CONCORDIA ST. PAUL’S OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1966.

Letter From the Editor N° 4
By Katrina Bell

Another semester is ending, another Walking Dead midseason finale has shown, and we can almost breathe because finals are almost over. This time of the year is stressful for most, considering money is tight with Christmas, most are exhausted, and people are looking forward to the holidays and getting time off to spend with loved ones. I hope that the December issue of The Sword will lift any downtrodden spirits with conversations and celebrations of holiday events around town, the aspects of great leaders, opinions about a new club that Concordia has created, and multiple insightful and meaningful convocations that have been presented.

From The Sword, congratulations to our cover feature, the Golden Bears volleyball team for winning their 8th national championship. Thank you to all who have given us wonderful feedback on our November issue. We appreciate and trust all of our writers and their skills, as well as respect the opinions they share.

We also respect the opinions of readers and welcome any criticism and positive regard given. So to everyone, thank you so much for reading. I truly hope that everyone has a safe and lovely holiday break spent with family and friends. Happy Christmas and happy New Year!

Very Sincerely,
Katrina Bell
Editor-In-Chief

CSP EVENTS

Thursday Dec. 15
- Bonding with Bunnies 10:00 am - 2:00 pm- Meyer Hall 115
- MLK Day Challenge Sign Up 10:00 am - 2:00 pm- Meyer Tunnel
- Study Palooza 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm- Student Success Center
- Holden: 10:00 pm- Chapel

Friday Dec. 16
- Donuts and Coffee 9:00 am - 11:00 am- Meyer Tunnel
- CSP Men’s Basketball vs. Bethel 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm- Gangelhoff Center (GC)

Saturday Dec. 17
- CSP Women’s Basketball vs. Mankato 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm- Gangelhoff Center (GC)
- Open STAGE 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm- Theatre 111
- CSP Men’s Basketball vs. Mankato 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm- Gangelhoff Center (GC)

Sunday December 18
- Christmas Vespers Service 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm- Chapel

Monday Dec. 19
- Moonlight Breakfast 10:00 pm-11 pm- Winget Student Life Center

Finals Schedule

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Beautiful Feet
Concordia Mission Conference 2016
By Renee Cortez

Every year, Concordia’s theology community takes a trip to the Beautiful Feet Mission Conference. This conference was first held in 1998 and is now an annual event at one of the Concordia’s across the country. It is planned by college students, for college students. This year, the conference was held at Concordia University Portland that CSP attended with a group of 27 students and faculty.

The conference began with singing, worship, a guest speaker, and washing each other’s feet in service. According to senior DCE major, Josh Eckstein, “The main idea of this conference is to support Christian mission work across the globe. There were many opportunities for people to get connected with organizations to help them be missionaries either in other countries or here in the United States.”

There were representatives from Concordia Irvine, Texas, Wisconsin, New York, Minnesota, and, of course, Portland. Combined, the group numbered over 100 and they all rose before dawn to attend morning worship before heading out to explore the Portland area. Groups piled into vans to travel to Multnomah Falls, downtown Portland, and Alberta Street.

Later that afternoon, the groups took part in various service trips. Fifth year senior Laura Taranto said, “One of my favorite moments of this conference was the service projects we got to be a part of.” She then added, “Through this experience, God ignited a passion in my heart for going out to those who are in need of help. God showed me the significant importance of personally and directly asking those who are in need how they can best be served, rather than just brainstorming on our own how a certain person in need may best be served.”

Sophomore Alex Cleary shared that, “Portland, Oregon has a high rate of homelessness. It is one of the most prevalent issues in the city. Coming from a small city in North Dakota, homelessness is not something I have seen a lot of so far in my life. Being in Portland was extremely eye-opening for me, and sparked some profound conversations.” She appreciated the experiences she had with classmates and professors during the conference and looks forward to next year.

The last day of the conference included many workshops and sessions to attend for those who are looking into mission work and using God’s messages to reach out to others. Eckstein stated, “All Christians are able to share the good news of forgiveness through Christ wherever they may be. There are always people around you that need to hear how much Jesus loves them and what He has done for them.” Beautiful Feet helped its attendees to connect with overseas mission opportunities, meet with other future church workers, and learn about the reason behind mission work: sharing the Gospel to the world.

Amidst the last night of the conference, CSP’s Cleary and Madi Schellack had an exciting announcement for the conference: Beautiful Feet 2017 will be held at Concordia University, St. Paul. A team of faculty and students are currently working on planning, scheduling speakers, and arranging outings for the event happening next year. Cleary stated, “We are so thrilled to show the students and faculty members from other Concordia’s why we love CSP! If you wish to help in any way, feel free to contact Shelly Schwalin!”

Comet’s Connections
Never Miss Out Again
By Cydi Yang

Comet’s Connections is the name of the app that is striving to connect students to campus life and increase involvement. Back in June, Kimberly Newton and Kate Larson, the C.A.L.L Center Coordinator, promoted this launch to students by holding a booth in the tunnel. A big screen TV was propped in the hall way to show the website of Comets connections and ice cream pops were offered to the students that downloaded the app. There is no catch, only the benefit for students who want to be more connected on campus.

Freshman Davis Vang said, “It’s pretty cool. All the events are there [on the app].” Freshman John Vue stated, “I use it once every week to see what events are up, and because I have CSP seminar class. I thought it was pretty helpful because, instead of sending an email, you can just open your app and see what events are going on.”

This new app is still in the process of upgrading, as more students give their opinions, the creators will know better how to enhance the app. Freshman Garret Hultgren commented on improvements he would like to see with the app. He disliked that there were old events that he had to scroll through to get to the current events, he wished there was a format where events can be organized in day, week, or monthly form, similar to Google Calendar. Hultgren also wanted to see what clubs there were available on campus, find club information, and when club meetings were held.

Students were unaware that there was a website version of the app as well on CSP Connect, with the link to Comet’s Connection that allows individuals to see the different clubs and events. Every club has its own website, stating meetings, mission statements, and constitution. The events on the website, unlike the app, were organized in a day, week, and monthly format. The website is rich with information and soon enough, the app will adopt these parts as well.

Newton wants students to be more involved and know that she is a resource, and a point of contact for connections. She encourages students to stop by her office if they need anything.

As this buzzing new app enhances over the years, it inevitably will become crucial for students to download this app, and it will ultimately become part of the campus experience.
Committee Spotlight
C.A.R.E. Committee
By Brooke Steigaf

The C.A.R.E. committee is being recognized for its work on Concordia’s campus, uniting students of all races and identities. C.A.R.E. stands for Coalition for Acceptance, Respect and Equity, they live this out by bringing about awareness of differences and celebrating diversity. It is a board of faculty and staff who are passionate and devoted to creating a welcoming environment for the wide variety of people that Concordia proudly supports.

The university was motivated to create the committee after a series of observers from Concordia expressed concern that there was a circumstances of unease about ethnic variations on campus. A panel of competent and determined Concordia University members were then established to actively promote a harmonious community of diverse students, faculty, and staff, not just on the subject of race, but encompassing all differences that exist in our diverse world. Their goal is to bring consciousness of the misunderstanding and discrepancy that still exist between people different from oneself, through engaging in activities that respond to specific situations, biases, and misconceptions about different aspects of identity.

An important part of the committee’s efforts is to play into the idea that if we were able to get to know each other as real people—not just labels—less judgment would be passed. Dr. Basma Ibrahim DeVries, another committee member, has incorporated much of this same energy and awareness into her past and current intercultural communications courses. In recent years, she has given her students the opportunity to take responsibility for their university, by allowing her students to choose how they would like to promote equality and coexistence. Dr. DeVries recalls a “hoodie march” that was done after the tragic death of Trayvon Martin in 2012, initiated and led by her students, drawing attention to prejudice beliefs within our legal system. Her students also created a “2 seconds” movement, after learning that it takes the human brain only two seconds to decide whether or not a person is worth our time and energy. In this exercise, students wore pins reading “2 seconds” every day for two weeks, to spark questions and promote conversation and knowledge of the limits our minds subconsciously set on a daily basis.

Dr. Cheryl Chatman, chair of the committee, believes that in order to systemize situations in identifiable examples of discriminatory tendencies. This exercise and off campus. The C.A.R.E. committee also promoted an online survey that was designed specifically for Concordia University, giving probable examples of discriminatory situations in identifiable places on campus, further creating an understanding that discrimination is still a very real thing in today’s world and on our school grounds. The anonymous and private survey asked students, faculty, and staff how they would most likely respond to these unjust situations of inequality, and then gave suggestions and strategies of how to handle the plight within their personal comfort zone and tendencies. This exercise was yet another effort to develop transparency and understanding of the differences that CSP celebrates.

The committee is currently working on a diversity plan that will fully engage people’s sensitivities so that more will be motivated to become advocates for mutual understanding and love between all people of Concordia University. This plan will take into consideration the current issues, trends, and views of both Concordia’s population, and the world as a whole, to ensure that the university’s mission is fulfilled and everyone feels safe and welcome on campus. The committee encourages students and other faculty members to voice their experiences or inputs on the subject by contacting any of the board members. If you wish to remain anonymous but still share your story, concern, or feedback, please contact any of the below C.A.R.E. committee members through campus mail.

Dr. Cheryl Chatman, Executive VP & Dean of Diversity
Tiffanie Loeb-Schneider, Director or International Student Services
Adrian Perryman, Assistant Director of Academic Advising
Matt Ryan, Professor, English
Choua Vang, Admissions Counselor
Dr. Basma Ibrahim DeVries, Professor, COM Studies
Dr. Kris Bransford, Professor, Psychology
Melissa Fletcher, M.A., Director of Accessibility Services
Cate Vermeland, Professor, Photography

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President Trump’s Plans

By Brooke Strigau

ew President-Elect of the United States, Donald Trump, announced his plans for his first 100 days in office, touching on many of his ongoing promises, such as immigration and foreign defense policies. He pledged to retire environmental restrictions created by Obama, ensure protection by the national security team against infrastructure attacks, and “have the Labor Department investigate federal worker visas and impose broad new bans on lobbying by government employees,” (cnn.com).

He also plans to retract the country from the Trans-Pacific trade deal, which is accountable for 40% of the world’s economy and requires ratification from all twelve signed countries to continue (bbc.com). All of these tasks are relatively easy for Trump to authorize, considering they do not require any oversight or consent from Congress. Failed to be reiterated, were many of his key areas of action vocalized throughout his election, these being bigger tasks such as building a wall along the Mexican Border, creating a “deportation force,” and establishing new restraints targeting immigration from Muslim countries.

Along with these, Trump had also discussed annulment of Obamacare and putting some $1 trillion towards improving infrastructure (cnn.com). These undertakings are a bit more complex and harder to execute, needing Congressional approval. The presidential elect also plans on setting term limits on the entirety of Congress through a proposal for a new Constitutional Amendment, as well as creating a 5-year restriction on Congress and White House officials, preventing them from converting to lobbyists after retiring from government services. On the topic of lobbyists, Trump also intends to forbid the pressing of this type of political action by White House officials and propose a complete ban on foreign lobbyists raising money for U.S. elections.

Trump said that he is determined to create wealth and jobs for Americans, hoping that the upcoming generation of “production and innovation” will flourish throughout his four years in office. With his vow to terminate participation in the Trans-Pacific trade deal, he wants to emplace “fair bilateral trade deals,” appointing new negotiators whose goal is to “win for America.”

He also intends to begin the deportation of two million illegal immigrants in the country and withhold immigration for terror-prone regions of the world to protect the safety of the United States, stating, “All vetting of people in this country will be considered extreme vetting.”

Trump also shared with “60 Minutes” that he has considered keeping many of the key elements of Obamacare, but also plans to “lift the roadblocks” in order to expand and advance infrastructure pursuits, such as the Keystone Pipeline. He plans to limit taxes on all business income forms to 15% and would “exclude child care expenses from taxation.”

EpiPen Price Spike: Who Benefits?

By Cydi Yang

he price of EpiPens has peaked to unreasonable prices in recent years. Back in 2009, it was only $100 to purchase a two-pen set, but as of 2016, buyers have to pay $600 for that same item. Mylan pharmaceutical company is the manufacturer of these life-saving pens, used for times of emergency when an individual experiences a severe allergic reaction.

The epinephrine hormone held in the pen container is used to counteract the allergic reaction when it is injected into the thigh of the individual. The price spike does not sit well with family members who use it or have young children who need this item for emergencies. In the New York Times, a woman by the name of Naomi Shulman has a 12-year-old daughter who is allergic to cashews. She had to make a co-payment of $100 out of pocket and an additional $400 for the two pen set.

Shulman later contacted her insurance company who told her that her total payment was actually $700 in total. Shulman stated, “It’s gouging parents about their children’s lives. It’s not like letting them sniffle. It’s life or death.” Mylan has raised the price of EpiPens over the years, because of the high demand for this product and because it is the only company selling this item. Other companies have tried to implement similar generic EpiPen products which would help to create a less monopolized industry, but the FDA did not allow these products go through.

Rachel Sun, who wrote a commentary in The Bottom Line news, stated, “Their [Mylan] unethical practice is worsened the fact that Mylan’s CEO Heather Bresch’s income, as of 2016, has seen a 671% increase. In 2007, when the EpiPen was first acquired by Mylan, Bresch’s earning was $2,453,456. In 2015, her total compensation was $18,931,068.”

Mylan was also charged with a $465 million pending settlement due to their false listing of their product as a generic brand, in order to pay smaller rebates to Medicaid, compared to a branded product. Truthfully, EpiPen is a branded product with the U.S Food and Drug Administration.

This issue has sparked the interest of Senator Amy Klobuchar, Democrat of Minnesota, Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa, Tonya Winders, the president of the Allergy & Asthma Network, and they all want to find a way to resolve this price spike.

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Soccer team from Brazil killed in plane crash: Cinderella Story Turned Deadly
By Cyndi Yang

Fans of the Chapecoense soccer team, in mourning and in tears, gathered at the Arena Conda stadium in Chapeco, Brazil on Tuesday November 29th, the day after the crash, to pay their respects to the rising team. On Wednesday, November 30th, a remembrance was held at the Atanasio Giradot Stadium in Medellin, Columbia for the victims. On November 28th evening, the plane owned by LaMia airlines departed from Bolivia’s Viru International Airport, filled with excitement and obliviousness to what was about to happen. A few hours into the flight, the plane made an emergency call about electrical failure, stated by the authorities; soon after, it crashed into a mountainous area called Cerro El Gordo near Medellin, Columbia. Other investigations to why the plane went down discovered that it may have been due to the lack of fuel. 71 out of the 77 people who boarded the plane perished in the accident, with only six survivors; three players, two crew members and a journalist. Almost all of the beloved players died in the crash, along with 20 journalists who joined them, in hopes to capture the Chapecoense soccer team on their journey to the Copa Sudamericana finals, the second-biggest international club competition in South America. The Chapecoense soccer team, from the small town of Chapeco began their journey to success over the years as they rose in ranks initially as the underdog, gaining more publicity, and finally reaching the South American Cup finals.

Keir Radnedge of World Soccer magazine told CNN, “It’s a Cinderella football story. They’ve only been in the top division in Brazil for the last couple of years, and they’ve reached the Copa Sudamericana final… What they have achieved in the last couple of years was just amazing.” According to Huffingtonpost, Jen Panegalli, a student in Chapeco, “They were the hope of our city. They played for love of the shirt and not for money. They played with the commitment that only those who have lived here know.”

After this tragedy, many are still in mourning, and scars that will be hard to heal, but plans are being made to keep the team together. According to Globo, 11 clubs have asked the Brazilian football federation to keep Chapecoense in Series A and be exempt from relegation for three seasons. “The teams also have offered to loan players from their teams.” CNN reported.

The Great Barrier Reef: Alive and in Need of Your Help
By Brooke Steigauft

Most people have one of two relationships with the Great Barrier Reef: either they have experienced its beauty while scuba diving during their tropical vacation or recognize it simply for its grim situation. Many were alarmed in March of last year when the largest coral bleaching, caused by global warming’s rise in sea water temperatures, reaped over 93% of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef.

Those who heard this story probably internalized the headline “Great Barrier Reef Pronounced Dead,” a title that had scientists screaming. In fact, it is still alive, although very, very ill. Scientists and environmental activists expressed grave concern that this false message would lead to the public giving up on the Great Barrier Reef, in a time when its protection and health needs more nurturance and help than ever, as it supports hundreds of types of coral and an abundance of other sea life. Although the reef is under severe threat, its fight is not over.

The process of coral bleaching involves photosynthetic algae called zooxanthellae (which covers and is relied on by the coral for food) to turn white in response to higher water temperature, leaving the coral more susceptible to disease. Once the sea temperature has returned to normal, the coral has the opportunity to regain its strength, but since the bleaching episodes are becoming longer and more frequent, few corals have sufficient time to recover.

Ocean acidification is also an effect of global warming, caused by carbon dioxide in the atmosphere settling into the sea water. With lower pH levels, the corals are not able to absorb the calcium carbonate necessary to maintain their skeletons. The combination of this and mass amounts of coral bleaching has led to a rumored 75% of loss in coral reefs, a number that continues to rise.

It is no secret that the Great Barrier Reef is in dire need of protection and change, although few acknowledge the intensity of its problems and the domino effect that it will cause. Although it covers less than one percent of the ocean floor, the Great Barrier Reef houses at least ten percent of the world’s total fish population, as noted on greatbarrierreef.org, proving the reef to be imperative to the global economy and food industry. Not only is the reef crucial to the survival of a multitude of ocean life and humans, it also accumulates over $30 billion a year in global goods and services which greatly impacts the revenue yielded by the U.S.

This being said, there is hope for the reef. Australia and Queensland governments have joined together, promising to give around $200 million a year to the protection and preservation of the Great Barrier Reef, working to improve the amounts of runoff, coastal habitat, and water quality, according to environment.gov. Aside from this, there are plenty of ways that civilians can help as well that are just as critical to the survival of the reefs.

Using less water ensures less pollution and runoff into our oceans, creating a cleaner, safer environment for the reefs to recover and the fish population to flourish. Also, biking, walking, and taking the bus reduces the amount of carbon emissions released, which can slow global warming so that coral bleaching is less common and less deadly to the reefs. Be sure to do your part in securing the corals of the Great Barrier Reef for the good of the entire world.

Holiday Sights & Shows in the Twin Cities: Brave the Cold for Winter Fun
By Reece Currie

Winter in Minnesota comes with many feelings. Bitter winds and frosty mornings don’t usually inspire us to jump out of bed and spend the day outdoors. Shoveling heaps of snow, stalling cars, and icy highways keep us tucked inside our warm homes and apartments.

However, with the (so-far) docile winter temperatures, this December is a Minnesotans dream come true! If you bundle up against the chilly gusts of air and bring along a hot thermos of coffee or cider,
Continued from page 6

you’ll be able to explore all that the Twin Cities has to offer this holiday season! Listed below are a sampling of the activities and adventures that every Minnesotan can enjoy.

Canadian Pacific Holiday Train:
Perfect for the whole family, the CP Holiday Train is decorated in festive lights, wreaths, and a beautiful tree. At each train stop, visitors can drink hot cocoa, participate in a horse-drawn wagon ride, and be entertained with live music, provided by American a cappella group, Home Free.

With a mission to raise awareness and collect donations to fight food insecurity in local communities, the CP Holiday Train is a stop you’ll love to support. Over 21 cities will host a stop for this year’s CP Holiday Train, including St Paul, Minneapolis, and Golden Valley. Find the full listing at cpca.ca/holiday-train/schedule-united-states.

The Nutcracker:
Nothing says Christmas quite like The Nutcracker ballet, and the Twin Cities is full of showings. Bring your family or closest friends to a wonderful evening full of dancing, a magical dream world, and thrilling music. In Minneapolis, Nutcracker Fantasy is showing Dec. 16–23. Pricing is listed on the baller’s website.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever:
A yearly tradition, Steppingstone is putting on a final showing of The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. A show filled with laughter and warm holiday feelings, you won’t want to miss this fabulous performance. Playing Dec. 2-23. Tickets $12-16.

La Natividad:
Join Mary and Joseph as they journey among the streets to find a place to rest. Performed in English and Spanish and based on the Mexican tradition La Posada, viewers participate in the journey as they follow the couple to four locations in the community.

Minneapolis Winter Events

Skate:
This beautiful ice rink is home to St. Paul’s Christmas tree and the whole park is draped in twinkling lights. Skating under open skies captures the spirit of the holiday, as does the joyful Christmas music that accompanies your skate. Open daily. Free.

A Christmas Carol:
Perhaps you’re feeling a little grumpy this holiday season? Seeing a showing of the classic A Christmas Carol at the Guthrie Theatre will surely help you put your woes behind you. The Guthrie is putting this show on for the 42nd time and is a cherished event in the Twin Cities. Nov 16–Dec 30. Tickets starting at $46.

A Country Christmas:
Perhaps you’re wishing for a twang to be added to your holiday events. See Home Free live at the Northrup Memorial Auditorium at the U of M as they sing new music (and add a special new member to the band). Dec 21. Tickets starting at $29, available at tickets.umn.edu

An Evening with George Winston:

For classical piano lovers, this event at Orchestra Hall is made specifically for you. From traditional favorites to Winston’s own compositions, this show will surely put you in the holiday mood. Dec 23. Tickets start at $30.

Ua Ntsaug Night Article, CHUSA, submitted by Cydi Yang

Ua Ntsaug Night: Night of Thanks

By Cydi Yang

The sound of coins jingling in the hallway was the cue for the night to begin. CHUSA (Concordia Hmong University Student Association) is committed to promote and educate about the Hmong culture and history through academic support, events and collaborations. CHUSA is the club that annually hosts Ua Ntsaug (Thank you) Night. Its purpose is to gather family and friends together in one space and for all to show appreciation for each other, enjoy delicious food, and be entertained with performances and activities.

This night usually takes place in mid-November in the Buenger Education Center (BEC).

At 4:00 pm on November 18th neared, the board members and volunteers rushed to the BEC to decorate and prepare for the event that started two hours later. Gold and purple confetti strings hung across the room, gold and purple ribbons decorated the center pieces.

A gold photo booth in the back inscribed with “CHUSA” was set up to take photos for the night. The preparation period consisted of chatting, volunteering and board members coming in and out, making sure the technology was working, ensuring decorations were perfect and performers were present. As the program began, the attendees rolled into the BEC, some wearing modern styles of Hmong clothing, others wearing traditional attire. Little girls in shiny ethnic clothing walked in asking where they can practice, as they were one of the performers of the night. A group of men in black vests and white flannel walked in with their musical instrument, the qeej, in hand. The board members started off the night introducing themselves and their club. After that, the microphone was handed to the two emcees, Bert Lee and Loc Luong.

The night consisted of great performances such as a story telling piece, singing, guitar playing, flute playing, a short partner dance the board and general members put together, and a humorous boy band group, by the name of X-tra Large Bang, newly created just for the event to sing a mash up of songs. When the band played, everybody was encouraged to come to the front and join in the interactive dance line. Students, friends, mothers, fathers, and children all joined together at the front stage laughing and attempting to learn the dance line routine.

Dinner was provided with dishes such as chicken pad thai, egg rolls, papaya salad and beef and broccoli. Twenty white clothed tables were filled with people ready to celebrate a night of thanks and enjoyment of family and entertainment.
Peace on Campus:
A Conversation with President Ries
By Brooke Steigauf

On Wednesday, November 30th, President Ries hosted a discussion in the chapel regarding a new club at CSP, called P.E.A.C.E, which stands for People Encouraging Acceptance, Connection, and Equality, intended to create a "safe space" for students who find themselves "outside of society's heteronormative standards." The public conversation was a result of an article printed by The Sword in the November issue, and the controversy surrounding it.

The conversation began with a statement from President Ries describing the origins of the club and the intent to create an environment of bilateral respect among all of CSP's community. The establishment of the club involved a long series of discussions among Concordia's students, faculty, staff, and board of regents, a process that Concordia has been working at for five years now. Many agreed that the session was civil and constructive, as campus members with many different perspectives disclosed their thoughtful opinions and questions, showing extraordinary critical thinking on the highly complex and controversial topic of sexual orientation in relation to the teachings of scriptures and doctrinal positions of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

It is a hot subject in any conservative religious institution, and finding a solution that would appease all sides of the dispute has proved a difficult task. To revere the Word of God, honor Concordia's promise statement, and ensure that all people are treated with respect and dignity, despite conflicting values, is a seemingly strenuous pursuit.

However, it has been made clear that the goal of the institution's condonance of the creation of the P.E.A.C.E Club is simply to offer students who are struggling with sexual identity a place of security and acceptance, and does not reflect the university's acceptance of sexual relations that don't reflect the behavior that is in accordance with the LCMS.

In his address to the attendants at the chapel event, President Ries said, "The P.E.A.C.E Club is intended to be a venue within which students will 'foster a climate of mutual respect and open communication' around matters of sexual identity within the context of the university's Mission and Promise statements." With the understanding that the university is not in any way endorsing anything other than the LCMS doctrine for what sexual behavior is norm, the P.E.A.C.E Club represents the university's effort to honor Christ and welcome all, including people of different beliefs, backgrounds, and identities.

The point has been made that there will be no such thing as a victory for either side of the argument, making it an aspiration that people who disagree about sensitive matters will still come together in love and respect, the closest thing to a resolution.

The P.E.A.C.E Club is this aspiration in action, which vows to recognize the Christian teachings and practice proper application of the Lutheran law and gospel. Executive Vice President and Dean of Diversity, Dr. Cheryl Chatman expressed her hope that both the club and campus members use this opportunity and others as motivation for more civil dialogue about differences, and to take time to listen and reflect in order to find harmony among all types of diversity and varying viewpoints.
Men’s Basketball Searches for Consistency  
By Tanner Peterson

The Concordia men’s basketball program kicked off their season with an exhibition battle against Northland College on November 2nd where the Golden Bears grinded out the win with a score of 73-65. Even though CSP shot an ice cold 15.8% from beyond the arc, they managed to find their groove as they were men amongst boys on the boards as they out rebounded the Lumberjacks 46 to 21, and outscored them in points in the paint 40 to 14.

After the win, the Golden Bears packed up and headed south to Des Moines Iowa to face Drake University in another exhibition game. Concordia played the bulldogs well, but Drake flexed their division I muscles and out manned CSP in a close one, with a final score of 75-81. From there, the Golden Bears packed up their sun screen and sun glasses to head down to Puerto Rico where they would kick off the regular season with three games in Bayamon. The beaches must have been a distraction, because the Golden Bears dropped all three games while down south.

After basking in the sun, CSP was welcomed home with a non-conference game against Bemidji State in the paint 40 to 14. Limited the opposing team to zero fast break points. The Golden Bears wrapped up their home stand with a non-conference competition against Michigan tech, and once again the Golden Bears found their groove and got the win with a score of 85 – 80. It was a team win as six players scored in double figures. Bryndan Matthews led the way with 17 points and nine rebounds. The Golden Bears outscored the Huskies 46 – 26 in points in the paint. With the Golden Bears rolling on a three game winning streak and contributions from everywhere, this should be a fun time to be a Golden Bear basketball fan.

National Champions: Golden Bears End Season in Incredible Fashion  
By Michael Limmel

Since the Golden Bears had their stretch of seven consecutive national championships snapped in 2014, their main goal has been to make it back, and win their eighth National Championship in program history.

After two years ago, losing to Southwest Minnesota State (SMSU) in the 2014 Central Region Tournament, Concordia was poised to make a run for the national championship last year. However, Wayne State spoiled that by punching the Golden Bears out in the 2015 Central Region Championship match. The Golden Bears entered this season ranked #1 in the country. They won 22 straight sets before dropping just one set, in a 3-1 set victory over SMSU. The Golden Bears started the season 13-0 before facing, at the time, #2 ranked Minnesota Duluth where Concordia lost in a wild five set match.

Two weeks later, they lost again dropping another five set match to SMSU. Despite dropping to games in the middle of the season the Golden Bears didn’t let them faze them from their ultimate goal of winning the national championship.Entering the Region Tournament, the Golden Bears had a tough road ahead of them.

The Central Region is one of the strongest in the nation when it comes to Division II volleyball. Of the eight teams in the region, the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) ranked seven of them in the top-eight. Concordia cruised through the field capturing their 10th Central Region Championship.

The Golden Bears advanced to the Elite Eight to face American International University on Thursday, December 8. They made quick work of the Yellow Jackets sweeping them in a three set match. After that, Concordia went up against the Lewis Flyers on Dec. 9, and once again the Golden Bears crushed their opponent winning 25-18, 25-16 and 25-18 advancing them to the national championship match against the University of Alaska-Anchorage.

In the first set, the Seawolves looked like they were going to give the Golden Bears a good match. The second set the Seawolves jumped out to an early lead, but then the Golden Bears took off and left the Seawolves in their dust as Hope Schiller’s three aces in a span of four points helped the Golden Bears to an 8-0 run in the second set that the Golden Bears to 25-12. The Golden Bears finished off the Seawolves in the third set winning the set 25-12 cementing the Golden Bears in history winning the programs eighth national championship in 10 years. Four Golden Bears were named to the NCAA All-Tournament Team. Senior Riley Hanson, who finishes her career in possession of Concordia’s all-time best hitting percentage. Senior Kasey Williams, who finishes her career fourth all-time in CSP’s record for assists. Senior Emma Lange, who finishes her career fourth highest in hitting percentage at CSP. Lastly,
**Male Athlete of the Month: Darius Chapes**

By Cole Schuessler

After the 2015 season, there was uncertainty on who would carry the load for the Concordia rushing attack in 2016. Fortunately for the Golden Bears, senior running back Darius Chapes stepped up and delivered for the Golden Bears. Chapes rushed for 700 yards on 128 carries and found the end zone five times on the ground, while also contributing 16 receptions for 226 and a touchdown.

As one of the four team captains, Chapes’ impressive 5.5 yards a carry and a team high 926 all-purpose yards (92.6 per game) helped lead CSP’s offense throughout the 2016 season. After one season at Stenson University, Chapes transferred to Concordia St. Paul, where he recently finished his third season as a Golden Bear.

Reflecting on his three years at CSP, Chapes stated, “I have learned that this is a very diverse world, and even though someone may have a different background or come from a different place, you may have a lot more in common then you realize.”

Chapes is majoring in business management and is still looking at options for a future career.

As a senior leader on the team, Chapes was named a team captain before the season started. The running back talked about trying to change the culture of the program by bringing excitement and commitment to the team. “I’ve always lead by example, but this year I have tried to step into the role of being a more vocal leader,” Chapes said.

“I think it is essential to have both qualities if you want to be an effective leader and or captain.”

Before this season, the most yards Chapes had rushed for in a season was 372, which was last year in his 2015 campaign. This year, Chapes greatly surpassed that mark, as his 700 yards on the ground made him the team’s bell cow back and leading rusher by nearly 500 hundred yards.

Standing at 6 foot and weighing in at 207 lbs., Chapes used a combination of power of speed this season with a similar running style to his favorite NFL player, Pittsburgh Steelers running back Le’Veon Bell. The senior back attributed to his increased success to off-season work.

“This past winter and summer is the hardest I have worked on my craft throughout my football career.” Chapes said. “From eating right to studying film and other players of my position, I really went all in for this season.”

The extra work has indeed paid off for Chapes, as he lead the Golden Bears through the 2016 season both in statistical measures and as a senior captain. The running back was rewarded at the conclusion of the season, as he was named as an All-NSIC South Division honorable mention performer.

After a successful career at Concordia, Chapes finished out his time on the football field by carrying the pigskin for 1,389 yards as well as recording 24 catches for 293 receiving yards and 10 total touchdowns. And though the senior captain was not always a star for the Golden Bears, his hard work and dedication lead

**Female Athlete of the Month: Emma Lange**

By Allison Larson

Emma Lange from the small town of Caledonia Minnesota is ready to close one chapter and start another. Lange just finished up the sport she has been playing since she was six years old. “I just had limbs everywhere. I was a skinny little kid who flew her hands everywhere.” Lange has always been interested in volleyball, and after one camp she was hooked. She continuously went to camps because of everything in such small town there wasn’t a team available to play on. When she was in seventh and eighth grade she found a team, and was able learn and hone her skills. When entering her freshman year of high school, she played on varsity all the way up to her senior year. Closing out the end of the volleyball season, Lange tried to soak up as much of the sport as she could.

Coming into college Lange thought she knew everything about the game, but was surprised at how much there was still to learn. It was more than she imagined. “The game teaches you mental toughness, you can have all the physical ability in the world, but if you’re not able to stay mentally tough through adversity and hard times in the game then your physical player is going to break down because your head isn’t in the right spot.”

Emma has always focused on one game at a time. “You’re not going to get anywhere unless you focus on the team on the other side of the net every game.” She hopes that if she takes away anything from playing so long is patience, and learning to adapt to different situations.

Lange stated that she knows that not everybody is the same as her, but that you have to be versatile and patient with everyone and having a positive attitude with everything you do. Lange is currently finishing up her degree in Psychology, while minoring in Family Sciences. While enduring the labors of applying to graduate schools, Emma hopes to get accepted into a few schools such as Adler, Marquette University, or the University of Colorado, Denver. When she gets into graduate school Lange plans to get her masters in clinical mental health counseling. Her spring semester, she will mostly focus on her internship at St. David’s center in Minnetonka, where she will work in their autism day treatment center.

She looks forward to working with different therapist and working with kids in the program. Lange has two role models that she looks up to, her dad and her grandpa. She believes that they have both been through a lot and have come out strong on the other side, and she hopes that when she hits difficulties in life she will have the same strength they had to make it through.

Knowing this has kept her motivated to play hard and work hard. Besides school Lange leads a fairly busy life. Most of her time is devoted to volleyball, school, and work. When she has some downtime Lange is just like any other average college student though. She enjoys reading in her spare time or watching Netflix, particularly the series One Tree Hill.

Her dream job would be to work in a hospital for in-patient rehab for children and adolescents. She acknowledges that she is very thankful for the opportunity to play volleyball for as long as she has and has loved working with coaches and her teammates. She believes that the coaches were the key to her success. She plans to take what she has learned and continuously apply it to her life. “Work hard because nothing is ever given to you.”

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Senior Anna Schlaak, who finished her career as one of only five players to finish their career having over 1,000 kills and 1,000 digs. Finally, after two long years, the Golden Bears are national champions again. With their eighth national championship, the Golden Bears have moved ahead of Division I Penn State and Division III Sand Diego (seven titles) in total number of volleyball national championships. Now, they only trail Division III Washington-St. Louis's only trail Division III championships. Now, they of those 14, his teams have made it to the Elite Eight 10 times, and they had won the national championship seven consecutive years.

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Strong defense is key to Concordia women’s basketball success

By Tanner Peterson

The Golden Bear women’s basketball team kicked off their season with four straight games on the road and it began in Warrensburg, Missouri against Central Missouri.

CSP picked up the win with the score of 74-65, led by strong performances from sophomore guard Anna Schmitt and senior guard Shay Jones. Schmitt registered 16 points, six assists, and seven boards while Jones put up 20 points to go with three assists and two boards. Next on the schedule was the 12th ranked Pittsburgh State. CSP lost a tough one with a final score of 53-73.

Sophomore and University of Toledo transfer Lindsay Dorr was the lone bright spot as she recorded 17 points to go along with her two blocks and three rebounds. The Golden Bears continued their four-game road trip to Marquette, Michigan to Northern Michigan University where the Golden Bears topped the Wildcats with a final score of 68-61. The road trip stayed in the Great Lake State as the Golden Bears took on the Michigan Tech Huskies, but the Huskies outlasted the Bears with a narrow final score of 62-76. Anna Schmitt and junior forward Kyrah Fredenburg were the bright spots as Schmitt finished with 23 points and Fredenburg registered an impressive 18 rebounds.

The team finished the road trip with a .500 record of 2-2. Finally, the Golden Bear women made their home debut against Concordia-Portland and narrowly registered the win with the score 55-52. The Golden Bears had four players score in double digits, even though they shot 27.6% from the field. Next on the schedule was the Jamestown Jimmies and the Golden Bears pounded the Jimmies to a pulp as they finished them off with a score of 82-61. The Golden Bears were shooting the lights out as they shot 40% from downtown.

They also had five players scoring in double figures. Anna Schmitt was the leading scorer with 19 points to go along with her seven assists, three steals, and four rebounds. After talking with head coach of the Golden Bear women, Amanda Johnson, she made it very clear that the team wants to take pride in protecting their home court and win at home. She said that this team prioritizes defense. She stated, “Our defensive goal is to hold teams to 62 points and out rebound them by 5 rebounds a game. We want to continue to focus on that every game. I think both our rebounding and defense can always improve, that will always be our main focus at practices.”

With only three seniors on the team, this is well-balanced team of talent and experience, and it should make for a fun season for the Golden Bears women’s basketball team.
CSP Convocation, Kerri Miller: On Conversation
By Mara Grau

On Wednesday, December 7, Concordia was fortunate enough to have Kerri Miller speak at this month’s convocation. Kerri is the talk radio host of MPR News with Kerri Miller and Talking Volumes.

She is quite the talented conversationalist who has had quality talks with a wide variety of people from authors to political leaders. Since Concordia’s book of the year is Talk: Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age, it is very fitting that someone to say “I just want you to shout something out or raise your hand or argue with me or ask me a cranky question like this retired professor warned me he was going to do.” She treated the convocation like it was an in-person version of her call-in radio show, which made it a unique experience. Everyone had the opportunity to speak if they wanted to.

One of the most important topics that Kerri touched on during the convocation was thinking in real time, which is one of the most difficult things for people to these days. We have become so used to communicating through technology, which gives us time to think before we respond in conversations. This has made having in-depth, natural conversations an uncomfortable event. Kerri explained that when she interviews people, she prepares ten questions ahead of time, but only a couple ever get asked.

She employs the concept of thinking in real time during her interviews to make them flow more naturally and seem more conversational. She has found that this technique scares many people, especially the writers she has interviewed.

As the convocation went on it became apparent through Kerri’s discussions with audience members that perspective is a very important part of having good conversations. Recently there have been a lot of events and issues that have caused people to find themselves in uncomfortable and sometimes hostile conversations.

People spend too much time talking about their own opinions, and not enough time listening to the opinions of others. Everyone has a reason for believing in their opinion, but they hardly ever take the time to understand the perspectives of others.

Overall, Kerri Miller’s conversation convocation was much needed and very engaging. She knows how to have conversations about the hard topics, and we could all learn something from her during these difficult times in the world.

“Waiting for Godot”
By Jerry Freels

It was clear from the beginning of Waiting for Godot that this play was chock full of effort and talent. A small cast of women played roles that were originally intended for men. Student director Mikaela Vogland wanted to bring this classic play to life with women playing the rolls. A former Concordia student, Amy Abrigo played the role of Estragon, aka “GoGo. Vanessa Nguyen mastered her role as “Pozzo,” completely embodying a rather selfish women.

“Lucky” was played by the professional actress Elizabeth Streiff. Allison Fries played a shy but powerful role as “DiDi.” Peyton Winegarden played the loveable role of “Boy,” enchanting the audience with her sweet voice and well timed digs.

The combination of actresses worked well together and played off one another’s personalities. The audience agreed and opening night was completely sold out at the Black Box Theatre. Director Mikaela Vogland is highly motivated by theatre. Besides Concordia’s shows, Vogland is working with several other theater companies to stay inspired.

A lover of craftsmanship, Vogland also created the set of Waiting for Godot out of cardboard. As a student-directed show, a cardboard set was easy to erect and was also cost-effective.

When it was all said and done the play was a hit and another beautiful project done by one of Concordia Theatre’s students. Thank you to all the cast and crew that made this show possible, I look forward to Concordia’s future shows.
Optimistic “Set It Off”  
By Mara Grau  

Winter has finally reached Minnesota and it has been a never-ending cycle of gray to black skies. Now that Thanksgiving has passed, its acceptable to play upbeat holiday music, but not everyone enjoys that music. So, if you are searching for some new music to lift your spirits during this season of dreary weather, you should check out Set It Off’s newest album, Upside Down.

Upside Down is Set It Off’s third full length album since they formed in 2008. Now that they have been around for a while, they are becoming more and more confident and it shows in their music. Their first single from the album, “Uncontainable,” was released earlier this year, and it perfectly set the tone for the album. As a band, they have become quite successful, and they do not plan on stopping now. They are uncontainable. The song’s chorus, “Hey, we’re takin’ our crown, we’re uncontainable,” makes it the perfect addition to a pre-game playlist. It might even work well to motivate us Minnesotans on those cold winter mornings.

Last year when the band was in the process of writing Upside Down, they heard the news of the terrorist attacks in Paris. Part of those attacks was the hostage situation and killings during a concert at the Bataclan Theatre in Paris. This event was particularly frightening for the band since they been at the Bataclan two years prior to the attacks. In an interview with Alternative Press Magazine, lead singer Cody Carson said “my heart sunk. I felt sick just because it made me think that we could have been playing that show. We could have been there.” Born from this event is their very catchy song “Life Afraid” which is filled with optimism about being alive, and not letting fear control your life.

The album’s title track, “Upside Down”, matches the positive tone of “Life Afraid.” The first verse of this song starts off with “Car’s dyin’, not a lot of money, scared to check my checkin’ account, I guess I’m walkin’ for now, but at least I’m finally gettin’ exercise.” If that doesn’t exude optimism, then I don’t know what does. “Upside Down” encourages people to make the best out of whatever situations they may find themselves in, which is what Set It Off does in their music video for “Something New.” The band members face some of their fears, and have some other new experiences which really embodies the theme of the song.

So, if the winter weather is getting you down, go check out Upside Down by Set It Off. The full album can be found on their label Equal Vision Records’ YouTube channel.

Mikaela Vogland  
Theater Spotlight  
By Brooke Steigauf  

Concordia is honoring Mikaela Vogland for using her wide range of skills in CSP’s theater and across the city. Majoring in Business Management and minoring in nonprofit management and theater, Mikaela is using her plethora of abilities to create sets and theatrical pieces that bring stories to life.

Vogland started stage managing because of her love of storytelling and art. She saw that there was a need for logistical administrators in the theater world and used her keen eyes and attention to detail to find her niche in the cast and crew. Since taking on the role of stage manager, she has worked for multiple different theaters since 2011, managing for high schools, colleges, community shows, and non-profit theater gigs. Each of these settings allowed her to build on her previously established skill sets, helping her learn how to better organize and direct all aspects of theater.

During Vogland’s senior year of high school, she took on the role of stage manager for Black Dirt Theater Company, a nonprofit community theater program, conducting around two hundred stagehands. Using the knowledge she acquired at this job, she was able to extend her talents towards college-age students. She learned how to manage people with a variety of different skill levels so that everyone can best use their strengths for the benefit of the show at hand. She says, “I learned to do everything I could to make the process fun and collaborative, but still tell a story.”

Vogland partook in freelance work for other institutions, such as the Transatlantic Love Affair, Animal Engine, Classical Actors Ensemble, and the Mission Theater, where she furthered her stage managing and carpentry know-how. Through these assignments, she obtained a better understanding of the different roles of theater and gained multiple perspectives on how theater changes depending on the individual tendencies and needs of that institution. For example, when Vogland was working for Mission Theater Company as an assistant stage manager, she had a laid out agenda of what her job entailed (ex. organizing props, writing down notes on lines, etc.) This was because they were doing two shows that were already created and written out, those being William Shakespeare’s Titus Andronicus and Much Ado About Nothing. However, when she works with Transatlantic Love Affair, their shows are devised pieces, meaning they create the script as they go. Since they also do not use props or set pieces, her main goal is to ensure that during the creative process they keep track of certain story lines as they develop during the creative process. She writes down set ideas so they can be added to the ongoing script and assists in researching the topics that they cover.

On campus, Vogland has worked in Concordia’s scene shop officially for two years. She began volunteering in CSP’s theater during her freshman year. She says that it was important to her to gain this experience because it helped broaden her artistic abilities and her overall knowledge of the theater. Focusing mostly on carpentry, Vogland continued stage managing multiple CSP shows, building or painting the sets for most of our performances since. This year, Vogland was the director and scenic designer of CU’s production Waiting For Godot, featuring an all-female cast. In this show, she intertwined all of her obtained skills and meshed them into one final product. She recalls it being a very different experience for her, in which she was expected to give her input on almost every aspect of the show, while balancing the task of respecting the ideas of the cast and crew.

Currently, she is the stage manager for Transatlantic Love Affair for their upcoming show at the Guthrie Theater’s Dowling Studio, premiering January 27 and continuing through February 12, 2017. The play, The Promise Land, is a reinterpretation of Hansel and Gretel. It shines light on immigration and tells stories to spark discussion about what motivates people to leave their homes to search for somewhere better in an unknown world.

She has found this particular production to be very humbling and meaningful to her and to those acting and viewing

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it for its creative, thought provoking reinvention of the classic story. Looking ahead, Vogland is hoping for a career that still holds the business title, but still has aspects of theater in it, such as fundraising efforts.

She says that she will not be disappointed if she works in business, doing freelance on the side, but dreams of doing freelance on more of a full-time basis. Regardless of what she does in the future, Concordia appreciates all the work that she has put into the theater department over the last four years!

**A Not-So Fishy Review: Let’s Go Fishing**

By Mara Grau

Early this year, one of Concordia’s own English professors, Eric Dregni, published his newest book: Let’s Go Fishing! This colorful book is filled with a variety of interesting tales about fishing and its history. Even if you are someone who does not enjoy fishing, Dregni’s writing will make you question why that is. I personally find fishing tedious and boring, but after reading this book I found a new respect for those who adore the sport.

Dregni wisely begins his book by describing the concept that fishing can be an act of meditation. People who do not fish regularly would probably never know that it could be a therapeutic activity. All that time spent alone with one’s own thoughts surrounded by the beauty of nature must work wonders on the mind.

This first portion of the book changers the way the reader will experience the book; they will be open to learning why people enjoy fishing so much. Throughout the book, there are colorful pictures that make it even more fascinating. There are examples of vintage fishing lures and advertisements for various other equipment. Historical pictures also contribute to the book, including a picture of notorious gangster, Al Capone, wielding a fishing pole at his fishing hideaway in northern Wisconsin. Perhaps the funniest pictures in the book are the old-fashioned postcards that were popular at different times in history.

This includes a story from the second century in which a fisherman successfully captures an eel by blowing into the sheep intestine he used as bait. George Washington is even brought up a few times by Dregni, and you probably never would have guessed that he was a big fisher himself. Apparently, he caught thousands of fish, and, like many early fishermen, buried the excess fish to be used as fertilizer.

**Find Holiday Spirit with Almost Christmas**

By Mainhoa Mowa

Ah, Christmas time - the time of snow (if you’re from the north), holiday decor, and the tunes of “Jingle Bell Rock” and “All I Want for Christmas” playing from your radio. Most importantly though, who can forget the boxes filled with gifts and presents that sit underneath the Christmas tree?

Many anxious children (and even some adults) cannot wait to see what new gadget hides within those boxes. But aside from the materialism that has brought a new identity to the Christmas spirit, whatever happened to just simply celebrating a joyful and cheerful time with family and friends?

David E. Talbert’s Almost Christmas emphasizes the importance of family and friends as the festive holiday approaches.

The 2016 comedy-drama film was released into theaters on November 11, 2016 and brings viewers into the Christmas celebration of a dysfunctional family; recently-widowed Walter Meyers (Danny Glover) and his four adult-aged children. The film starts out with quick snippets of flashbacks from the late 1970s of young lovers Walter and Grace.

Throughout the next three decades, the family grows larger with the addition of two sons and two daughters. The family seems like the perfect definition of a happy family, but the passing of Grace in early 2016 puts the family at odds with one another and viewers soon realize that the relationships between the siblings have not been easy throughout their mature years. This Christmas, Walter makes it a mission to bring together his estranged children - all of whom have lived in different parts of the country with different careers, marital statuses, and financial circumstances - back to their childhood home in Birmingham, Alabama.

Upon the siblings’ arrival, viewers learn that the two sisters Rachel (Gabrielle Union) and Cheryl (Kimberly Elise) have conflict with each other and live opposite of each other on the economic spectrum. Christian (Romany Malco) has a wonderful family yet his busy political activism has created a drift between them all.

Evan (Jessie Usher) is an aspiring football player in college who relies on illegal painkillers to keep his dream from coming true.

In an estranged family, tensions is to come. On the first night, the siblings fight about Aunt May’s (played by Mo’Nique) cultural food which brings down the mood right away. Christian constantly chooses work over family time, which upsets Walter when Christian reveals that his job is attempting to shutdown a homeless shelter that the late Grace loved so dearly. Not to mention, Walter’s grandchildren are constantly on their laptops and cell phones, displaying constant attachment to technology and social media. Evan tries to hold a strong face, but he is emotionally pained with memories of his mother.

With all of this tension, Walter believes that it is unlikely his family will put aside their differences to celebrate Christmas. The siblings find out that Walter is looking to re-sell their childhood home.

In addition, Cheryl’s husband is unfaithful and cheats on her with a cashier from the supermarket. These two conflicts cause anger and misery for everyone, landing Evan in the hospital when, angry and intoxicated with drugs, he gets into a car accident.

However, it is these two issues that finally bring the siblings close together. They remember how beautiful and
Concordia Christmas Concert: Into the way with Peace
By Renee Cortez

The combined musical talents of four groups came together in the annual Christmas Concert during the weekend of December 9-11, 2016. This year’s event was entitled Into the way with Peace.

The title was inspired by the Song of Zechariah from Luke 1:79, which in fact was the first song sung by the choirs for the night. Over 50 individuals participated in and helped make this event possible.

The concert was a combination of the handbell ensemble, Christus Chorus, Jubilale Choir, the chamber orchestra, readings from the stories of the birth of John and the Baptist and Jesus Christ and finally, a reenactment of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist. A great deal of work went into this event as each part flowed well into the next. Even the audience was invited to participate in the music by singing along to many songs.

The variety of pieces in the concert was impressive. Many different songs were sung in different languages. Most notable was the song sung in the Kiruba dialect from Central Africa.

This piece was performed in the balconies as a call and response that lead into a melody. It was very well executed and performed with spirit. Perhaps the most impressive component was the students who were in more than one ensemble. A handful of students were in two groups during the concert and had to balance between going back and forth between the two. One student, Kristyn Svoboda, was in three of the groups.

These students show that commitment is behind an inspiration in music, because the practice time to be in just one group alone was a monumental commitment. Here at CSP, music is highly respected and loved, as proven by these students.

CSP Convocation: Martin Luther and the Reformation
By Jordan Peiser

On November 16th, Concordia hosted Thomas Rasher from the Minnesota Institute of Arts (MIA). Rasher who came to address students on the current exhibit "Martin Luther and the Reformation" which will be at MIA until January 15th, 2016.

The exhibit features artifacts from multiple museums in Germany including the State Museum in Halle, the Deutches Historisches Museum in Berlin, and the Schloss Friedenstein Foundation in Gotha. There are also artifacts that were collected and discovered by sponsors who were preparing for the upcoming Protestant Reformation celebration.

As stated by Mr. Rasher: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity." The exhibit focuses primarily on Luther’s life including what his childhood was like, his studies, and what lead up to the momentous day of October 31st, 1517. Several aspects of the history portrayed in this exhibit are unknown to the larger public. Although it was uncommon at the time, Luther left his estate to his wife, Katherine. And, contrary to Luther’s portrayal of his early life, there is evidence that his family was fairly wealthy. There is even a story about how a golden ring that was given to Katherine likely wound up in the toilet of Luther’s study.

The exhibit will also feature, among other things, a copy of the 95 theses, the second edition of the Lutheran hymnal, books written by Luther, portraits of Martin and Katherine, and Luther’s beer mug.

As quoted from Mr. Rasher: “The venue will not be traveling, the objects will be going back to their locations...I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity.”
Social Media and Politics
By Jordan Peiser

Many people, myself included, use social media as a means by which to learn about the world around us daily, but what has often been ignored is the prevalence of fake news sources on social media. Now, more than ever, people are informed or misinformed about the world around them and current events by social media. This has come to the forefront of media attention in the wake of this past election.

I was bombarded by people close to me with news with falsified information for the past few months. From headlines about how President Obama is trying to seize our democracy to apparent Hillary Clinton love affairs. Some of the news seemed both farfetched and irrelevant to the governance of our nation. However, it seems many people believed the claims and shared them all over social media. It appears that now more than ever social media is playing a major role in politics. Including being able to create and circulate fake accounts of world events. Social media is playing a vital role in our history. Consider, for example, an article from the New York times titled “Mark Zuckerberg is in denial” by Yezen Tufekci which states: “The Pope, a vociferous advocate for refugees, never endorsed anyone. The Denver Guardian doesn’t exist. Yet thanks to Facebook, both of these articles were seen by potentially millions of people. Although corrections also circulated on the social network, they barely registered compared with the reach of the original fabrications. This is not an anomaly: I encountered thousands of such fake stories last year on social media — and so did American voters, 44 percent of whom use Facebook to get news.”

This is a message to all of us of how social media influences our politics though, fake news sources influencing voting patterns is only one such example. In fact, Facebook also has done experiments to see how people respond to different stimuli as further detailed in the article by Tufekci: “The problem with Facebook’s influence on political discourse is not limited to the dissemination of fake news. It’s also about echo chambers. The company’s algorithm chooses which updates appear higher up in users’ newsfeeds and which are buried.”

The news we receive on social media is programmed to feed further into our own preconceived notions, likes, and interests so that, in relation to politics, people are far more likely to see news that already agrees with their world view rather than being challenged. This, unfortunately, has included news that provides false information. This of course factors into people’s voting patterns often bolstering what people already believe about issues.

Politicians today have latched on to social media, including President-elect Donald Trump, Mr. Trump, although unorthodox in execution, has latched onto the news and social media—Twitter specifically—to present his message. We are entering a new political age where discourse is reinvented and in a new medium; an age where opinions need to be supported by facts from credible sources, and every person with internet access of how social media influences our democracy to apparent Hillary Clinton love affairs. Some of the news seemed both farfetched and irrelevant to the governance of our nation. However, it seems many people believed the claims and shared them all over social media. It appears that now more than ever social media is playing a major role in politics. Including being able to create and circulate fake accounts of world events. Social media is playing a vital role in our history. Consider, for example, an article from the New York times titled “Mark Zuckerberg is in denial” by Yezen Tufekci which states: “The Pope, a vociferous advocate for refugees, never endorsed anyone. The Denver Guardian doesn’t exist. Yet thanks to Facebook, both of these articles were seen by potentially millions of people. Although corrections also circulated on the social network, they barely registered compared with the reach of the original fabrications. This is not an anomaly: I encountered thousands of such fake stories last year on social media — and so did American voters, 44 percent of whom use Facebook to get news.”

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The Implications of a Donald Trump Presidency
By Jakob Kounkel

As President-elect Donald Trump approaches his term in the Oval Office—and as citizens start to prepare for anarchy—it’s important to understand what the implications of a Donald Trump presidency means for the American people.

A long list of suspect experts appointed by Mr. Trump himself coupled with an overwhelming number of Republicans in office is reason enough to fret. However, he recently acknowledged the science behind global warming issues, and he’s decided not to hire a special prosecutor to look into the Hillary Clinton email issue—guess that’s what got you myself, Mr. Trump, but I risk a risky move if I do say so.

One big thing on the agenda is the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership)—a trade deal that slows free trade from Japan to Chile, and has eleven other countries involved. “We will negotiate fair, bilateral trade deals that bring jobs and industry back onto American shores,” Mr. Trump said in an interview with CNN.

Basically, what he wants to do is pull out of the agreement we have with other countries in the TPP because he thinks he can get a better deal if less countries are in the mix. Risky move if I do say so myself, Mr. Trump, but I guess that’s what got you elected in the first place.

He has been promising since the beginning of his campaign that he would repeal and replace the ACA (Affordable Care Act), as every Republican and their Republican grandma has vowed to do.

There’s a problem with health care in America, and there’s no doubt that the ACA needs reform. However, the ACA was successful in one very big way: more Americans have health care than ever before. The unfortunate fact is that it costs too much money, and it isn’t a sustainable health care model. I’m with him in a sense that Obamacare needs reform, but it’s not necessary to repeal it. Mr. Trump said in the same interview with CNN, “I will ask the Department of Defense and the chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff to develop a comprehensive plan to protect America’s vital infrastructure from cyberattacks and all other forms of attacks.” OK, Mr. Trump, this one’s coming out of right field. I don’t know where this came from or why this is one of the things you deemed necessary to change on your first day as president, but I guess I don’t want to get hacked.

Lastly, he wants to reinvent the energy policy with the goal of producing many high-paying jobs. America is way behind in the energy game. There’s big money in oil (just ask George W. Bush) and some people can’t leave the money behind, like the U.S. government for example. Therefore, it’s hard for some people to see the benefits of harvesting energy from wind, water and the sun because there’s no money to be made in it, or at least that’s the common conception about it (ask Elon Musk about that one. He’s doing alright).

However, these aren’t the implications of a Trump presidency that have Americans worried. The world may never know (until January 20th, that is). Anyway, here’s an easy list of things he can and can’t do as president, per a Los Angeles Times article by David Lauter. No, he doesn’t have that much power: He can’t overturn Roe v. Wade—a Supreme Court decision in 1973 that legalized abortion—by himself. He would have to appoint pro-life Supreme Court justices, if he ends up filling open spots. The Supreme Court has repeatedly voted against limiting abortion.

Much like the Roe v. Wade decision, Mr. Trump will not be able to overturn marriage equality by himself. There would have to be vacancies for him to appoint Supreme Court justices, so it’s just as likely to happen as an overturn on Roe v. Wade—not very.

Yes, he can actually do that: He can, and probably will, repeal the ACA. Since Republicans control the House and the Senate, it will be fairly easy, besides the fact that Republicans haven’t been able to collectively lead on a new plan.

The Successes of President Barack Obama
By Jerry Freels

President Barack Obama was born on August 4th, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He worked as a civil rights attorney and taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School from 1992 to 2004.

He graduated from Columbia University and the Harvard Law School, where he was president of the Harvard Law Review. He is the first president to serve that was born outside of the continental United States.

In 2004, President Obama received national attention during his campaign to represent Illinois in the United States Senate with his victory in the March Democratic primary, his keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in July, and his election to the Senate in November. He began his presidential campaign in 2007 and, after a close primary campaign against Hillary Clinton in 2008, he won enough delegates in the Democratic Party primaries to get the presidential nomination. He then defeated Republican nominee John McCain in the general election, and was inaugurated as president on January 20, 2009. Nine months after his inauguration, Obama was named the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

Then he surprised the country with a health plan for everyone even though there has been a big controversy over it and its cost.

In 2012 he ran for reelection and won, locking up his second term and another victory. After killing the most wanted terrorist in the world, he kept gas prices down for the past 8 years and had made a big dent in the unemployment rate, making it go from 10.6% to under 5%.

Even though he is disliked in the eyes of most Republicans and had a hard time getting approved in his second term, he still made ways for the middle class like he promised. Now that his term is coming to an end, he is making way for his retirement and what to do after his legacy is stamped forever in history. Now the only thing to do now is to move forward and keep making changes in this free country.

*These articles are opinions of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Sword staff, CSP administration, staff, or faculty*
Why the P.E.A.C.E. Club Concerns Me: Words from an LCMS Student
By Christianna Eckstein

I am not concerned about the P.E.A.C.E. club in the sense that I feel endangered or afraid because of it. Rather, I am concerned for the eternal well-being of the individuals who will attend the club and who may be encouraged to embrace their sinful desires instead of receiving forgiveness in Christ. That last sentence was a bit loaded, so it might be helpful for me to elaborate.

First of all, the original Hebrew word for 'sin' means literally "to miss" (Matthew 19:1-9). Things that miss that mark include lust, adultery, bestiality, and homosexuality. In the Bible, it is clear that homosexuality (and sexual immorality in general) is no worse than other sins, since it is often condemned alongside many other sins such as drunkenness, pride, idolatry, and anger (Galatians 5:19-21, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Looking at all of the ways in which one can miss the mark, it is clear that the rest of the world is just as guilty before God as I am. How can anyone live up to such perfect standards? That is precisely the problem; we can't.

However, there is good news. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16-17). Jesus Christ lived a perfect life, died to pay for the sins of the world, and rose again, defeating death, so that we might have the hope of eternal life with God.

However, one may ask, if Jesus paid for the punishment that my sins deserve, does that mean that I should sin all the more, since I'm covered? "By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" (Romans 6:2-3)

The response to the forgiveness of sins through the work of Jesus is not to celebrate our sins, but to agree with God that sin is wrong and that we need the forgiveness given by Christ. In other words, the proper response is to repent. "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives" (1 John 1:8-10).

So, how does all of this apply to the P.E.A.C.E. club? From what the club's constitution states about it's beliefs, and from what I have gathered from listening to the leaders of the club discuss its purpose, I do not believe that that club intends to point people to repentance and forgiveness in Christ in regards to homosexuality and other forms of sexual immorality.

On the contrary, it seems clear that one of the main goals of the club is to help individuals celebrate these specific things, which are sins. Just as I would not affirm a club that celebrates drunkenness, lust, or anger, I cannot affirm the goals of the P.E.A.C.E. club when it comes to celebrating sin.

I can, however, affirm the concern for those who are struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts in relation to their sexual desires; a concern that has been expressed this past week by an adviser of the club. That is certainly a horrific struggle that I wouldn't wish on anyone.

That is why I am not calling for the end of the club. Rather, I plan to use the P.E.A.C.E. club as an opportunity to talk with people that I wouldn't necessarily see otherwise in order to form relationships and share the truth of the Scriptures with them; that includes both the Law and Gospel.

I want to show LGBTQ supporters that I do not hate or fear them, but I want to share the forgiveness of Christ with them. The club serves as a place where those struggling with suicidal thoughts can receive friendship and counsel. It is vital that those same individuals also receive the forgiveness of Christ as well.

Peace and Harmony
By Brooke Steigau

Throughout the last week of November, many members of CSP became increasingly aware of the club “P.E.A.C.E.” (People Encouraging Acceptance, Connection, and Equality), which was given permission to exist on Concordia’s Christian campus.

The club’s intention is to offer a secure place for LGBTQ students on campus, who need an expressive space to build connection. Although many disagreed of the university’s decision, others gained a new respect for the institution as it prioritized what it stood for, to ensure that all of its members feel welcome and honored. As a witness to this unraveling of events, I commend the university for its flexibility, now understand the amount of work that is still needed here at Concordia for people to internalize what it really means to love and accept all.

My own emotions are stirred every time I hear the words “outside of society’s heteronormative standards,” the wording extracted from the club’s approved charter. Although this was likely the only phrasing that would enable the club to be passed, it reflects the negative stigma that is still being stamped onto these discriminated-against students. This word, by definition, recognizes ‘hetero’ beings as the norm and reflects a gender binary. This phrasing suggests that LGBTQ members, although now given a place on campus, remain alien and abnormal. Furthermore, those who would choose to partake in it anyway, are therefore, “outsiders”.

Essentially, although the university is allowing the club to exist, it is still implies that its practice is wrong, unholy, and should be opposed.

While the university should be commended for its huge step towards inclusion, we are still far from where we need to be. I understand that the university is bound by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and must comply with its teachings. However, I believe that this not about religion, but rather, basic human rights.

The identity of others should be explored and critiqued intrapersonally. No one should be compelled to judge what characteristics are more virtuous than others. Furthermore, we certainly should never be deduced for something we cannot control or change. To say that a person is wrong for an innate trait, such as this, would be to say that someone with brown hair is not as honorable as one with blonde.

This misunderstanding comes from the idea that sexual identity and orientation is a choice. To clarify, it’s not. My hope is that the club creates a refuge for students who have felt hurt and rejected, giving them a chance to express their identity, be proud of it, and most important, be recognized as more than this one asset.

I am also optimistic that others will become more accepting of the LGBTQ population through open conversation and integration of diversity. It is in this acceptance, that we will finally be honoring Christ and truly welcoming all. Thanks for reading.
HOLIDAY WORD SEARCH

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K G N I L O R A C N Y Z Q T D
H M F I L F G Q M O O M G R P
N U D I T N H S R Z E W I P M
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Bells  Grinch  Santa
Blitzen  Holiday  Scrooge
Caroling  HotChocolate  Sledding
EggNog  Milk  Snowman
Elves  Ornaments  Stocking
Gingerbread  Present  Wrapping
Giving  Rudolph