



# Westfield Windows

The Newsletter of Westfield House, Cambridge  
Theological College of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England  
Michaelmas 2003

## Another Year, More Blessings

On Thursday, 25 September, our newly arrived intake of students sat in the library for the customary orientation. It was the largest group ever assembled for such an occasion. New ELCE student, Jago Krüsel joined Gordon Naumann in preparing for the ministry of our church. They will be sharing the internal course with a Finnish student, bravely abandoning the recognised universities of his homeland, in search of decent theology with faith in the Christ revealed in the Holy Scriptures at its centre. Additionally three students from each of the American Concordia seminaries are to be with us for an exchange year on the well-established programme, and a new experimental programme brings two selected students from Concordia University, River Forest, in each semester of this year. Later we will be joined by a Sudanese student, preparing to take a leading role at the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan. Add the resident wives of two married students, and the part-timers Steve Edge, Steve Hunt, and Tapani Simijoki, and the community is comfortably larger than even its peak in the early 1970s. Numbers are not in themselves very significant, but three things should be said about this student body.

The first thing relates to the importance of the overseas students. Their presence is encouraging and helpful to our own internal students. But it is also important to the churches from which they come, and overwhelmingly that is the LCMS. There are few opportunities like this, where their seminaries feel it is appropriate to expose their students to other ways of thinking and doing theology. And that is a significant gift we can return to our long-term benefactrix.

The second thing to say is the apparent cruelty of the timing of this expansion. Years of planning are bearing fruit at the very time we are least equipped to cope with it in terms of our own staffing.

When the telephone rang, one Saturday night, late last term, who could have guessed the significance of the innocent sounding message? A sister from the dialysis unit was calling to say that Glen Zweck, our Tutor, had a nasty infection in a wound on his leg, and they would be keeping him in overnight to dress it properly. Overnight turned into a few days, and a few days into a few weeks. Then words like life-threatening condition, and urgent surgery came into play. Those of us who visited him each day would have settled for Glen losing his leg, if it meant we

should not lose him. But the prayers of the church are a potent mystery, and the power of God is mighty, and neither of us lost what we feared we might. We rejoice that he has returned home and is regaining his strength. But, alas, his eyes have deteriorated to the point that he cannot teach as once he did. The contributions of one of Lutheranism's most accomplished polymaths are very much missed.

The third thing relates to the funding of the Westfield programme. For many years we have been arguing in various quarters that Westfield House is a valuable asset of the whole church, very cost-effective, and therefore it needs to be supported. But there is another way of looking at the equation. Rather than seeking support for Westfield House, one could seek support for those who study there and benefit from it. This is exactly the approach being taken by the newly organised Friends of Westfield House. This group, largely lay led from the USA, solicits gifts to sponsor bursaries to students who will benefit the church because of their experience at Westfield House. The candidates for the grants are primarily non-Americans, and this year they have selected the student from Finland, the one from Sudan, and our own Jago from Wales.

For so many of these things we are again thankful. Not least among them is the generous volunteer effort, partially reported elsewhere in these pages. Perhaps only a theologian can explain this. What would make a group of Lutherans pay for their air fares to get here, pay for the materials they would use, and spend a week's precious holiday laying beautiful wood flooring throughout a foreign seminary? I mean, they don't have threats of hell, nor promises of rewards for their works, even such generous works as these. It is a testimony to the power of God's grace, and the transformation of the consecrated life, that they will simply answer the question by saying, 'We had a great time. Can we do it again?' The answer was not hard to find. To them and to all who share their vision, I say thanks. But most of all to God who really is the doer of all good things.



*Westfield students and staff gather after the opening service on 29 September 2003*



## Lutherans in the Other Place ...

**By Korey Maas**

Unlike Cambridge, which has the good fortune of being home not only to a Lutheran church, but also to two Lutheran houses of study, the university city of Oxford has for a long time had no visible Lutheran presence. Where do Oxford students go if they want to meet, mingle, or worship with other Lutherans? Until the autumn of 2002, the answer to that question was simply but sadly: somewhere else. But with the commencement of Michaelmas Term last year, and the simultaneous organisation of the Oxford Lutheran Society, some small attempt has made to remedy this situation.

Oxford, like Cambridge, is a university of societies. Sport societies, academic societies, political societies—and, of course, a fair share of drinking societies. But the university is also host to dozens of religious societies. And with no Lutheran congregation in town, the organisation of a Lutheran society seemed the best place to begin reaching out to fellow Lutherans. So, with the assistance of Westfield's Pastor Reg Quirk, and Resurrection Lutheran Church's former Curate David Cowan, a few students laid the foundations for what will hopefully become a long-lasting and visible Lutheran presence in Oxford.

In its first year of existence the Lutheran Society met fortnightly during term, with two social events and two educational presentations being the norm. Interested students had the chance to meet one another and to socialise at a welcome reception, Christmas party, Society dinner, punting afternoon, and weekend excursion to

Cambridge.

Educational offerings—generally better attended than the strictly social events!—included the following:

- David Cowan: 'Gospel Themes in Popular Film'
- Dr Tom Winger (Westfield House): 'Aspects of Lutheran Liturgy'
- Dr Graham Tomlin (Wycliffe Hall): 'Luther and Pilgrimage'
- Dr Bernd Wannewetsch (Harris Manchester): a viewing and discussion of the film *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace*
- Korey Maas: 'Robert Barnes and Early English Lutheranism'
- Dr John W. Montgomery (Luton): 'A Barrister's Defence of Christianity'

The programme on offer this year promises to be equally engaging and, as an awareness of the Society grows, even better attended. Some of the scheduled presentations include Canon Trevor Williams (Trinity) discussing Paul Tillich's debt to Luther; Reg Quirk answering the question, 'What's Distinctive about Lutheranism?'; and several D.Phil. students summarising portions of their research in areas such as 'Luther and Islam', 'Copernicus and Wittenberg', and 'Ethics in the Lutheran Tradition'.

But it's not all tweedy, academic fare. As Oxford Lutherans made themselves known to one another through the Society, the question of Lutheran worship quickly and quite naturally arose. And once again, the pastors, staff, and students of Westfield House graciously offered their assistance in leading occasional worship services. With

## Canadian Connection

**By David Godkin**

**Student, Michaelmas 2002–Easter 2003**

If you have ever visited the Westfield House web site you have probably noticed that it is called a 'House of Theological Studies', which is actually quite an appropriate description. As a place of theological studies, Westfield House is unique in several respects. Firstly, classes are generally conducted in the professor's study or in the library, and are generally quite small in size with a few students per lecture. I found that this has helped create a sense of openness and freedom to ask questions and engage in meaningful discussion. This arrangement has also encouraged a closer relationship between the Westfield House professors and the students. In addition to in-house lectures, Westfield House students are provided the opportunity to attend lectures from virtually any faculty at Cambridge University. It has been a wonderful experience attending classes in a university with such a rich academic history and reputation.

Not only is Westfield House a fantastic place to receive solid Lutheran teaching, it is also a great place to fellowship with other theology students and to grow together in a community. And with Resurrection Lutheran Church literally out the back door, the Lord's gifts of the Word and Sacraments were always close at hand. Living and studying together in the same house has resulted in many interesting conversations that have helped us all in forming our theological convictions and we have become good friends as well. The community at Westfield House also enjoys many social outings together such as football (soccer), teas, and holiday celebrations.

In addition to life within the house, living in Cambridge has provided many unique opportunities. For example, I have had the opportunity to travel throughout Europe and to try my hand at rowing. All in all I would say that this year at Westfield House has been a spectacular experience and I would highly recommend anyone spending a year here.

*Dave Godkin came to Westfield after his first year in the Master of Theological Studies programme at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. He was able to complete all the requirements of his degree by transfer credit. He has now decided to enter the pastoral ministry programme at St. Catharines.*

# Floored by Their Generosity

By Yvonne Quirk

For the third consecutive year we have welcomed volunteer groups to Westfield. Does that amount to a tradition? We certainly hope so, because these enthusiastic and committed Christians make a real difference. They put their hearts and souls into a glorious array of projects that make Westfield a brighter, safer and more homely place to be for both students and guests.

In Summer 2003 we welcomed Laurie Rosenwinkel, from St John's, Wheaton (near Chicago), as a summer volunteer. Laurie cleaned, administrated, smiled, smoothed, and generally turned her hand to anything asked of her. She was 'a treasure' as we say in the UK, and quickly became one of the community.

Towards the end of Laurie's stay she was joined by fellow members of St John's Youth Group, who came over with their youth leaders. They painted fences and windows, overhauled our collection of bicycles, and re-painted the bike shed. They worked unstintingly, including an eight hour shift on the hottest day ever recorded here in the UK (100°F—I know many overseas readers will be thinking that's actually quite comfortable, but it was big news over here. The sight of these youngsters toiling away in the heat was both a mystery and a witness to the power of the Lord!)

No sooner had the youth left than the old'uns from the same congregation arrived. Not to be outdone by the kids, they laid beautiful new floors in the hallways, dining room, and common room, re-stained parts of the front hall and staircase, and painted the kitchen, as well as tackling various smaller projects in the house and garden.

Our volunteer groups are a testament to the power of faith in action. Not only do they give up their holidays, they reach deep into their own pockets to enable all this work to be done. We can only say 'thank-you', which seems inadequate, and pray that their efforts are rewarded with a thriving Westfield House



*The Wheaton Crew display their handiwork in the Westfield foyer*

and a vibrant contribution to Lutheran Studies across the world.

We hope to see many of our volunteers back again—not just to work, but maybe to fit in a well-earned holiday. Meanwhile, we give thanks to God for the great gifts of time, talent, and treasure that His people are so willing to share.

## A Bridge to River Forest

*Revd Jeffrey Leininger, former Westfield student and Assistant Pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cambridge, recently completed his Ph.D. in English Reformation history from the University of Cambridge. Now campus pastor at Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois, he has pioneered an overseas study programme enabling his students to come to Westfield. He writes:*

The first semester of our 'Concordia in Cambridge' programme is nearly completed, and we remain excited

about this tremendous opportunity for our students. The seeds for this idea were planted in the spring of 2002 when Dr Bob Hayes, the dean of students at Concordia University, River Forest, visited Cambridge after I had accepted the call to be Campus pastor at Concordia. I recall that we stood on Claire Bridge overlooking the exceptional gardens of that college, when we talked about how enriching an experience studying in Cambridge would be for Concordia undergraduates. Dean Hayes and I both felt that some kind of exchange should begin as soon as possible, and already in the 2003-04 academic year we are sending two students each semester to

study at Westfield House.

The purpose of the programme is three-fold:

- to expose Concordia students to a study semester abroad in one of Europe's premier academic and cultural centres;
- to immerse graduate and undergraduates in the life and learning of a Lutheran seminary, while offering them opportunity to attend lectures at Cambridge University;
- to enrich the community life of Westfield House, Resurrection Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Survivors of the second annual Westfield House v. Luther League (youth) football match, in which the Westfield Academicals avenged last year's defeat with a 10-4 triumph*

## First Finn Flies In

**By Tapani Simojoki**

In September this year, a tall, dark young man with an unusual accent joined the customary mix of British and North American students at Westfield House. Eero Pihlava, 21, newly arrived from his native Finland, began his first year of training towards ordination. Born and raised in south-western Finland, he has taken to life and work in Cambridge with great energy and enthusiasm.

Eero's arrival marked the inauguration of Westfield House Finnish Project. This international venture was launched to bring relief to the increasingly difficult situation in which confessional Lutherans find themselves in Finland.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) boasts a membership comprising nearly 90% of the Finnish population. However, in reality, Finland is a highly secularised country with very few churchgoers. Over the last several decades, the ELCF has gradually been permeated by a liberal theology that has taken the church very far from the pure teaching of God's word. The ordination of women since 1987 is merely a symptom of the profound crisis in the church. Currently, it is almost impossible for men to be ordained or receive calls in Finland unless they acquiesce to the liberal agenda. There is an open campaign of official persecution led by the bishops and other church leaders, aimed at ending the 'confessional resistance'. Faithful lay members often have to travel great distances to attend biblical church services.

This situation was created, and is now

maintained and exacerbated, by the absence of confessional pastoral training. The two theological faculties that train pastors for the church are controlled by academic priorities and at many points their teaching has departed from Christianity altogether. No significant alternative forms of theological training exist in Finland.

It is this grave situation that the Westfield House Finnish Project aims to address. It was initiated by Luther Foundation Finland (LFF), an organisation that was founded five years ago to establish confessional mission congregations. It now operates in twelve towns and cities across Finland and has a great need for pastors. As its director, pastor Juhana Pohjola points out, a speedy and radical solution is needed.

Being forced to look outside Finland, the LFF has now teamed up with Westfield House to train Finnish pastors in Cambridge. The project is still in its infancy. The funding for Eero's first year was generously provided by the Friends of Westfield House. Pastor Jeff Ahonen of Garland, TX, is now working to raise further funds for Eero and other, future students in North America, while the LFF is doing the same in Finland. There are many other practical issues to deal with.

Yet the modest beginnings are highly significant. If it is the Lord's will, Eero will become the first of many faithful confessional pastors trained in exile at Westfield.

'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field' (Matt. 9:37-38).

## River Forest

*(Continued from page 3)*

Church of England with Concordia's best and brightest students.

Jonathan Rusnak, a pre-seminary student at Concordia, and Ryan Van Laningham, an MAR graduate, have pioneered the first semester for Concordia. Two young women with strong interests in theology will be arriving at Westfield in January. Allison Maas is one of our most gifted English majors; she is also studying biblical languages with the aim of possibly doing translation work. April Bishop is representative of our fine Deaconess students, who combine a love for Lutheran theology with a love for the service of God's people. It is our aim to continue to send two or three of Concordia's 'best and brightest' each semester in order to enrich Westfield House and the Lutheran community in Cambridge, even as this exchange enhances Concordia's mission to 'equip men and women to serve and lead with integrity, creativity, competence, and compassion ...'.

## Oxford

*(Continued from page 2)*

pastors Claudio Flor and Sunday Effiong, both of London, having also offered their assistance, bi-weekly Lutheran services will very soon become a reality in Oxford. Weekly Bible study is, in fact, already taking place.

As the Lutheran Society of Oxford enters its second year, members request your prayers and encouragement. If you know of anybody in the area who might be interested in Society events or in attending Lutheran worship, please do provide us with their name and contact information (korey.maas@stx.ox.ac.uk).

### Published by:

Westfield House  
30 Huntingdon Rd  
Cambridge CB3 0HH  
England  
Tel: +44 (1223) 354 331  
Fax: +44 (1223) 355 265  
E-mail: westfield.house@ntlworld.com  
Website:  
homepage.ntlworld.com/westfield.house

### Distributed by:

Friends of Westfield House  
c/o Memorial Lutheran Church  
5800 Westheimer Road  
Houston, TX 77057  
U.S.A.