



Brother Ian Boden (M.Div. '23) leads worship at his internship site, Trinity Lutheran Church in Greenville, SC

Serving in South Carolina: Beginning a Two-Year Internship

This fall, Brother Ian Boden (M.Div. '23) entered his first year of internship, and though only a few months in now, the experience has truly been transformative. For veteran internship supervisor, Pastor Susan Crowell of Trinity Lutheran Church of Greenville, South Carolina, the experience has also been unique.

Trinity Lutheran Church describes itself as a place of “Radical Welcome” and places special emphasis on extending hospitality to those who sometimes find themselves excluded from sites of care and love. Pastor Crowell has been at the church since she was an intern in the 90s, and she has occupied the role of senior pastor for nearly twenty years.

During Pastor Crowell’s tenure, the church has hosted seven interns. They have come to think of themselves as a teaching congregation in the same way that a medical facility may conceive of itself as a teaching hospital. They are a church whose mission includes forming, learning from, and growing with clergy in training. This call is taken seriously, embraced by church staff and parishioners alike, but even still, Brother Ian’s internship is a little bit different.

There’s less pressure and more opportunity.

Unlike the seven interns before him, Brother Ian is staying for two years, instead of one.

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Each year, clergy prepare and plan as best they can, and yet the busyness of fall blends into Advent, Christmas, Lent, and so on. The justice issues, news of the day, and needs of our immediate communities evolve. The day-to-day affairs of pastoral care and administration fill our calendars. In the middle of it all, it's possible to miss something.

Advent planning happens once a year, whether or not an intern finds themselves responding to tragedy and sitting with the teenagers in the youth group and their collective grief. And while ministry is ripe with unexpected detours, detours that interns should experience and know to count on, we also want each intern to have the opportunity to participate in planning Advent. On the other side of seminary, it'll be part of their jobs!

In Pastor Crowell's words, "Ian will be here for the most part of two [yearly] cycles, and so it doesn't feel like 'Oh, you have to get everything [the first time around]." He is going to have the chance to participate, observe, learn, and lead.

This welcome opportunity was carefully curated by Director of Contextual and Experiential Formation, Pastor Julie Hutson, who does not simply pair interns with internship sites. It's truly a matchmaking process. She considers students' callings, as well as their strengths, passions, and growing edges. She notices the mission and cultures of particular congregations, as well as the personality and abilities of potential supervisors.

From there, students meet with potential supervisors, and both parties consider the match.

Then, whether everything was a "natural fit" or if there are questions or concerns, students and potential internship sites work with Pastor Hutson to determine the best way forward.

Pastor Crowell describes the pairing of her congregation with Brother Ian as the work of the Holy Spirit. She was pleased with the opportunity to host a two-year internship, to meet with Ian and get to know him a little bit before placement, but the reality of her congregation's situation is not lost on her. Though Trinity Lutheran Church has a long history of hosting interns, they were not able to cover the full cost of hosting an intern this year.

Ian is with them this year because of special designated funds at the seminary to support contextual education. For the first time ever, Trinity was able to subsidize a congregation's cost of hosting an intern, which is something we look forward to doing more in the future as the seminary's new Contextual Education Endowment grows.

According to the seminary's Pastor Hutson, the endowment will make it possible for "more of our students to serve with supervisors who are women, members of the LGBTQIA+ communities, people of color, and people of different ethnicities." This is because, statistically, these pastors serve congregations that have less financial capacity.

After seminary, Trinity students encounter every kind of ministry context, and the opportunity to work with and alongside leaders like Pastor Crowell and congregations like Trinity Lutheran Church in Greenville, South Carolina will enrich the learning experience. And, in both the short- and long-term, the internship experience will serve the church.



"There's less pressure and more opportunity."

Remembering President Emeritus Dennis A. Anderson

President Emeritus Dennis A. Anderson died on September 23, 2021. Anderson led Trinity Lutheran Seminary from 1990 – 2000, presiding over a decade of enrollment growth and a significant increase in the seminary endowment. Beyond the numbers, his leadership was manifested in fruitful relationships with ecumenical and interfaith partners.

President Anderson’s most visible legacy on Trinity’s campus is the Promise for Life Holocaust Memorial, which stands at the corner of Main Street and College Avenue. Inspired by a lecture by Holocaust survivor and artist Alfred Tibor, President Anderson commissioned Mr. Tibor to create a sculpture embodying this vision:

“The fires of hate and evil produce the ashes of death, overcome by the fires of God’s love for all humankind pulling us forward in life toward God’s ultimate hope and promise. The piece would be a reminder of the vision of God in the face of the Jewish Holocaust and all the other silent holocausts around us – blacks and other ‘minorities,’ women, children, Bosnia, South Africa, South and Central America, Native Americans, etc.”

The plaza surrounding the finished sculpture, which was dedicated in 1999, is paved with over 100 bricks inscribed with the word “Remember” in different languages.

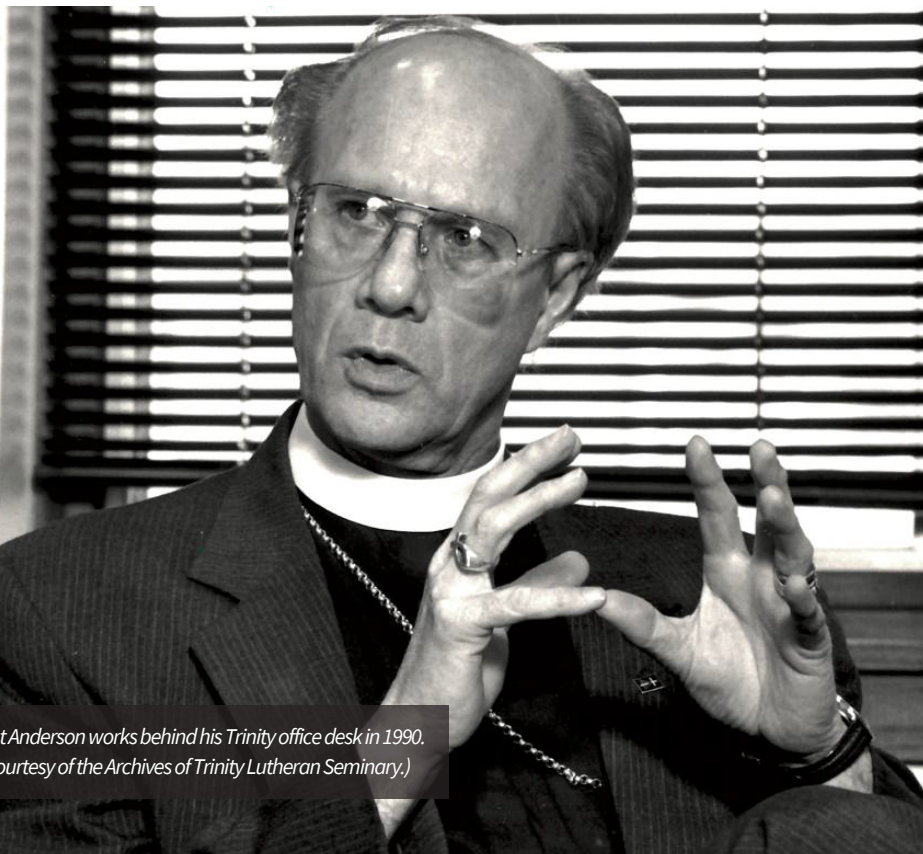


Promise for Life Memorial

Prior to assuming Trinity’s presidency, Anderson served as bishop of the Nebraska Synod of the ELCA and pastored congregations in Texas, Illinois, and Nebraska.

Funeral services for President Anderson were held on Saturday, October 2, at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska. Dean Kit Kleinhans offered greetings on behalf of the seminary, expressing thanks for Anderson’s life and ministry. The heart of Denny’s faith was encapsulated on the cover of the worship bulletin: “Celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his servant Rev. Dr. Dennis A. Anderson.”

Our prayers are with Barb and the whole Anderson family, as well as all those who were touched by Denny’s life and ministry.



President Anderson works behind his Trinity office desk in 1990.
(Photo courtesy of the Archives of Trinity Lutheran Seminary.)

*“I am the
resurrection and
the life. Those who
believe in me, even
though they die,
will live, and
everyone who lives
and believes in me
will never die. Do
you believe this?”
(John 11:25-26)*

Teaching the Bible, to Everyone

Faculty Profile: Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies

Shawn Morgan (MTS '23) first met the Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, as a non-degree student in summer 2021. Dr. Wrenn's online course, Introduction to the Bible, covered every book--Genesis to Revelation--in just three weeks. It was a whirlwind introduction, but for Shawn, the class was not about drinking from the proverbial fire hose; it was like stepping into a waterfall -- powerful, beautiful, and life-sustaining.

Dr. Wrenn joined Trinity as a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in the fall of 2020, and Shawn's experience of Dr. Wrenn's class has been the norm for seminarians. Since joining Trinity's faculty, Dr. Wrenn's classes have garnered a reputation for rigor, but they are also described as liberative, invitational, and inclusive. And as anyone who sat in on her 2021 Trinity Days workshop on preaching the Advent texts knows, Wrenn brings an attentive, pastoral presence with her wherever she goes.

Whether mentoring students one-on-one, gathered with interns returned to campus for an intensive, or at the blackboard, Dr. Wrenn yokes teaching with intellectual prowess, enthusiasm, and generosity. Her classroom is electric. For Wrenn, the best part of teaching is watching concepts "click" with students -- when eyes widen, body postures change, and students embrace a new idea or offer an insight that shows real comprehension and critical thinking.

Though she cherishes each of the big steps that came before, for Dr. Wrenn, teaching at a seminary has always been a dream. The Hebrew Bible scholar recently completed her Ph.D. at Emory University. A Minister of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA, Wrenn earned her M.Div. at Luther Seminary, and, prior to her doctoral studies, served as a parish pastor in southwestern Minnesota.

When asked how she would describe Trinity, Dr. Wrenn commented on our rhythms. She has found them to be both centering and hospitable.

Chapel is centering, and it is a fully incorporated practice of day-to-day seminary life. Through this shared experience, affording regular moments to stop and notice the Holy Spirit at work, the community comes together. It is refreshing and sustaining on the first day of class, when energy and enthusiasm are high, and it is still refreshing and sustaining mid-semester and at the end of the semester when the work has piled on.



Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn outside Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Hospitality and care show up in a lot of ways at Trinity, but as a new professor carrying a full docket of responsibilities, one thing Dr. Wrenn has been especially appreciative of is the mentorship she has received as a Trinity faculty person within a larger university. On Trinity's campus, faculty colleagues and staff look out for one another. Within the scope of the university, she's experienced the welcoming presence of scholars like Dr. Renda Ross, chair of Capital's Social Work program, who has communicated regularly with Wrenn over the last two years.

As the fall semester marches to a close, Dr. Wrenn looks forward to spring. She'll be teaching second semester Old Testament, Spanish for Liturgy, and Feminist Biblical Interpretation, an online class open to auditors. And then, from April 26-May 10th, Dr. Wrenn will be co-leading a trip to the Holy Land with Trinity New Testament Professor Emeritus, the Rev. Dr. Walter F. Taylor. This much anticipated travel seminar is already garnering excitement on campus, and it is open to alumni and other off campus friends interested in adventure and learning.

The last few years have been anything but predictable, but through them, Dr. Wrenn has settled in and made a new home for herself here at Trinity. A lover of hiking trails and good food, she's found joy in exploring Columbus' park and restaurant scenes with her husband, Tim, and her two children.

Take a Spring Semester Class Available to Remote Learners

Clergy seeking continuing education, lay leaders seeking additional formation, and others looking to “test the water” of seminary are invited to participate in spring classes as auditors. Remote students will be able to video call into on-campus classes, which are equipped with technology to support an integrative, healthy learning experience for students in the physical classroom and students joining classes in real-time from other locations.

- HTS 1025 Church History II (M/W 8:30-9:45am ET), The Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder
- BL 2022 Old Testament II (M/W 10:45am-12pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn
- HTS 1001 Faith Seeking Understanding (M/W 1:30-2:45pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Mark Rich
- MN 1001 Person in Ministry (Tu/Th 8:30-9:45am ET), The Rev. Dr. Brad Binau
- MN 2171 Music in the Contemporary Church (Tu/Th 1:30-3:15pm ET, 7-week course), Prof. May Schwarz
- HTS 3144 Our Humanity: Creation and New Creation (Tu 3:30-6:15pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Kevin Dudley
- HTS 2218 Church & Community in the Black Experience (W 3:30-6:15pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Kevin Dudley
- MN 1672 Spanish Liturgy (Th 11-11:50am ET), The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn
- MN 2511 Seven Deadly Sins (Th 3:30-6:15pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Brad Binau
- HTS 2307 Intro to Womanist Theology (Th 6:30-9:15pm ET), The Rev. Dr. Beverly Wallace
- BL 3137 Feminist Biblical Interpretation (Online asynchronous), The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn

If you are interested in joining, please contact A.J. Minney (aminney2@capital.edu, 614-236-6131).

Holy Land Trip

Calling all travelers! You are invited to join seminary students on their spring 2022 trip to the Holy Land!

Land in Tel Aviv, visit Jaffa, and ride in the Sea of Galilee. Travel to Mount Carmel, Nazareth, Bethsaida, Capernaum, the Mount of Beatitudes, Caesarea Philippi, Bethlehem, the Western Wall, and more.

The trip will be led by Trinity Bible professor and Hebrew Bible scholar, the Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn, and Trinity Professor Emeritus and New Testament scholar, the Rev. Dr. Walter F. Taylor.

Trip dates are April 26th-May 10th.

Contact A.J. Minney (aminney2@capital.edu) for more information and to join the trip!

2022 Nelson W. Trout Lectures January 20th & 21st

The Trout Lectures honor the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Nelson W. Trout (1920-1996). He was a Trinity Lutheran Seminary alumnus, a member of the Trinity faculty, and the first African American elected to serve as a Lutheran bishop.

Trinity is delighted to announce that the 2022 Nelson W. Trout Lectures will feature Bishop Yehiel Curry, who currently serves as the Bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Please note this year's lectures will be held in-person, though keynote addresses will be recorded and available on Trinity's YouTube channel in the days following the event.

Registration is open now at capital.edu/trout-lectures/



Bishop Yehiel Curry

Prayer Labyrinth Dedication Reflection

Editor's Note: The following piece is from Pastor Lisa Bernheisel (Trinity '03), classmate of Aaron Blankenhorn (Capital '99, Trinity '03)

On Friday, September 24, 2021, Trinity and Capital dedicated a new prayer labyrinth that sits on the eastern side of Trinity's campus on College Avenue in memory of Aaron Blankenhorn. Aaron was a fellow seminarian and dear friend of mine who graduated from Capital University in 1999 and Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 2003. The Labyrinth sits between two of the places that shaped his life and ministry. Aaron died tragically on October 3, 2006, in an auto accident leaving behind his wife and their two young children. Our entire graduating class wept hearing the news of his untimely death.

Aaron was like the brother I never had. His wit, love of life, and desire to follow Jesus and serve the church were contagious. The Spirit shined brightly through him. It shined so much that God inspired Shane Michael Sonnenberg who, for his senior thesis project as a religion major at Capital, proposed that a labyrinth be constructed as a place of meditation in memory of his beloved pastor and mentor, Aaron Blankenhorn. Many worked together to secure funding and complete the project this past fall. The Labyrinth is now dedicated and an open space for meditation and prayer for all to come and commune with the divine.

When Aaron and I graduated from Seminary, we were so excited about what was ahead of us. Now he is dead, and I have stage 4 colon cancer and after 34 rounds of chemotherapy and a painful liver surgery, I am facing another 12 rounds of aggressive chemo. Life is never what you envision, and yet God is there in the midst of the struggle. That is the way of the cross, ushering you through it, giving you strength to get up another day and face whatever is in front of you because nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus, not car accidents, cancer, or death.

On September 24th, I was feeling sad about missing Aaron's Labyrinth dedication. I had chemo earlier in the week and was not feeling very well. I started the day reflecting on the emptiness of this long chemo journey, feeling it and being sad but then, the Spirit stirred in me...

We live in a suburb of Cincinnati and after I dropped our youngest child off at school, I just kept driving - TO COLUMBUS!

It was a beautiful day to drive, and I thoroughly enjoyed the goldenrod and asters that lined the highway. I saw many red-tailed hawks along the way. These were all indications to continue on. It was a pilgrimage.

I made it to the Seminary to have time by myself beforehand to pray all alone at the Prayer Labyrinth. It was a contemplative day... I sat, I meditated, I walked, I prayed. I remembered. I grieved, I cried, I mourned death. I celebrated life, I laughed, I smiled. It was amazing. Wow, God. Thank you.

The breeze was cool, and the sun was hot. I gave thanks for Trinity and all that it did to help shape me to be the person I am today. I sent deep prayers of gratitude for my professors, administrators, the staff, my fellow students, all who had gone before there and all who would go after there. I remembered those in my class who have died, retired, or changed careers,



An early 2000s seminary admissions publication features Lisa Bernheisel, Aaron Blankenhorn, and Beth Hartfiel studying together.



The Prayer Labyrinth is located in the Fred Meuser Courtyard, adjacent to College Ave.

and for those in active ministry. I gave thanks for the past 18 years of my life that have brought me to this point.

It was a Spirit-filled dedication with beautiful words spoken about Aaron and the Labyrinth. Many came to celebrate the moment, honor Aaron, and give thanks to God's steadfast love through it all. The Labyrinth was dedicated as a place where people of all faiths can walk together as we are led by the Spirit. It is a wonderful place of hospitality and welcome for all. The world needs that. Christ is the gracious host and invites all to come and be who we are as we honor the Spirit at work in the world.

Life is short. Live boldly in your time as you are led by the Spirit. Perhaps the Spirit is nudging you too to get in the car and drive to Trinity to walk the Labyrinth, to meditate, to remember, to mourn, to rejoice, and to celebrate life.

Rev. Lisa Bernheisel is a mother of four, ELCA Pastor, certified Spiritual Director, and Associate Priest at St. Timothy Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, OH

Seminary Dollars and Sense

The University's fiscal year ended on June 30, 2021, marking the close of Trinity's third full fiscal year as Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University. We are so very pleased to report that Trinity revenues have exceeded direct seminary operating expenses for each of these years.

While mission was a primary force behind Trinity becoming part of Capital in 2018, greater financial stability was also an important goal. Through our reliance on Capital for many services (business and finance, IT, and the like), Trinity has been able to cut operating expenses significantly. And it's a two-way street: Capital benefits from the residence hall and apartments that Trinity brought to this new relationship, as well as the ability to use spaces like Gloria Dei and Koinonia, not to mention classrooms, conference rooms, and even a parking lot!

In short, the decision to bring Trinity and Capital together is working. But our newfound financial stability does not guarantee sustainability for the long haul. Both seminaries and universities are facing financial challenges. We need the committed financial support of donors who share our mission and vision.



This year, every Trinity student with demonstrated financial need is receiving scholarship aid from the seminary. The majority of them are receiving full-tuition scholarships. In January, we look forward to welcoming the largest class of new students with spring-term start dates in recent memory. And as our enrollment grows, our need for scholarship dollars will increase.

We are dreaming big dreams here at Trinity. Despite the challenges we have faced, especially since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020, we have continued to experience the generosity of old and new friends alike. We are thankful for your investment in Trinity's mission of forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

Contextual Education Endowment

During the State of the Seminary Address at the 2021 Trinity Days, Dean Kit Kleinhans was pleased to announce the seminary's new Contextual Education Endowment, which received its first lead gift this fall. Once fully funded, the endowment will subsidize the cost of hosting an intern at internship sites that cannot support the full cost on their own, cover the expense of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and offset the cost of travel seminars, like the upcoming trip to the Holy Land (see page 5).

Pastor Julie Hutson, Director of Contextual and Experiential Formation, is excited about the burgeoning endowment, as it will be transformative for Trinity students and serve the church. It will afford Trinity students more opportunity to serve in rural ministry, inner-city ministry, and in other vital ministries that are sometimes under-funded.

According to Pastor Hutson, we aim to offer our students "a robust and deeply faithful contextual education experience." An essential part of this is noticing the church's diverse ministries--new and old--and introducing our students to them.

The new Contextual Education Endowment will help us build, grow, and adapt. Through it, we will be able to grow in our ability to expose students to the richness, depth, and diversity of Christ's church at work in the world.

If you would like to give to the Contextual Education Endowment or if you would like more information, please contact the Seminary's new Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement, Rev. Mary Ann Harris Siefke (msiefke@capital.edu, 614-236-6301).

Community News

In May of this year, Mr. **Dan Johnson** (Trinity '87) published a novel, *Date of Birth Unknown*, with Adelaide Books.

Dr. Kathy R. Higgins writes to share that her sister, the Rev. **Janice A. Berthinee** (Trinity '99), died on August 16th of this year in St. Louis, MO. Rev. Berthinee served two Lutheran churches in the Northwestern Ohio Synod.

In August 2021, Dr. **Seth Gaiters** (Trinity '10) completed his Ph.D. at the Ohio State University and began a tenure-track position in the department of Philosophy and Religion at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington. Dr. Gaiters will also be affiliated with UNCW's Africana Studies program.

The Rev. **Kristin McCarthy** (Trinity '21) was ordained on November 19, 2021. She has been called to serve as Pastor of Prince of Glory Lutheran Church in Madison Heights, Michigan; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Royal Oak, Michigan; and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clawson, Michigan.

On August 15, 2021, the Rev. **Evan McVann** (Trinity '21) was ordained as a Minister of Word Sacrament and installed at Salem Lutheran Church in Creston, IA.

Submit Community News for future issues of *The Trinity Connection* at tinyurl.com/SemUpdate

Stay in Touch

Reach out to us!

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Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University has adopted an affirmation of welcome to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and is recognized as Reconciling in Christ (RIC).

Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.

OTHER NEWS & NOTES

Welcoming Trinity's New Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement



Trinity is delighted to welcome the Rev. Mary Ann Harris Siefke, the seminary's new Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement. Pastor Mary Ann holds a Master of Arts in Church Music degree and Master of Divinity degree from Trinity.

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