



You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you have made summer and winter. Psalm 74:17

THE HEIDELBRIEF

NEWS FROM HEIDELBERG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DECEMBER, 2018

15 YEARS OF ANSWERED PRAYER

Be careful for what you might pray; you might just get it.

Rev. Chuck Muether, Director of Advancement

In late November, we were hit with 14 inches of snow in parts of south central Iowa, and I was struck by how masterfully our Creator determines the totals of precipitation for every region. Nothing is left to chance; God ordained one Iowa town to receive the brunt of the storm and another town, which was just a stone's throw away, to receive barely a trace of the white stuff.

Likewise with the rains of a previous season, some farmers found their fields become ponds, while others were wondering when the clouds would open up.



MORE INSIDE!

PAGE 3



Kevin Te Slaa recording lectures.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Canons of Dort is 400 years old? Formed between 1618 and 1619 in Dordrecht, NL, at an international synod, this confessional statement refuted the teachings of Jacob Arminius. To celebrate this landmark anniversary, HTS will be sharing content over the next year from Reverend Paul Treick's book, *Faith of Our Fathers*. Visit our blog at <https://heidelbergseminary.org/blog> to catch the weekly installments.

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT DR. MAYNARD KOERNER

Heidelberg Seminary is very privileged to train men for the gospel ministry. We are particularly excited about preparing men for the pulpits of RCUS congregations. Currently there are six students who are members of RCUS churches who are taking courses at HTS. We also have nine students from OPC, PCA, and other churches. This brings our total enrollment for this fall to 15 students. Indications are that there will be some additional students next semester.

The primary purpose of Heidelberg seminary is to train men for RCUS pulpits. We are thankful that this also gives us the opportunity to train men for other churches. Heidelberg Seminary is uniquely able to provide classes to students in a variety of situations. Our desire is that the students live nearby and participate in the classroom. However, at times coming to the area is not possible so we are very happy that we can provide other means for taking courses.

Six of our students are resident students who take their classes in the classroom. The remaining nine students are from six different states. These students are able to fully participate in the classroom by means of the digital classroom. Six of the students are full time, while the remaining students take one or more courses.



A Better Celebration of Advent
Rev. Jay Fluck, Professor of Church History

The celebration of Advent is an effort at preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. That is a monumental day, when God Himself took on human flesh becoming one of us.

There is no clear evidence of when the observance of Advent began in the church. By 480 AD, it was an observation to call attention to Christ, possibly in response to the northern European festival of winter. By 567 AD, at the Council of Tours, monks were ordered to fast every day in December. By 581 what Bishop Petpetusus had ordered was the official rule in France, that six weeks of fasting three days a week for December.



Gregory “the Great,” Pope from 590-604 AD, made it a celebration for the whole church for the month of December, but did not order fasting.

These days the observance of Christ’s birth has faded in our society; yes, we still celebrate the birth but the focus is now on the usurper, Santa, and Jesus has faded in the minds of children, even ours. Without great care the little ones will remember only the one who “pays off” in presents.

It is time for us to make a bigger “deal” of the birth of the Savior in focus and preparation, outwardly as well as inwardly, so that the apparent pronouncement of “Pope Santa” about his day may fade away.

CONTINUED



The training of men for the ministry is an extremely important responsibility of the church.

Heidelberg Seminary is very humbled and thankful to be able to provide this service. It is an awesome responsibility, one that we take very seriously. We are also keenly aware that we could not do this without the support of the church. Please continue to pray for God's blessing upon Heidelberg Seminary.

HTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the summer of 2017 a number of students enrolled to take courses from Heidelberg Seminary for the purpose of receiving training for the ministry. Dr. Maynard Koerner taught two courses in the Philippines in an intensive format. Since that time there has been some turnover with some students needing to drop out and the enrollment of some new students. In the summer of 2018, Rev. Travis Grassmid also taught two courses in the Philippines.

There are currently 18 students who are involved in the program from the northern island group, Luzon. It is in this area that most of the Pearl of the Orient Covenant Reformed Church congregations are located.

The students who have been with the program from the beginning have completed six courses at this time. The program involves a professor going to the Philippines each summer to teach two courses and then they meet together in two different groups to take courses by video. The curriculum, which has been established for this program, will take four years to complete. Upon completion of the curriculum the students will receive a Master of Theological Study Degree and be eligible to seek ministry in the POCRC.

Some new groups are beginning to take courses in the southern island group, Mindenau, where there is one congregation of the POCRC. A group of 6 students are meeting in Loreto and 3 students in Cagayan De Oro. This brings the total number of students to 27. Just within the last couple of weeks a request has been received for another group of potentially 15 students by Osima City and 8 students in the central island group, Visayas. Please pray for the students as they study and for the seminary in administering the program. Also pray that the Lord would provide so the needs of the students would be met.

(continued from page 1) In the business of advancing a seminary like Heidelberg, we encounter seasons of feast and famine. We have been praying for an increased student enrollment and God answered that prayer by more than doubling our student body. We have been praying for financial viability and God has blessed us with generous supporters and resources. The Board of Trustees has recently inquired about the possibility of adding a second full time professor. This is a tall order considering Heidelberg has a modest budget and only two other full time employees. As the Director of Advancement, I can only work part time part (given budget constraints) and often I have to pay my own expenses.

However, as a graduate of this seminary, I have experienced first hand the educational product, and there was nothing quite like coming under the parsonage tutelage of Drs. Grossmann, Embree, and Koerner. Our professors today have continued the tradition of orthodox training, and I consider it a privilege to work along side of Drs. Koerner, Carroll, and Larson.

As our Lord controls the weather patterns and all of creation, so He controls the institutions such as Heidelberg Theological Seminary. We are currently in a dry season regarding our modest budget, but I am convinced the Lord will provide the rain as He has done so faithfully in the past.



HTS D.MIN. PROGRAM

DM 850 Ecclesiastical Office and Ministry Today is being offered to ordained ministers. January 14-18 at the Sioux Falls campus. Contact Dr. Koerner for more information at 605.595.5850.

As you consider your end-of-year giving, please think of the needs of Heidelberg Theological Seminary. We have been truly blessed by the prayers and financial support of our friends.



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