

Dear Friends in Christ,

We're coming into the home stretch. I sit here in my dining room surrounded by papers for getting our house ready to sell. We have rented a small storage unit and moved some furniture and boxes out of the house, to make the place seem more open and ready for the possibilities of a new owner. Meanwhile, I am in the process of interviewing for associate ministry positions. And the seminary is meeting with district presidents to begin deciding our fate. Things are moving.

But not so fast, we tell ourselves. Will (9) and Eli (6) still have school to go to, friends to hang out with, and mischief to make. I still have a semester full of classes to attend, papers to write, and tests to take. It is hard to remember to live in the present when the future is so close at hand.

But that is what we are trying to do. Will, our third grader, is doing very well. He is cruising through his multiplication tables, devouring books, and becoming quite the piano player. He dreams of us getting a call back to Louisburg, KS (where we lived before seminary). We have told him that is not very likely, but he says, "a boy a can dream, can't he?"

Eli is also doing very well. He won the 1<sup>st</sup> grade spelling bee, and will go on to represent the school's 1<sup>st</sup> grade class in the area academic bowl this spring. Next week marks a milestone, he will be heading off to his first sleepover. We are friends with the other boy's parents, and we hope to stay that way when they realize that Eli gets cranky when he's tired.

The big news for Kate is that she stepped away from her job at the International Language Center just before Christmas. For the next several months, she will be working full time on a book discussing women's journeys through the seminary, on the path toward becoming a pastor's wife. A lot of resources exist for the men as to what is to be expected on their journey through seminary, but not much is available to support the wives and fiancés through this process of their *preparation* for ministry. Kate is interviewing and compiling the stories of dozens of women, both on campus as well as those whose husbands have recently graduated. We hope it will be a great resource for women as they not only follow their husbands but find their own role in the life of God's Church.

This semester's classes have started off well. My classes include Sanctification (looking at what it means to grow in one's faith and in the image of God in the modern age); Marital and Family Care and Counseling (which is what you would think it would be); Religious Bodies (looking at where the Lutheran faith – specifically the LCMS – fits into the eclectic landscape of 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity); and Pastoral Leadership (I haven't yet figured out what we're supposed to be learning in this class, but we sure do have interesting conversations).

We have three months of Seminary to go. And then it's off to the next great adventure. None of this current adventure would have been possible without faithful Christian brothers and sisters like you. Without you walking beside Kate, the boys and me through your prayers and financial support, Seminary simply would not have happened. Thank you! May God bless you as He has blessed us through you.

In Christ,

*The Meadows*

Bryan, Kate, Will, Eli, and Gracie

