

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

CONCORDIA SUNDAY

Talking Points: Lutheran Higher Education

The following are talking points that pastors may find useful in preparing a sermon for Concordia Sunday. It is available for download at <http://www.lcms.org/universities>. Click on "Resources" and then "Worship Materials."

You do not have to be a Lutheran to appreciate Lutheran theology. And you do not have to be a trained theologian to understand how theology intersects with education and informs the way we teach and learn. Jesus used numerous everyday activities or events to illustrate how the Kingdom of God touches the lives of people. Probably the most notable illustrations are the story of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son.

The LCMS is recognized for its educational programs. Before our forefathers built churches, they built schoolhouses to provide for the ongoing education of their family members, who would be the "bakers, butchers, judges, council members, and leaders of the community." They left us with a legacy that offers us an opportunity to share with our communities what we "believe, teach and confess." Martin Luther said it well: "For the sake of the church, we must have and maintain Christian schools." A teaching church is a church in mission.

The mission of the colleges and universities of the Concordia University System is marked by transformation of people and communities. It is built on the foundation of the biblical message of salvation and footnoted by the highest levels of ethical conduct and a deep sense of building a better world. Faculty and students are engaged in a daily faith-life conversation and experience.

Recently a supporter of Lutheran higher education commented: "The Concordia University System is one of the most powerful and far-reaching tools the Lord of the Church has given the LCMS to take the Good News of life in Jesus Christ to a world desperately in need of hearing and believing in Him, through professional church workers and those trained for other services in our communities."

Students who enroll at one of 10 Concordias choose a Concordia for a quality education within a Christian environment to prepare for a life of service. Each campus radiates a healthy, Christian atmosphere where students hear the Good News daily in their faith-life experiences with each other and their professors.

Concordia graduates become pastors, teachers, physicians, legislators, missionaries, business entrepreneurs . . . professing a Christian faith and lifestyle. These are the individuals who will represent Lutheranism in the future in the communities in which they will live and work.

Concordia students develop a strong set of values, leadership skills, Christian faith, commitment to community service and a sense of purpose in life. Concordia helps prepare students to make wise and ethical decisions. Study, faith and service are intertwined as students grow stronger in a Christ-centered lifestyle.

Talking Points: Lutheran Higher Education

Concordia University System colleges and universities are regionally located across the country and offer a variety of programs (150 undergraduate and 60 graduate). Enrollment at our 10 campuses continues to increase annually with more than 28,000 students presently attending a Concordia. Students' lives are constantly developing through the power of the application of the Gospel message in all of their studies.

The cost of education continues to increase annually. It is for that reason the Concordia University System initiated an endowment program called **For The Sake of the Church**. Generous donors have contributed more than \$200 million in cash and pledges to support this special ministry. Earnings from the endowment funds assist students financially as they consider enrolling at one of our Concordias. It takes dollars to make an educational program inviting and stimulating for students.

There is an old adage that says: "Fruit never falls far from the tree." Proverbs 22:6 says it in a similar manner: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Christian education will make a difference in life's journey.

Luke's Gospel (2:40) describes Jesus' growth in the grace of God: "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." Likewise Luke 2:52: "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Education that supports the physical and mental growth of students within the framework of what we believe and confess as Lutherans builds moral and spiritual qualities in the character of students. Faith-life experiences within a Lutheran environment connect individuals to a life of faithful commitment to proclaim Jesus Christ as the Lord of Life!



1-800-248-1930, ext. 1252
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