

# THE SEMINARIAN

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Issue 5

## RETREAT AT KIRKRIDGE

The end of February a group of LTS students again went to Kirkridge to meet with persons from eight seminaries to discuss spirituality and social concerns. This time we had the good fortune of meeting with Dorothe Soelle. She is a very interesting and challenging person.\*

The following are some quotes I recorded during our time with Dorothee.

Things are not accomplished quickly.

So what if there's a heaven - as long as there's a hell I need to be there.

Can you watch yourself, look in the mirror and feel good? Can you maintain self respect with no visible success?

To be alive is to be with those before and those after; saints new and old have died for me too.

A name for God is "all things are possible."

Learning means that we unlearn.

Empowerment comes from the poor who teach faith, patience, not to give up, power of the people, pride, suffering...

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## A LETTER TO THE LTS COMMUNITY

Our seminary catalog opens with a statement from Peter Schmiechen which says, in part, "The re-lighting of the tower...is an image of our intention to let the light of this Seminary shine, so that people may see and learn what we are about and give thanks to God."

I wish to respond to the chapel service conducted March 18 in light of that statement. It is my understanding that the outward goal of that worship service was to address the issue of the need for unity, especially here within the LTS community. While I wholeheartedly agree that our community is in great and dire need of healing its divisiveness, I am, at the same time, wholeheartedly opposed to the method and underlying motives used in that attempt.

It angers me to see someone take on the guises of a pastoral leader, don a clerical collar, step up into the pulpit, and stand behind the semblance of a worshipful event to, in effect, use the pulpit as a shield to hide behind

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## From the Editors' Desk

When seminarians discuss the "in-between time" they are usually referring to the time between Jesus' first and second coming. For many Seniors, however, this phrase has taken on a new meaning.

It is indeed an "in-between time" when almost, but not quite rules our lives. We are almost graduated, but not quite and are almost full-time pastors (or chaplains or educators), but not yet. Many of us are "almost called," but are waiting for search committees to go through the endless process of interviewing, talking, deciding. Some of us are "almost ready" to make a decision for a church, but not quite willing to make that final commitment. A lot of us feel "almost eager" to start a new chapter in our lives, but not quite ready to say good-bye to old friends and relationships.

Thus, "in-between time" revolves around the search process, which is, for lack of a better word, an interesting experience. No one warned me that my rusty secretarial skills would have to be honed so that I could write a series of polite, formal, and informative letters (a nearly impossible combination) in an attempt to introduce myself to search committees.

Nor did I expect that I'd have to become a technical wizard, taping and re-taping sermons to be heard and judged. (It's a horrifying thought that one's professional life may depend on 15 minutes of "is it live or is it Memorex?"). After several frustrating attempts to produce a realistic-sounding sermon while preaching in my apartment to my tape recorder, I was tempted to call the far-off search committee and say, "you want to hear me preach? Hang onto your phone, sit back and listen."

Classes, papers, and homework have somehow slipped down the scale of importance in the attempt to prepare for the "real world." It is obvious what is occupying senior's minds when the immediate answer to a casual "how's it going?", results in a progress report on The Search.

One needs to take a step back for a moment in order to gain some perspective. The answer to the question, posed only half in jest, "is God in the search process?" I'd have to reply "yes." Because despite the endless shuffle of papers, the bureaucracy, and the headaches, looking for a job in ministry is a step of faith. We are once again saying "yes" to our individual calls.

It is, it seems to me, somehow appropriate that this time-, mind-, and life-consuming activity occurs during Lent. Lent is a season to re-examine our faith and renew our relationship to God. The search process triggers the same response in me, especially when I realize that soon it will be "you and me, God," out there, away from the security of LTS.

The search process - and Lent is a time of preparation, waiting, self-examination, and learning. In the midst of my despair that it will never end, I am grateful that I've gotten this far. And so, as I set my sights on Easter and the unknown future beyond, I am glad that God is with me and all of us during this "in-between time."

Sue Foster - editor

## A LETTER TO THE LTS COMMUNITY

(continued from page 1)

while ultimately and essentially making public a personal conflict. I am vexed that one may stand before us with the misconception of giving us the Word of God while instead launching an attack on others, based upon one's own interpretation and perception of the inner workings of a particular group or groups on this campus. Such an act makes a mockery, not only of the pulpit, and the collar, but the meaning of pastoral leadership itself.

If unity was, in fact, the goal of the message, the wrong means was used to try to reach the end. If the underlying motive, as I understand it, was to "blow people away," that goal was certainly attained. But, what was also achieved in the process was further dividing this community, causing increased disunity and disharmony.

My concern is for the extension of the separatism this has caused, the increased distancing, and the people who have been hurt, further wounded, or more greatly alienated.

Worship, to me, is in part, to be a source of healing and reconciliation. How can healing take place with events such as these? One cannot talk of unity and throw a greater wedge into the community, then expect instant reconciliation as we gather to share in the Eucharist. Healing and reconciliation must be a part of the process of coming to the Table. Disunity exclusiveness was preached about, but nowhere in the service was there an opportunity for us, as a community, to corporately confess our sins, to openly acknowledge our own alienation within the community in which we participate.

We, as a community or individually cannot be reconciled unto Christ until we are reconciled with one another. That cannot be done until the wounds of those hurt are recognized and dealt with, and allowed to begin to heal.

This division that exists - this separatism - this exclusivity - this alienation - represents to me that we, as a community, have broken that covenant of community. We alone have tarnished the image of the tower light.

It is time that we - individually and collectively as the community we are to be - immediately remedy the problem. We need to take a look at ourselves and determine whether the light that shines here is truly the image we want to reflect. We need to rid ourselves of the divisions which exist, to end the rivalries and the struggles for power, to cooperatively work from separatism and separateness toward unity and oneness of community, while allowing one another to each remain individually unique. We must put an end to words and deeds that are destructive and hurting in nature. We must begin to heal and help one another to heal. It is the genuinely strong who will humble themselves to work to accomplish this - through kindness, gentleness, and love; not the one who loudly proclaim to have power or who are expressly seeking power.

It is time to take a good hard look at ourselves, and our purpose for being here. If that chapel service was a statement of purpose - however individualized in form - then perhaps we need to extinguish the light in the tower.

Kathy Cordaro

RETREAT AT KIRKRIDGE  
(continued from page 1)

Brainwashing education shrinks your dreams.

The first world has the great privilege of knowledge.

Christ came and showed us the gap and then bridged it. We need to see the poles and increase our awareness.

When I read the Bible I wonder if it once happened, why can't it happen again?

Each generation must define freedom for itself.

We are educated into a mix of ignorance and arrogance.

Discussing theological issues helps to distance us from the reality of the poor.

Learning the cross means un-learning apartheid.

The over spiritualization of Christ leads us to a false separation of religion and politics.

If we pray for the Spirit, we pray for signs.

In a society like ours, a spiritual life can only be a revolutionary life.

When you close your ears to the cries of the helpless, you close your ears to your lover. (you no longer can love)

Justice means a new economic world order.

The three main issues we need to face today is justice, peace, and creation (the conservation of the earth)

\* \* \* \* \*

**Easter Scripture Bars**  
(Use Bible for reference)

- 2 Jeremiahs (chapter 17, verse 11)
- 1 cup Jeremiah (chapter 6, verse 20)
- 1 tablespoon melted Psalm (chapter 55, verse 21)
- 1/4 cup First Kings (chapter 4, verse 22)
- 1/4 teaspoon Leviticus (chapter 2, verse 13)
- 3/4 cup chopped Numbers (chapter 17, verse 8)
- 1 cup chopped Nahum (chapter 3, verse 12)
- 1/2 teaspoon Galatians (chapter 5, verse 9)
- 1 teaspoon liquid Numbers (chapter 17, verse 8)

To think you don't have enemies is not to fulfill the command to love your enemies.

God loves the poor and oppressed to liberate them. God loves the rich oppressor so that they may repent.

The crosses we seek desperately to avoid come down on our neighbors.

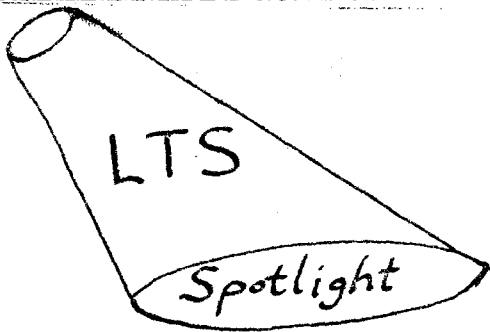
How can I talk when I have forgotten how to weep?

I think that most of these quotes stand on their own. If you would like to discuss them, feel free to talk with the persons who attended the retreat: Sue Foster, Drew Willard, Ed Sanders or Linda Meredith.

Linda Meredith

\*(Dorothee Soelle has taught in universities in Germany and France. Currently she is a visiting professor at New York's Union Seminary. She is author of several books including Death By Bread Alone and Revolutionary Patience)

In case you are not accustomed to using your Bible in the kitchen: begin the recipe by taking 2 parts of the ingredient you will find mentioned in Jeremiah (chapter 17, verse 11) Add a cup of the ingredient mentioned in Jeremiah (6.20) and so on. If there is more than one ingredient mentioned, always use the first. Another point is in biblical days some ingredients do not appear in modern form, such as baking powder, which is used when in Galatians (5.9) they suggest a word to make dough rise Beat Jeremiah (17.11) until light; add Jeremiah (6.20) and Psalm (55.21) Blend well; sift dry ingredients together; and all chopped ingredients and flavoring and blend well. Pour into greased shallow cake pan; bake in slow (300°F) oven about 25 minutes. Cut into bars and roll in Jeremiah (6 20) Makes 24 bars.



REV. DR. ELIZABETH C. NORDBECK

How does one write an article about someone who needs no introduction on campus? Beth Nordbeck is more than simply an associate professor of church history. During her nine years at LTS she has been Dean of Students, Dean of Faculty, author, historian, public speaker, committee member working on the joining of the U.C.C. and the Disciples of Christ, World Council of Churches member, and much more. Her busy schedule does not lessen her enthusiasm about LTS and its programs.

The environment of LTS and its location are two of the reasons for Beth's loyalty. She describes the atmosphere at LTS as being low-key; there is a "high degree of contact between students and faculty, faculty and faculty, students and students." She enjoys the lack of what she calls "arbitrary kinds of hierarchic dividing lines" between faculty and students, which she finds to be appropriate in a Christian setting.

LTS lies in an ideal location for Beth. She does not feel too far away from her native New England, and is within easy access to interesting places: Washington, Philadelphia, New York.

When looking at LTS's future, Beth highlights three areas that she hopes will be developed: Feminists studies, Black studies, and the Arts. She envisions courses in each of these areas as well as their incorporation into other

classes currently offered. This will prevent the possibility of "ghettoizing" these subjects and giving the impression that they are options instead of an integral part of seminary education. Beth believes that we must "integrate our sensibilities about minorities, about our non-cognitive ways of knowing things, artistic ways of knowing things into our regular course of study."

In order to do theology in the latter part of the Twentieth century, one must recognize the impact that feminist and black theology have had. One must be exposed to these theologies in all areas of study. The same thing, according to Beth, is true with the Arts. The use of artistic forms should be encouraged in class, in chapel, and in church. When arts are incorporated into daily life instead of set aside as something different, they will help achieve a new style of learning.

Beth's eyes brighten when she describes her 5 month sabbatical. Although she enjoyed the rest and relaxation, she certainly wasn't idle. Based in the metropolises of Wolfboro and Effingham, N.H., she commuted into Boston to do research on the Christian denomination. Some of the results will be published in a chapter of

(continued on next page)

LTS SPOTLIGHT:  
BETH NORDBECK

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the second Hidden Histories, by Barbara Brown Zikmund, due out this Spring. She hopes to expand her research and produce an article about early women preachers in this tradition; she was intrigued to discover that many women were preaching as early as 1812. An abbreviated version of the article will appear in the next edition of the LTS Bulletin.

When discussing plans, hopes, and dreams for the future, Beth mentions the upcoming publication of her dissertation. She is also busy with several research projects, which will also appear in print in the future. A co-authorship with Michael Kinnamon (Christian Theological Seminary) detailing the U.C.C.-Disciples of Christ partnership is one of the highlights.

Beth is a fun person to be with: she has good stories to tell and a head filled with interesting anecdotes about history and how it relates to today. She also has good advice for Seniors - "don't expect to bring about the eschaton in the first year." That is, be prepared for the lonely times, the challenges and the frustrations. Beth recognizes how difficult the transition from student life to working world can be and advises seniors to give themselves time to adjust.

Beth Nordbeck is a mixture of practicality and humor; she has a respect for the past and a vision for the future. Take a class with her sometime or better yet, just sit down and talk. You'll be glad you did.

Susan J. Foster

CELEBRATION OF THE  
TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE CONFESSION  
OF 1967 OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

During the week of April 27 to May 1 of this year the seminary will be celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of the Confession of 1967 of the Presbyterian Church. Classroom discussion, chapel services, a community hour, and a display of recent church history are being planned. The focus of the celebration as of the confession will be the Church's call to be God's reconciling people in the world. How has the Church been involved in the issues and concerns of the world in the last 20 years?

Keep your eyes and ears open for more information as this celebration approaches.

Steve Cahoon

\* \* \* \* \*

I AM

*I am a dream monger,  
with a heart filled with aspirations.  
Charity rules my soul.  
Destiny sits in my hand and does as  
He is told.  
Greed, Lust, Envy, and Hate are an  
antithesis of life.  
They who live by these shall surely die  
But the sad irony of it all is that  
so many are following in these  
footsteps.  
Faith, Hope, and most of all Love  
are life.  
They who live by these shall surely  
live forever in the form of life  
which they give to so many others.  
Therefore I am.*

Keith Albert Enty

STUDENT'S COMMENT ON LTS

"I Heard it Through the Grapevine" wails a popular 60's song, "And I'm just about to lose my mind." The songwriter was going through personal turmoil based on news gotten through the proverbial grapevine. The song never tells us whether or not the news was factual or not, but if I know grapevines like I think I do, chances are just as good that the rumor was unfounded. Grapevines are susceptible to terminal root rot, and the fruit of such vines is sour grapes.

The other week, somebody told me some juicy gossip about myself that was as much news to me as it would have been had the story been about someone else. It wasn't anything that could hurt my career or endanger my marriage, but since it involved a subject I'm a bit sensitive about, it could have hurt me. I laughed it off, but as I walked away from the experience, I couldn't help but wonder why anyone had a need to propagate such a story.

Some of my classmates have confided that they, too, have found themselves the topic of stories based, in part or truth, but mostly made up of idle speculation. In a community as close as ours, its almost impossible to avoid such rumors. My current brush against the grapevine has left me more aware of the tendency stories have of being unfounded. I try to be more careful now about what I pass on. I want to praise my colleagues more and feed them fewer sour grapes.

Kathryn Schmidt-Dillon

We are an institution dedicated to the preparation of persons for the Christian ministry with a special emphasis on the parish ministry. This is my understanding of the purpose of LTS.

While I see this as a stated purpose, I clearly have felt a tension in this regard. Do we really aim to be pastoral when all we do is criticize? Are we really supportive of the parish when we schedule classes on Wed. nights especially during Lent? Are we really training persons for the parish when we condemn them for going five minutes over time in chapel services even though an hour is left unscheduled? Are we really supportive of the parish when staff meetings are scheduled during chapel? Are we being pastoral when we use the pulpit to condemn others "faults" and praise our own "righteousness" What is the teaching/learning for the onlooker in all of these actual instances?

These questions have been building for me over the semester. It is very difficult for me to understand who and what we really think we are. I tend to feel we are all far from ready to be pastors, all of us - staff, faculty, students, all of us! What are our priorities? What personal needs are unmet and being acted out in nonsupportive and unhealthy ways?

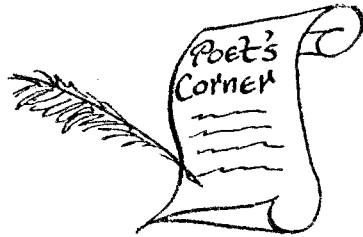
I pray that each of us will examine ourselves and seek to be more constructive and true to the purpose of this institution. Only together can we make a difference.

Linda Meredith

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You better live your best and act your best and think your best today, for today is the sure preparation for tomorrow and all the other tomorrows that follow.

---Harriet Martineau



Poetry for Worship

SET SAIL NIGHT WIND

as the clock hands reach two a.m.  
 i stand on the ship's deck  
 surrounded only by the wind and the sea  
 and while i weather the wind  
 i remain suspended above the sea  
 restrained only by the railing on  
 which i lean  
 engulfed in the vastness before me  
 i search to catch a glimpse of the  
 horizon  
 hidden amidst this wind-woven darkness  
 but i hear only the roar of the engines  
 the crash of the waves  
 the silent scenes of the night  
 the wind thrashes against my body  
 flapping my clothes in the dark breeze  
 and the frosty air chills my spine  
 blanketed by the colorless black sky  
 i keep my stance as the early morning  
 comes to a standstill for but a moment  
 and i remain entranced by this vision  
 my gaze fixed upon the shadows of night  
 and i know i stand not alone  
 for as my thoughts turn to the freedom  
 of the wind and sea  
 they dwell upon the love and the  
 spirit of the sky  
 and i know i stand not alone

Kathy Cordaro

\* \* \* \* \*

go in peace forgetting not justice  
 go to service in spite of the pain  
 go with eyes open and  
 arms outstretched  
 make stories to share  
 til we meet again

Linda Meredith

in the depths of silence  
 in the light of the sun  
 with the birds softly chirping  
 this day is begun  
 the snow lies there softly  
 the trees stand so tall  
 the rocks share their beauty  
 unite now we all  
 in silence, reflection,  
 prayers not we raise in quiet  
 introspection we cry and then praise  
 we seek liberation from weights -  
 pains and chains  
 we seek understanding and strength  
 once again  
 help us in our doubting -  
 claim us in our fear  
 all things are possible  
 not only to hear  
 but deep in each being -  
 somewhere deep inside  
 all things are possible  
 please now abide

\* \* \* \* \*

how can i say that i stand at the cross  
 and say that i truly do see  
 when standing and looking into the cross  
 i find my tranquility  
 for the cross is a challenge -  
 a shameful tough place  
 the cross shows me suffering  
 i can not erase  
 the cross means that i risk my all  
 yes my life  
 and will not stop risking  
 til all earthly strife  
 has found there its justice -  
 its peace found there too  
 i'll walk by myself now  
 but i'll call to you  
 each voice call another  
 each task call a team  
 together perhaps one day  
 not only a dream

Linda Meredith



LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

Lift every voice and sing,  
 till earth and heaven ring  
 Ring with the harmonies of liberty!  
 Let our rejoicing rise high as the  
 list'ning skies,  
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
 Sing a song full of the faith that the  
 dark past has taught us  
 Sing a song full of the hope that the  
 present has brought us;  
 Facing the rising sun of our new  
 day begun,  
 Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
 bitter the chast'ning rod,  
 Felt in the days when hope  
 un-born had died;  
 Yet with a steady beat,  
 have not our weary feet  
 Come to the place for which our  
 fathers sighed!  
 We have come over-er a way that with  
 tears has been watered  
 We have come, treading our path thro'  
 the blood of the slaughtered.  
 Out from the gloomy past,  
 till now we stand at last,  
 Where the white gleam of our  
 bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
 God of our silent tears,  
 Thou who hast brought us thus far  
 on our way;  
 Thou who hast by thy might,  
 led us in-to the light  
 Keep us for ever in the path, we pray.  
 Lest our feet stray from the places,  
 our God, where we met thee  
 Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine  
 of the world, we for-get thee  
 Shadowed be-neath they hand,  
 may we for-ev-er stand,  
 True to our God,  
 true to our na-tive land.

Black National Anthem  
 prayer by James Weldon Johnson



Linda Meredith has accepted a one-year position as resident chaplain at the Lehigh Valley Medical Center in Allentown, PA. She will start in August.

Phil Myers has accepted a call as pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Concord, MA. His ordination service is set for June 21 and he begins his work on July 1.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Seniors, share your good news with the community. When you know your post-graduation plans, please put a note in The Seminararian's mailbox.

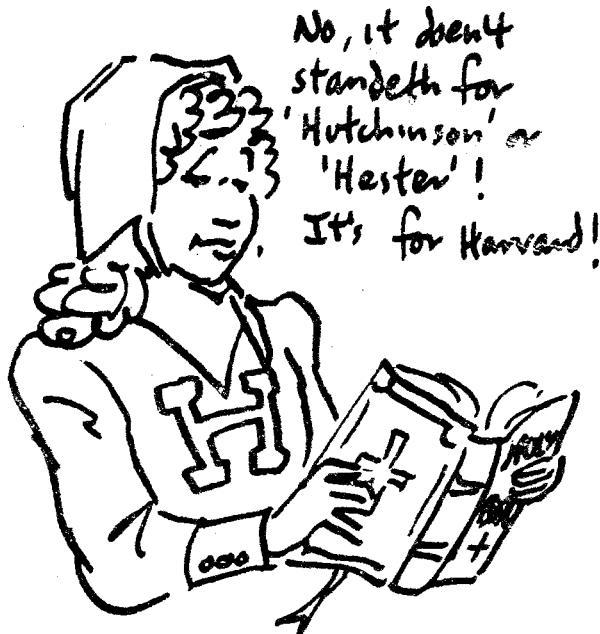
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Every human being has some handle by which he may be lifted, some groove in which he was meant to run; and the great work of life, as far as our relations with each other are concerned, is to lift each one by his own proper handle, and run each one in his own proper groove.

---Harriet Beecher Stow

The assorted  
APOSTOLIC  
FATHERS & MOTHERS  
OF  
L. T. S.

THE PROPHET (CHRIS)  
HA BUKKER



Sister Elizabeth Nordbeck



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\* THE SEMINARIAN is the monthly student newspaper of Lancaster Theological Seminary. \*

\* Contributions and articles may be submitted in the paper's mailbox. Deadline for \*

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