



WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Summer 2026 Spotlight

GRADUATION WEEK

On May 22, 2026, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary held its graduation service. President Earle Treptow based his sermon on the class verse, John 6:68, with encouragement and a prayer that the graduates continue to want more of God's Word throughout their ministries and lives.

This year, forty-two seniors received master of divinity degrees. Three men received bachelor of divinity degrees and one man received a bachelor of theology degree through the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI). In addition, four pastors received master of sacred theology degrees.

The synod's Assignment Committee met on campus on Tuesday, May 19, to assign candidates for the holy ministry to the synod's congregations, mission fields, and schools. At the assignment service on May 21, 2026, Professor Sam Degner preached on Revelation 5:1-10, thanking the perfect Lamb for paying for us with his life, and reminding us that not only does our future belong to the one who died for us but that we already rule with him.

After hearing encouragement from God's Word, the candidates, along with their families and friends, learned where they

were headed to serve. In all, fifty-one men were assigned. Of those, forty-six were receiving their first call, including three PSI graduates. In addition, one graduate from 2023 and one graduate from 2024 were reassigned to a new field of ministry and three men were reassigned to their present field of ministry.

On Wednesday, May 20, during a separate evening service, forty-three men were assigned to congregations throughout the U.S., as well as one in Canada and one in Colombia, to serve for their vicar—or internship—year.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

The 2026-27 school year will likely begin with an enrollment of approximately 150, which is about the same as the 2025-26 school year. The first-year class is likely to be about 40 students. Next year's second-year class is likely to be around 30, with the senior class at 37. The 2026-27 school year begins with an opening service at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19, with classes starting Thursday, August 20.



COMPELLED GROUNDBREAKING

On the morning of Wednesday, May 20, the seminary hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for students, faculty, staff, and donors to the *Compelled* campaign. It was a memorable way to begin a series of special services on campus.

This summer, renovations to the seminary library will move forward. A new student lounge fostering more informal interactions between students and faculty and a more accessible rare books room are the highlights of those renovations. Site prep, foundations, and utility work will also begin on the new education center as well as the new gathering hall addition to the auditorium building.

This campaign is about more than physical buildings. It's about seizing an opportunity to address the challenges and

blessings of providing even better training for future WELS pastors. We remain thankful to God for the faithful support of his people.

Regular updates will be provided on the Compelled website, which can be accessed via the QR code below.



E-BOOKS AT THE WLS LIBRARY

The seminary library and Grow in Grace are eager to support pastors in their continuing education. One new initiative is the expansion of the library e-book collection, giving pastors with a seminary Microsoft 365 account instantaneous access to a greater variety of free resources.

For example, after The Shepherd's Study team reviewed and discussed *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever in both written review and podcast episode, the book's third edition was added to the library e-book collection. Because the e-book allows unlimited users, any WELS pastor with a Microsoft 365 account can read the book online or download chapters at no additional cost.

PASTORAL STUDIES INSTITUTE (PSI)

“Being a pastor in the Lord’s vineyard has been my desire and prayer from my youth. The Lord has made me eager to go and preach the unadulterated gospel to my home country

(Kenya) and gather them around the Word and sacraments. It is against this backdrop that I wrote to PSI and I was fortunate to find Prof. Goetzinger, who then reached out with the guidelines.

“I went to Gethsemane Lutheran Church (Omaha, NE), where Rev. Helwig walked me through the Bible information class. Thereafter, I started PSI training. All that I have learned, I have put into practice by preaching and teaching the needy souls back in Kenya. This includes preaching on the local radio station, which has 4 million listeners. It is through the radio preaching that a certain group heard my sermon and developed the desire to become Lutherans. In December 2025, I went back home in Homa Bay, and when the group heard that I was around, they invited me to share the gospel with them. I did it twice and out of that, a congregation was born. I do preach to them from here in America through WhatsApp video calls and they have shown a strong interest in becoming part of the WELS congregation.”

– Opiyo Sultan, PSI student