



Forming Leaders for a Globalized World

Table Talk

Formando líderes para un mundo globalizado

LSPS is a program of Wartburg Theological Seminary & Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Dear Friends,

It was with great joy that we recently celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the founding of LSPS in 1975! Our honored guest and speaker was the Rev. Lawrence Bade who was the Chair of the District Committee of the American Lutheran Church at the time. He along with other visionary founders helped to secure the initial grant of \$50,000 to begin this important educational adventure in the life of the church.



**Rev. Lawrence Bade and
Jay Alanis, PhD, JD**

In his address to the gathered assembly Rev. Bade reviewed the history of the Lutheran missions of the Rio Grande Valley dating back to the 1920's. He reminded us that our mission to the Hispanic community can be traced to faithful missionaries and lay workers who served the people of south Texas and northern Mexico in ways that were culturally sensitive and theologically sound. These folk had a passion and love for the gospel and for mission with their neighbors. They shared the Lutheran witness of grace with the people of the borderlands in ways that continue to affect the lives and history of the church.

I am one of those witnesses. As a son of St. John Lutheran Church in San Juan in the Rio Grande Valley I am the recipient of the ministry of those early missionaries. One of these was Pastor Alvin Koehler who directed the Lutheran Bible School and directed the Commission on Mexican Missions in that early history. Rev. Bade shared stories of his own ministry at First English Lutheran Church in Edinburg where he answered the call to serve following graduation from Wartburg Seminary. He recounted stories of service to a people who "continually longed for support, affirmation, growth and partnership" (quoting Rev. Bade). He along with District President Vern Mohr and other visionaries dreamed of a seminary program that would provide

Welcome to the Summer Issue of Table Talk!

Table Talk is our e-newsletter. We hope you will find that this is a great tool for keeping you up to date on what is happening here at LSPS.

LSPS is a program of Wartburg Theological Seminary and the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. LSPS trains leaders through the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program of the ELCA. Its primary focus is equipping women and men for mission in Spanish speaking contexts throughout the church.

Alumni News

Ron Beatty and I are hiking the Appalachian Trail until frost in the fall. We are rejoicing because Vol. 6 (A and B) of the Gloria Dei Record Project has been submitted to the publisher. Ron is the editor of the series of the records of the Swedish Colonial churches. **Rev. Dr. Cynthia Forde-Beatty '91**

In November 2013, I took a 2-site

opportunities for growth for folks being served in south Texas as well as provide alternative routes for ordained service should the Spirit call them to full-time ministry. I am one of those folks. I am an LSPS alumnus.

As we celebrate and commemorate this fortieth anniversary we give thanks to God for the faithful witness of so many that made this dream a reality. We have graduated over two hundred pastors and are now serving countless others in continuing educational opportunities and programs that bring them to Austin from every part of the country. We are training and equipping leaders for service in the globalized world of our times. LSPS was founded for such a time as this! To continue this legacy participants were invited to honor the Rev. Bade with gifts to LSPS. So on this fortieth anniversary we take time out to say: Gracias Pastor Bade for your vision and commitment to serve the people of the borderlands and for extending our horizon of service to the world! Que Dios te bendiga!



Jay Alanis, PhD, JD
Executive Director

New General Undesignated Endowment Named

In April, a general undesignated endowment was gifted to the Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest. This is the Alvin Henry Koehler and Edna Bohls Koehler General Endowment and was gifted by their three daughters Lois Luedtke, Doris Ermel, and Ruth Foster.

While there are many scholarship endowments which insure that LSPS students receive generous scholarships, however the Alvin Henry Koehler and Edna Bohls Koehler General Endowment is the first of its kind for LSPS.



**Lois Luedtke, Doris Ermel, and Ruth Foster
gifted the Alvin Henry Koehler and
Edna Bohls Koehler General Endowment to LSPS**

This generous gift will help insure that LSPS will continue into the future. Proceeds from this endowment will help with the programmatic expenses of LSPS: professors' salaries, support staff, and general office expenses.

Alvin Henry Koehler (4-13-1907) was born and raised on a farm in Arneckeville, Texas. He attended Lutheran College (TLU) in Seguin, Texas for two years and then attended Wartburg College in Dubuque, Iowa from 1929 to 1932. He was called to pastor St. John Lutheran Church in San Juan in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, a Spanish speaking congregation and ordained at Zion Lutheran Church in Arneckeville. After attending Pan

call to be Pastor/Chaplain at Eben Ezer Lutheran Care Center in Brush, CO and also Pastor at Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Akron CO. I graduated LSPS in 2001. **Rev. Dan Hays**

I was elected TLGCS council for female clergy at large 3 year term today. I've been on council as laity so this is new. I'm also going with Don Carlson on the "In Search For Paul" journey. Shalom **Pastor Diane Campbell '2014**

Sam joined the Texas Interfaith Center for Public Policy in July of 2014 as an Outreach and Engagement Specialist. Currently, he is working on the Water Captains Program. **Rev. Sam Brannon '2005**

Share your alumni news by emailing lsps@lsps.edu.

Upcoming Courses & Events

August 4-8

[New Testament I](#)

[Historia del Pensamiento Cristiano II \(Spanish\)](#)

[History of Christian Thought I](#)

August 17-October 20

[Teología de las Confesiones Luteranas \(Spanish\)](#)

September 20-23

[Claiming Your Vocation for Life](#)

October 6

[Confesiones Luteranas I \(Spanish\)](#)

American College (Edinburg) learning Spanish for six months, he began his ministry in 1933. He started Spanish speaking churches in Donna, El Capote, Edcouch/Elsa, Edinburg and Campo Alto. He also was in charge of an elementary parochial school on the grounds of St. John.

In 1948, church headquarters called Pastor Koehler to be director of Mexican Missions which included the Rio Grande Valley and San Antonio. Also in 1948, a Lutheran Bible School was built for men and women from Mexico to attend a two year course and return to their homes to spread the word of God as Lay missionaries. They lived and attended classes in the Bible School. At that time only Mexicans could be in charge of a Mexican congregation in Mexico. He and the other missionaries taught the Bible classes in the school.

Pastor Koehler had a heart attack and was called home to be with the Lord on a Monday morning (11-22-1954) after returning home from San Antonio the night before where he preached and had given communion in the mission church there on Sunday. He had been looking forward to the summer when he would be showing his family Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque and accepting an honorary doctor's degree. He is buried in the Immanuel Lutheran Church Cemetery in Pflugerville.

Edna Bohls was born and raised in Pflugerville, Texas (1-4-1907). She met Alvin Koehler while also attending Lutheran College (TLU) where they became engaged. She lived with his parents and taught school in Arneckeville until Alvin finished seminary. They were married on 1-20-1933 in Pflugerville. Edna became a loving partner with Alvin and loved the work they were doing. She even taught in St. John's parochial school. They raised three daughters, Lois (Luedtke), Doris (Ermel), and Ruth (Foster). After Alvin died Edna began teaching in the public schools in the Rio Grande Valley, Seguin and Round Rock. She went to live with the Lord on 1-10-1991 after teaching for many years. She also is buried in Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery in Pflugerville beside Alvin.

It was while Alvin and Edna served St. John Lutheran Church that they met the Alanis family as they were members of St. John. During his 22 year tenure his children and the Alanis children grew up together. Out of friendship and respect for Rev. Dr. Jay Alanis, the director of LSPS, the three Koehler sisters thought it a wonderful way to also honor him and their parents by establishing this endowment.

Anyone can add monies to this endowment or perhaps give another in honor or memory of a loved one. Contact Rev. Dr. Liz Stein if you would like more information on how you can help guarantee that LSPS will continue long into the future. (cell: 713-249-8471 or estein@lspss.edu)

Donor Honor Roll

We thank all of our donors for their faithful support of LSPS! This report reflects all gifts to the seminary from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st 2014. May God

October 15-17

[Liturgy](#)

[Ética Cristiana \(Spanish\)](#)

Donate Today to Support the Mission of LSPS

Support LSPS with your annual gifts. Your gifts make a difference and strengthen the mission of LSPS! **[To give directly to LSPS give online at \[www.lspss.edu\]\(http://www.lspss.edu\)!](#)**



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[See donor honor roll.](#)



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Recommended books: *Introducción a la Última cena y el Banquete de la Creación* and *Ser y Comer: migajas en torno a la identidad* by Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Alvarez.

Claiming Your Vocation for Life

September 20-23, 2015

Join us September 20-23 in Argyle, TX for The Claiming Your Vocation for Life Retreat. This spiritual retreat will provide reflection and guidance for all the baptized in living out your Christian vocation in the next stage of life. This includes those contemplating major life transitions of all kinds, both individual congregation members and church professionals: retirement ("third chapter" of life), job changes, family transitions, next calls, and other life transitions.



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