

## EXPANDING GOSPEL PROCLAMATION WORLDWIDE

CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI | \$100,000

### *Advanced Theological Education for International Students*

Prayer: Heavenly Father, there are challenges in training pastors to serve as seminary instructors for developing countries. Their Lutheran church bodies do not have necessary funds to send them abroad to gain an advanced theological education. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is committed to addressing this concern to further the Great Commission with its Graduate School's ongoing acceptance and preparation of highly qualified international students. We ask that You continue to bless this initiative and reach out with a loving hand to encourage these students and enable them to proclaim the message of salvation to all.

**All: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.**

Hymn: "Go Tell It on the Mountain" LSB 388 (all verses)

Reader: Psalm 96:2–3: *Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all peoples!*

Leader: The Lord calls upon us to proclaim His love and salvation throughout the entire world. The best way for the Gospel to be proclaimed is for a local pastor to proclaim it to the people he knows and loves. However, the pastor must be adequately trained to prevent false teachings. This mission grant will assist with the costs of obtaining an advanced degree from Concordia Seminary for international students. This will enable them to return to their country to spread God's Word and train more Lutheran pastors.

Reader: Isaiah 12:3b–4: *And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted."*

Leader: Isaiah had been preaching to his people and warning them of consequences for abandoning the Lord and worshiping false gods. We are reminded that God will always intervene, and we who were once downtrodden because of our sin will be uplifted by God's grace and love. Concordia Seminary wants the saving grace of Jesus to be spread to all nations. Without monetary support, many international students would not be able to attend Graduate School to earn the advanced theological degrees needed to become seminary professors and leaders in their home country. In these positions, they will have considerable impact on increasing the spread of Christ's name and making His Gospel known throughout the world.

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19–20).*

Reader: Matthew 24:14: *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

Leader: The end is coming. We do not know when, but we have the Lord's word that He will return and when He does, the end will come. God loves the whole world. He loves them whether they believe in Him or not and He wants them to be with us in paradise but that can only happen if they have faith created in them by the Holy Spirit. People from every nation are coming together to worship the risen Christ, but they need trained pastors to lead them. These international students are answering the call to reach out to all people with the Good News of Jesus. This reflects the heart of God, *who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth* (1 Timothy 2:4). The fields are wide open for harvest and God is also sending us to reach out in the name of Jesus. We can share the saving message of hope in a world full of darkness and despair.

Reader: 1 Chronicles 16:24: *Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all peoples!*

Leader: 1 Chronicles 16 tells the story of King David bringing the ark of the covenant into the temple. The people of God were called to declare His glory among the nations. For the people of God at that time, the nations were everybody who did not believe in God. We are called to do the same. Let none be forgotten throughout the world. In the name of God go and baptize. Help us to be faithful, standing steadfast, walking in your precepts, led by your Word. God is offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy. From the people of God in King David's day to the people of God in Jesus' day and to us, the people of God here and now, we are all called to do whatever we can to proclaim the Word. We may not be able to travel to far off lands, but we can help fund the training and send someone else to fulfill the mission of the church.

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2023–2025 MISSION GRANT NO. 8

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