accepted by Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy on spiritual reflection by non-chaplaincy health care staff. Tom continues on the Transitional Council of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health professionals. This is the new body that will establish the standards and oversee spiritual and religious care counselors in Ontario. Tom was invited to give a paper on theological reflection at a conference on spiritual care in Glasgow Scotland on March 13-15, 2012.

**David Pfrimmer** continues to be involved in a number of Boards and Organizations. Currently he serves as a Seminary member of the Wilfrid Laurier Board of Governors, on the Tshepo Institute on Africa at Laurier Brantford, the Evangelical Lutheran Foundation of Eastern Canada and on the Laurier Centre for Music in the Community. David has been a guest speaker at churches and community organizations offering a lecture series at St. Peters in Ottawa on the role and contribution of Canadian churches to the public good (2010), a presentation for the Annual House of Friendship fundraiser (2010), speaking to a church worker's orientation at the Churches Centre for Global Mission, addressing the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches (2011), and a number of other events. David is a member of the Society for Christian Ethics. He most recently presented a Lutheran perspective at a Project Ploughshares Roundtable on "Just Peace." In January 2012, Dialog A Theological Journal, published his article, Developing a Public Hermeneutic for the Future for Theological Education?