



November 17, 2009

### **Three ELCA seminaries resolve to work together in new ways**

CHICAGO – Collaboration and coordination characterize the six resolutions adopted by the boards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Covenant Cluster seminaries when they met in joint session, November 5-7, in Chicago.

The Covenant Cluster includes the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, and Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. The actions of the boards commit the seminaries to explore business, programmatic, faculty, and planning models that will further their common mission of forming leaders for the church.

Following the meeting, Wartburg President Duane Larson, who currently serves as executive director of the Covenant Cluster said, on behalf of the three seminary presidents, “This was a consequential and far-reaching meeting of our boards. We were inspired by the dedication of every board member to their seminaries and to the leadership needs of the church at large. We look forward to exploring, with the Covenant Cluster Board, new models for deeper collaboration and excellence in our ministries.”

Prior to taking action on the resolutions, the boards held several joint sessions. They heard presentations by the Rev. Dr. Daniel Aleshire, executive director of the seminary accrediting agency, the Association of Theological Schools, and the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Strandjord, ELCA’s director for theological education, on trends in theological education and the Church. With those trends in mind, the boards commented on resolutions inviting new ways for LSTC, Wartburg, and Trinity to work together.

“It was very important and extremely beneficial for the boards to reflect on the current and future stewardship of these seminaries in the larger context of North American and ELCA theological education,” said LSTC President James Kenneth Echols. “Both presenters contributed richly to the joint board meeting.”

“In times such as these, and when theological education needs to be a central priority for all of the baptized, the energy devoted by seminary leaders and boards is significant,” said Mark R. Ramseth, president of Trinity. “We are historic communities of learning and

formation. We can never be in isolation, but are called always into larger arenas of possibility for the sake of our common mission.”

The Covenant Cluster board, which consists of the presidents and board chairpersons of Wartburg, Trinity, and LSTC, as well as board and faculty representatives, will begin to implement the resolutions at its next meeting in December 2009.

For information contact:

Jan Boden, Director of Communications and Marketing, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 773-256-0744 or [jboden@lstc.edu](mailto:jboden@lstc.edu), [www.lstc.edu](http://www.lstc.edu).

Margaret Farnham, Director of Communications and Marketing, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, 614-384-4662, or [mfarnham@trinitylutheranseminary.edu](mailto:mfarnham@trinitylutheranseminary.edu), [www.trinitylutheranseminary.edu](http://www.trinitylutheranseminary.edu).

Janelle Koepke, Principle Gifts Director/Communications Director, Wartburg Theological Seminary, (563)589-0712, or [jkoepke@wartburgseminary.edu](mailto:jkoepke@wartburgseminary.edu), [www.wartburgseminary.edu](http://www.wartburgseminary.edu)

###