

# Seminar Handbook

Foundations  
in Lutheran  
Teaching



# Welcome

## Greetings in the name of our Lord!

As a teacher in a Lutheran classroom, you are an important partner in the ministry and mission of the school. Therefore, it is vital that you have an opportunity to understand well the faith and practice of the Lutheran church.

CUEnet is pleased to welcome you to **The Seminar Program: Foundations in Lutheran Teaching**. We know that you will find this to be an interesting, inspiring and helpful program of study. In it you will find clear explanation of the Christian faith with particular emphasis upon those teachings which might be most strongly identified as “Lutheran,” including justification, law/gospel and *sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia*. The instructors in the program will explain the Lutheran understanding of the Lord’s Supper, baptism, sanctification, interpreting the Bible, worship practices, and more. It is the intent of the program to prepare you to serve more effectively within a Lutheran Christian context.

You will be asked to meet regularly with the principal and pastor of your Lutheran school. Hopefully these sessions will allow you to ask questions of them as you encounter doctrines which are new to you. We also hope the meetings will provide you opportunity to develop a closer working relationship with these leaders of your school.

May the Lord bless your studies in this program and may He guide the work you do among His children!

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# The Online Classroom

You will access each multi-part seminar in CUEnet's online classroom. To enter the classroom:

1. Go to the login page at <http://classroom.cuenet.edu>. You may want to bookmark this page for future use. (It can also be accessed through CUEnet's main website.)
2. Log on with your user name (which follows the format **lastnameinitial**, such as smithj) and your password.
3. Once logged in, you will see links to one or more of the seminars in the program. Simply click the link for the seminar you want to access. If the correct seminar is not listed, please contact CUEnet for assistance.

Each seminar is divided into multiple lectures. Simply click on the links in order to stream each video.

Issues regarding access to the individual seminars should be directed to our registrar, Wendi Murphy, at [wmurphy@cuenet.edu](mailto:wmurphy@cuenet.edu). Wendi can also be reached at (541) 322-7282.

Technical issues should be reported to [support@cuenet.edu](mailto:support@cuenet.edu).



# Process

1. Upon receipt of the introductory email from CUEnet (titled “The Seminar Program”), create a covenant document with your school’s pastor and principal. Send the completed and signed covenant to CUEnet for approval; it can be faxed to (541) 322-7286 or scanned and emailed to [seminar@CUEnet.edu](mailto:seminar@CUEnet.edu). (Please see the next page for a description of what must be included in the covenant. The form is available from CUEnet.)
2. Make arrangements to meet with your school’s pastor (he will serve as your “mentor-pastor” for the duration of this seminar) for two half-hour sessions (or one full hour) to take place after you have watched the video lectures for each seminar. You will find guides for these mentoring sessions in this handbook, but each class you take will also include a PDF listing of the topics for your mentoring sessions. Please consider these to be starting points only. You are welcome to discuss with your mentor-pastor any relevant issues you wish to explore.
3. Begin watching the lectures. The seminar is self-paced.
4. Upon completion of the videos and the mentor sessions, have your mentor-pastor send an email to CUEnet verifying completion of each seminar. Please send the email to [seminar@cuenet.edu](mailto:seminar@cuenet.edu).
5. Please progress through the seminars in order: Introduction to Lutheran Teachings, Lutheran Perspectives on the Old Testament, Lutheran Perspectives on the New Testament, History of the Church, and The Role of the Teacher in a Lutheran School. Upon beginning the final course, The Role of the Teacher in a Lutheran School, begin work on the final project as it is described in the covenant document. (Note: Over the course of the first four seminars, you may decide to revise or completely change your final project. This is not a problem. We only ask that you submit an updated covenant along with your final project.)
6. Upon successful completion of the final project and a positive evaluation from both your mentor-pastor and your principal, either your mentor-pastor or your principal should email the final project to CUEnet at [seminar@cuenet.edu](mailto:seminar@cuenet.edu). He or she should include a brief assessment of your work in the program and its effect on your classroom ministry. If your final project was revised or changed from what was described in your original covenant, please include an updated, signed covenant form as well.
7. CUEnet will send you a Record of Completion after you have passed review of your final project.



# Covenant

The covenant document is a description of the activities that you agree to fulfill with the help, support, and approval of your school's pastor (your mentor-pastor) and your principal. Please email ([seminar@cuenet.edu](mailto:seminar@cuenet.edu)) or fax (541-322-7286) the covenant to CUENet with your signature as well as those of your school's pastor and principal.

Your covenant should include:

1. Your agreement to watch the video lectures in each seminar course.
2. Your agreement (and that of your mentor-pastor) to meet regularly to work through the discussions identified for each seminar (see the following pages).
3. A description of your final project. The final project will be accomplished during the last class in the seminar program. It requires you to apply what you are learning to a practical setting in your school. It is expected that by doing so you can demonstrate a clear understanding of Lutheran doctrine as it will be taught in your school. The final project will be assessed by your mentor-pastor, your principal, and by the CUENet staff.

What should a final project look like? Here are several possibilities (feel free to use these simply as inspiration and develop a project which fits well your situation):

- *You have a religion lesson every day in your fourth grade classroom. So, for your final project, you will create a week's worth of lesson plans which reflect upon the upcoming baptism of one of your students. You utilize the opportunity to communicate a Lutheran understanding of the sacrament of baptism.*
- *Your principal has asked you to handle a couple of upcoming staff devotions. So you prepare devotions which explore the role of Law and Gospel in the classrooms of your school. You pay particular attention to how a teacher demonstrates proper application of Law and Gospel in a real situation.*
- *You want to play some contemporary Christian music as background music in your classroom. So you choose three specific songs and analyze their lyrics for appropriate use in the Lutheran classroom. Your final project consists of a written summary of your analysis.*
- *You teach science in a Lutheran high school. Naturally, you will need to deal with the subject of evolution at some point (whether in class or in the hallway with a parent). Your final project consists of notes preparing you to manage the topic faithfully.*
- *You know that you feel strongly about a difference between the teaching of your particular denomination and the Lutheran church on a specific doctrine. You use the final project as an opportunity to place in writing how you will handle the subject in your Lutheran classroom.*



# Introduction to Lutheran Teachings

## Mentor Session 1

This course introduces the seminar student to many of the foundational teachings of the Lutheran Christian faith. Based upon the Lutheran concepts of sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide, Lutheran teachings are Christ-centered and completely grounded in Scripture. Teachers in a Lutheran school will need to be able to teach these doctrines clearly and confidently.

At the beginning of the video sessions, you will have heard the words “material principle” and “formal principle”. These are concepts which apply to any faith, Christian or non-Christian. Please discuss with your mentor-pastor these concepts:

1. To what does “formal principle” refer? Why is the concept important?
2. What is the formal principle of the Lutheran Christian faith? Does this differ from other Christian articulations of faith?
3. What do theologians mean when they refer to the “material principle”? Why is this concept important?
4. What is the material principle of the Lutheran Christian faith? Does this differ from other Christian articulations of faith?
5. Discuss how this might affect your teaching of religion in your Lutheran classroom.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Ephesians 2:8-9; Luke 24:44-47; John 17:17*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**

## Mentor Session 2

Among the Christian denominations of America, one Lutheran teaching which can be confusing is infant baptism. You will likely need to explain this teaching at some point to parents or children in your classroom. Please discuss the following questions with your mentor-pastor:

1. What is the Lutheran understanding of the Lord’s command to baptize? How is baptism efficacious? (Be sure to discuss the importance of the sacraments in the life of a Christian.)
2. Why do Lutherans baptize infants? What Scriptural support is there for such a practice?
3. Are Lutherans and Catholics the only Christian churches which baptize infants? Explore the baptismal practices of the major church bodies in America.
4. Discuss how you will handle this teaching in the classroom. If you are a member of a church body which does not teach infant baptism, discuss your responsibility regarding this doctrine in your Lutheran classroom.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Psalms 51:5; Matt. 28:19; Luke 1:41; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 16:33; Col. 2:11-12*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**



# Lutheran Perspectives on the Old Testament

## Mentor Session 1

This course explores a number of intersections between that which all Christians learn of the Old Testament and specific Lutheran doctrines. It is not intended as a survey of the Old Testament, rather it should generate some conversation and research into how Lutherans interpret and teach Scripture.

Throughout this seminar program, you will be learning about the Lutheran “hermeneutic.” It is essential to understand how Christians read and understand the Bible. With your mentor-pastor, please discuss the following questions:

1. What does “hermeneutic” mean?
2. What are some of the different hermeneutical approaches used by Christians? (Be sure you know the similarity or differences between the Lutheran approach and that of your church, if you are not Lutheran.)
3. How is the “historical-grammatical” hermeneutic used when Lutherans read and understand Scripture?
4. Discuss what Lutherans mean by the “analogy of faith.”
5. Discuss how the Lutheran hermeneutic can be taught in the classroom in an age-appropriate way.

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**

## Mentor Session 2

Often when Christians think of learning about Christ, they think only of the New Testament. And yet it is proper to see Christ in all of Scripture. With your mentor-pastor, please discuss the following questions:

1. What does it mean to have a “Christological” view of the Old Testament?
2. How does having a Christological view of all of Scripture help a teacher teach well?
3. Explore specific sections of the Old Testament which point children to Christ?

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:17-19; Books of Isaiah and Matthew*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**



# Lutheran Perspectives on the New Testament

## Mentor Session 1

This course explores a number of intersections between that which all Christians learn of the New Testament and specific Lutheran doctrines. It is not intended as a survey of the New Testament, rather it should generate some conversation and research into how Lutherans interpret and teach Scripture.

Lutherans speak of a “theology of the cross”. With your mentor-pastor, please discuss the following questions:

1. What does “theology of the cross” mean?
2. How does it differ from a “theology of glory”?
3. How is the Lutheran way of speaking about these topics different than other traditions? Why do Lutherans place an emphasis on the cross?
4. Spend some time talking about how language of from “theology of the cross” might affect how you teach in your classroom.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Mark 1:15; Mark 15:39*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**

## Mentor Session 2

Another concept that Lutherans use to explicate doctrines found in Scripture is the “the kingdom of the left hand and the kingdom of the right hand.” With your mentor-pastor, please discuss the following questions:

1. To what does “the kingdom of the left hand” refer? To what does the “kingdom of the right hand” refer?
2. What impact does this two-kingdom doctrine have upon the Christian life?
3. What impact should this two-kingdom doctrine have upon your work in the classroom? Consider both how you teach and what you teach as you explore this question with your mentor-pastor.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Rom. 13; Eph. 2:11-22; Acts 25-26*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**





# History of the Church

## Mentor Session 1

This course will cover many of the essential moments in the growth and development of the Christian Church on earth. It will spend particular time on the Reformation and on the shaping of Christian denominations in America.

Lutherans speak of the Reformation as an event which is ongoing; it is not over. The event of the Reformation and its repercussions will be something you will teach at some level during your service in a Lutheran school. Please discuss the following questions with your mentor-pastor:

1. What were the primary motivations behind Luther's nailing the 95 Theses on the church door? What was Luther trying to accomplish?
2. How did Luther teach about the Catholic Church in his later years? What were his concerns and where did he remain in agreement?
3. How did Luther's actions and teachings influence other reformers who followed him, especially John Calvin and Jacob Arminius?
4. What does your Lutheran school do to celebrate the Reformation? What does it mean to celebrate the Reformation?

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Rom. 1:16-17, Rom. 3:24 and 28*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**

## Mentor Session 2

The development of the Christian Church in the United States has resulted in a wide number and variety of different denominations. Chances are that you have several represented among the parents and children of your classroom. Spend some time discussing the following questions with your mentor-pastor:

1. What are the major Christian denominations which exist in your region or city? How do their teachings and practice differ from the LCMS?
2. How does the LCMS differ from other Lutheran groups in your area? You are likely to need to know the differences and similarities between the LCMS and ELCA, but you may also need to understand the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).
3. Consider how your school expects you to discuss theology with the children in your classroom and their parents. What questions are likely to arise, given the various Christian faiths represented in your school?

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**



# The Role of the Teacher in a Lutheran School

## Mentor Session 1

This course will explore the ministry of the teacher in a Lutheran school, as well as the common missions of Lutheran schools. Many questions will be asked and answered relative to the practical work of a teacher in the Lutheran classroom.

The LCMS has a long history of careful teaching and practice regarding the role of the teacher in the ministry of the church. Please discuss the following with your mentor-pastor:

1. What do LCMS Lutherans mean when they speak of the Call of a Lutheran teacher? How does this differ from the call each of us has as a Christian? How does this differ from the call of a pastor? What about other workers on the staff of the church and school?
2. What are the congregation's expectations of its called teachers? What are its expectations of its lay teachers?
3. Discuss your role in the life and ministry of the school and church as a lay teacher.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*1 Pet 2:9-10; 1 Cor. 14:40; Titus 1:5-2:15*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**

## Mentor Session 2

The LCMS has treasured its schools as precious and essential to the Church. Yet, over time, the mission and purpose of Lutheran schools have become more varied. Please discuss the following with your mentor-pastor:

1. Why do Lutherans value Christian education so highly? When did this begin?
2. What are the various roles and missions accomplished by Lutheran schools in the Missouri Synod today?
3. What is the mission of your school? What is its role in the congregation and in the community?
4. Consider ways in which you specifically assist the school in fulfilling its mission and its role. Consider ways by which you might strengthen your service.

Possible launching points for exploration:

*Deut. 4:9; Deut. 6; Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 11:28*

**This mentor session is expected to last at least 30 minutes.**



# Policies

**Eligibility for the program:** This seminar program may only be taken by teachers and other school personnel who are otherwise ineligible for the regular teacher colloquy program.

**Honesty:** This is a self-paced, highly independent program of study. It is the expectation of CUEnet that the student will be responsible and honest in his or her completion of every aspect of the program.

**Communication:** Given the nature of the program's design, CUEnet will be in direct communication with the pastor and principal of each student's school regarding the progress of the student.

**Credit:** This program is a non-credit program of instruction. It may be that the hours spent will apply to work hours needed for state certification. Policies vary by state; the student is encouraged to research this possibility with his or her state's education board.

**Right to request substitute mentors:** At times teachers may find that they do not have a pastor and/or principal associated with the school available to them. In unique and extraordinary circumstances, the director of academic programs at CUEnet may approve a substitute mentor. In every case, such a substitute must be an ordained or commissioned minister of the LCMS.

**Tuition payment:** No student shall receive access to a seminar course until full payment for tuition has been paid. Exceptions to this may only be made through the approval of CUEnet.



**Record of Completion:** After the final project is approved, the standards of the covenant met, and all pertinent assessments have been received and evaluated by CUEnet, a Record of Completion will be issued by CUEnet to the student. This Record does not endow the teacher with any official standing with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

