

Enrolment stays steady in church programs

EDMONTON – Enrolment in church-work programs at Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA) remained “steady” this fall, says a senior administrator.

“I’m not seeing any huge shifts in terms of the numbers in the program,” said Dr. Paul Schoepp, director of church-work programs at CUCA. “It’s steady as we go.”

The numbers were presented to a Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) planning conference in November and showed a total of 63 students enrolled in church-work programs at CUCA. Church-work programs prepare students for work in LCC congregations and other church bodies.

Nineteen students had enrolled in the director of parish services (DPS) program. Of those, eight were new to the program.

CUCA anticipates placing two DPS interns and four DPS candidates during the 2009-2010 year.

The parish nurse program attracted eight students – four of whom were new to the program.



CUCA anticipates certifying four parish nurses during the 2009-2010 year.

Twenty-one students enrolled in pre-seminary studies – 13 of whom were new to the program.

Schoepp said he considered the number of new, first-year, pre-seminary students to be soft.

Finally, the teaching program attracted 15 students, five of whom were new.

Schoepp said CUCA anticipates placing two or three teacher candidates at the end of the 2009-2010 year.

He said because enrolment numbers are so small, it’s difficult to draw any conclusions from the minor fluctuations CUCA sees every year.

Schoepp said he is noticing a new trend, though. More students appear to be making decisions about church work as they progress through their academic careers, rather than at the beginning of their studies.

“God calls people into ministry at all points of life,” he said.

A different look at parish life for seminarians

EDMONTON - If you heard about a seminary course on parish immersion you would likely visualize seminary students working with a local pastor and congregation. For the first time, Concordia Lutheran Seminary is taking a group of five seminary students to Southeast Asia to see how parishes operate in a very different environment. CLS professor, Dr. Edward Kettner, who is travelling to Thailand and Cambodia to teach seminary courses, will accompany the students, Stephen Bartlett, Michael Montague, James Prophet, Darren Dressler and Timothy Schneider as they encounter a new culture. The trip is funded from the seminary’s Missionary Study Centre grant provided by the Marvin M. Schwan Foundation.

“This approach reflects the practical focus of our curriculum,” explained Dr. Kettner, who also serves as academic dean. “From my own experience, I know this experience will play an important role in the pastoral formation of these students.”

Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary professor Dr. Roger Humann took students to Nicaragua for a New Testament course. He taught the class in English which was then translated into Spanish for the Nicaraguan students.

“It’s important that LCC’s seminary students have the opportunity to experience a mission field,” noted Dr. Kettner. “Some of them may discover a new area of ministry to which the Lord may be calling them.”

Lutheranism in South America



Professor Gerson Linden, president of Seminario Concordia in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil

EDMONTON - As part of its countdown to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS) students and members of area congregations had the opportunity to hear Professor Gerson Linden, president of Seminario Concordia in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil in late October.

The professor first met with seminary students, Thursday, October 29 where he was the

“Missionary for Lunch.” He presented an overview of seminary education at Seminario Concordia in Brazil.

That evening, at an open lecture at Concordia University College of Alberta, Professor Linden gave a lecture on Luther in South America.

His weekend in Edmonton wrapped at a Festive Divine Service for Reformation at Grace Lutheran Church where he was the preacher.

CLS has planned events for the next seven years centring around the Reformation. In October 2010 the seminary is scheduled to invite a Roman Catholic theologian to bring a different perspective on Luther and the Reformation. For more information visit the seminary’s website at www.learngrowserve.ca