



Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

CALLED INTO THE WORLD

Dear Partners in Ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod:

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) is grateful to share highlights from our seminary in this 2023 report to supporting synods. We form visionary leaders to declare the good news of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your support during these rapidly changing times.

Highlights from our school this year include:

- After several years of thoughtful discernment and evaluation, the Board of Directors decided to sell and relocate LSTC to a space better suited for our educational mission. Selling our building is a strategic move that puts us on stronger financial footing, enabling us to invest in key areas while opening the door for innovation and growth.
- We are relocating the seminary to a well-designed space on the fourth floor of the Catholic Theological Union (CTU). We are moving to CTU and staying in Hyde Park because this setting is a rich educational resource and enables ecumenical collaboration and cooperation. The Hyde Park community and our partnerships in the ACTS consortium enrich our ability to form people who are called into the world for innovative, inclusive ministry.
- LSTC has refocused its distance and online learning initiatives to increase student enrollment and flexibility for those who want to attend but cannot move to Chicago. In the current academic year, faculty and staff are launching comprehensive distance learning tracks in our MDiv, MAM, and MA programs. Cohorts of distance students will be formed starting with the 2023–2024 academic year. We are also developing programs with asynchronous online courses and look forward to sharing them with LSTC stakeholders in 2024. This initiative is led by Dr. Candace Kohli, assistant professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism, who is experienced with online learning programs.
- We continue to advance our work toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, making it one of the two central themes in our 2023–24 strategic plan. This work includes the intentional, strategic recruitment of BIPOC students to LSTC. It is also enriched by scholarly programming through the Pero Center for Intersectionality Studies, led by the center's director, Dr. Linda Thomas, Professor of Theology and Anthropology. Antiracism training, hosted by C-ROAR, is also widely available to LSTC's faculty, staff, students, and board of directors through our Antiracism Transformation Team (ATT). Administrative leadership in this area is provided by Vima Couvertier-Cruz, the school's director of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, as well as liaison with the ATT.
- LSTC will offer innovative leadership programs through a new endowed faculty position, the Damm Chair in Leadership. This position will oversee programs to nurture leaders for congregations, religious organizations, and nonprofits. New initiatives will develop skills such as change management, conflict transformation, operations and finance, resource development, and other key organizational areas. Audiences for these initiatives to enhance pastoral, diaconal, and other forms of leadership will include alumni, contextual education supervisors, LSTC faculty and staff, and lay leaders. A faculty search for the Damm Chair is underway with service at LSTC expected to begin on July 1, 2023.

To learn more about LSTC and the historic changes happening now, please visit www.lstc.edu.

Sincerely,

Rev. James R. Nieman, PhD
President

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago