

## *A Moment in Mission ❖ from Bethany Seminary*

In her reflections about living shalom in the Bethany magazine *Wonder & Word*, President Ruthann Johansen wrote, “From the beginning to the end of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, in wilderness or relative tranquility, in violence or truce, in abundance or deprivation, the biblical poets and prophets chronicle human efforts to find and return to the heart of God and live again the blessedness of shalom... Living shalom calls us to imagine, watch for, and initiate signs of the new heaven and the new earth... Through the liberty of love, living shalom leads us to honor the image of God in all creation and to make of our own lives a home of welcome for all people.”

### *Highlighting ways Bethany is living shalom:*

- ◆ Bethany’s 107<sup>th</sup> Commencement graduated sixteen graduates with master of divinity degrees, master of arts degrees, or Certificates of Achievement in Theological Studies. Bethany celebrates the learning and callings of these gifted individuals, who embark on new and continuing ministry journeys in their professional lives to share God’s shalom and Christ’s peace in their unique contexts.
- ◆ With gratitude for the opportunity to conduct business around round tables in St. Louis, Missouri, ***Bethany’s Annual Conference report*** provided conference delegates with an opportunity to hear about the happenings at Bethany, but also to discuss their own questions, concerns, hopes, and joys about Bethany education. This model of table sharing created a heightened sense of shalom to truly share with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ the ways we live as Brethren and the ways that Bethany contributes to ongoing ministry training for the entire Brethren body.
- ◆ The fourth ***Presidential Forum, “Joy and Suffering in the Body: Turning toward Each Other”*** brought a capacity crowd to the Seminary in April to share and learn about the intersections of sexuality and spirituality. Highlighted in the current *Wonder & Word* magazine, Dr. James Forbes provided thoughtful and inspiring leadership for all participants to reflect on how closely held beliefs and practices affect relationships with God and one another. In turning toward each other, participants learned more about themselves, their community, and the kingdom of God we all both anticipate and already live within.
- ◆ The Association of Theological Schools has awarded Bethany a \$54,000 grant which allowed faculty to ***explore how an intercultural understanding of “God’s shalom and Christ’s peace,”*** can inform the preparation of students for ministry. This exploration focused closely on cross-cultural immersion courses and hospital ministry, the most common multifaith settings that students encounter in their studies at Bethany.
- ◆ The Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion has granted Bethany \$20,000 for ***assessment and refinement of the strategies of its Ministry Formation program.*** For Bethany students earning a master of divinity degree, Ministry Formation is at the center of their course of study, incorporating traditional classes, spiritual formation groups, and field placements. Among the objectives are to ask those in leadership at student placement sites to describe the qualities desired for effective ministers in their context and then to use this data in developing models for twenty-first-century ministry. The team will also determine a definition of Ministry Formation that reflects the language of Bethany’s current mission statement and develop new strategies for teaching Ministry Formation in distance-learning contexts.

Bethany Theological Seminary was founded in 1905 and is the graduate school and academy for theological education for the Church of the Brethren. Bethany expresses gratitude for the many ways you have shown support for its mission. All are invited to take part in Bethany life, from campus visits to support of a student to inviting faculty and staff, including President Johansen, to provide a workshop for your local congregation.