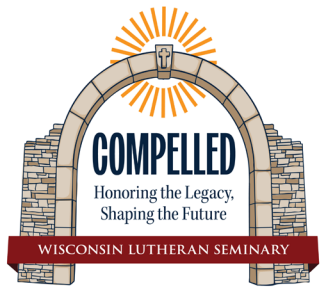




WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Fall 2026 Spotlight



ENROLLMENT

The 2026–27 school year began with an opening service at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19, and with an enrollment of 148 students, which is a little lower than the 2025–26 school year. The first-year class sits at 39 students, the second-year class at 30, and the senior class at 36. Forty-three men are serving as vicars. Classes started on the morning of Thursday, August 20.

CALL ACCEPTED

In August, Professor Ken Cherney, Jr. accepted the call to serve as Lusophone ministry coordinator for WELS world missions. Lord willing, the seminary governing board will extend a call for a professor of Old Testament and homiletics in late September.

COMPELLED CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Throughout the summer, construction continued to make steady progress across the building project, with several spaces beginning to take shape.

At the education center site, foundation wall and footing pours are nearly complete, with backfilling and slab preparation coming next. At the gathering hall site, crews have relocated the electrical transformer, poured the footings, and begun foundation wall construction.

Inside the library, lower-level flooring, painting, casework, tiling, restroom finishes, and glazing are complete, while first-level work continues. Students are already using the library's new footprint and improved rare books room, with the student lounge expected to be completed by the end of October.

Changes are also visible near the auditorium, where renovated restrooms are completed and new oversized window openings along the auditorium hallway to the gathering hall are also completed. Nearby, fitness center



framing and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work continue, with renovations expected to be finished by the end of October.

Overall, the project remains on track as several areas transition from foundational construction to finish work. The campaign is also approaching an exciting milestone: gifts and commitments are now less than \$4 million away from reaching the \$15 million goal.

Visit www.wlscompelled.com for up-to-date information.



2026–27 EVENTS

- October 10 Friends of the Seminary Day
- December 13 Christmas at the Seminary
- January 11–22 Winterim
- February 2–4 Mission and Ministry
- May 26 Vicar Assignment Service
- May 27 Graduate Assignment Service
- May 27 Graduation Concert
- May 28 Graduation Service

PASTORAL STUDIES INSTITUTE (PSI)

On June 27, fifteen men entered the chapel at the seminary in Lusaka, Zambia, to receive their BDiv diplomas and graduate from a pastoral training program overseen by the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. These men came from five nations—Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, and Zambia. Graduation marked the culmination of years of study. Their instruction was overseen by WELS missionary Dan Witte, the theological education liaison for the One Africa Team.

All these men were already pastors before their bachelor's degree studies began. Twice each year these men gathered for intensive courses. That way, men could attend to their main duties and their families without faraway studies getting in the way. Paul Nitz helped the cohort become better listeners. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary professors Dave Bivens, John Schuetze, and Brad Wordell guided them into God's Word. Professor E. Allen Sorum led the men in

street evangelism. Professor Ken Cherney, Jr. helped them see the Holy Spirit's power better.

Professor Harland Goetzinger, director of PSI, encouraged the fifteen graduates, plus all the other pastors and other guests in attendance. "Preach the word, the full word of God, including the law in all its sternness and the gospel in all its sweetness. Stay true to the word that the Spirit has taught you over these many years of learning, and your flock will be blessed, and Jesus will be glorified. Brothers, always and ever, shine the light on the object of our faith, Jesus. Always and ever, carry out a Christ-centered ministry."

We pray for our Lord's continued blessings upon these men as they share what they have learned with their flocks, preaching and teaching the freedom that we have in the gospel of Jesus—sins forgiven and the certainty of life eternal.



LEARN IT, LIVE IT, AND LEARN IT SOME MORE

Paul encouraged Timothy to continue in the Holy Scriptures he had known from infancy because those Scriptures make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Tim 3:14–15). There is a popular phrase, "Live and learn." You gain knowledge from experiences. God's encouragement is better. Gain knowledge from his Word and from living it until he calls us home.

The big danger is thinking we've graduated from God's Word. The new pastor graduates from the seminary and is tempted to think he now knows it all and is too busy with ministry to learn anything new. Yet Psalm 1 reminds us that the person who continually delights in and meditates on God's Word is like a tree planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in season (Ps 1:1–3). The Scriptures lead us to

Jesus, forgiveness, certainty, salvation, and God's will for us. Where else would we want to go (John 6:68)?

I was privileged to receive a Master of Sacred Theology degree in the biblical languages from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary this spring. I was blessed to take classes from wise teachers and then turn around and teach many of those subjects in Bible class, write sermons from an even more thorough study of the biblical text, and better apply God's comfort in counseling. God promises you'll be blessed as you learn it, live it, and learn it some more.

This is an abridged version of a newsletter article that Rev. Nathanael Scharf shared with his congregation, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, in New Ulm, MN, in the summer of 2026.