

Let's Go Deeper...
Wednesday, June 22



It was an honor and pleasure to celebrate the 150th commencement of Lexington Theological Seminary last week.

- On Thursday, Central hosted a luncheon for the graduates followed by a Communion Service in the sanctuary.
- On Friday, the 150th Commencement Ceremony took place in the sanctuary followed by a reception in Fellowship Hall.
- On Sunday, our worship focused on Disciples' historic commitment to education, particularly the education for ministry provided by LTS.

The Seminary's web site www.lextheo.edu provides an overview of its history:

“Lexington Theological Seminary is the lineal descendant of the Department of Hebrew Literature in Bacon College, founded in 1836. With the rechartering of Bacon College in 1858 under the name of Kentucky University, the biblical department was considerably expanded and renamed the School of Biblical Literature and Moral Sciences.

In 1865 Kentucky University moved from Harrodsburg, Kentucky, to Lexington and merged with Transylvania University on the Transylvania campus. The newly-merged institution was named Kentucky University and retained the name until 1908, when it resumed the charter and name of [Transylvania University](#).

The Seminary dates its founding from 1865 when it was The College of the Bible, one of several colleges in Kentucky University. Another of these colleges was the College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, which separated from its parent institution in 1878, and through a series of name changes emerged as the present [University of Kentucky](#).

The Seminary acquired its own charter in 1878 and occupied buildings on the campus of Kentucky University (Transylvania University) until 1950, when it moved to South Limestone Street in Lexington. At its centennial in 1965, The College of the Bible was renamed Lexington Theological Seminary.



Thus three institutions of higher education in Lexington are of the same background: Transylvania University, the University of Kentucky, and Lexington Theological Seminary.”

I was interested to learn that in 1909 the seminary established the first chair of Religious Education in the nation. A century ago, the degree was in Bible School Pedagogy. Today graduates receive the Masters Degree in Christian Education.

The importance of Christian Education was on my mind during the 9:30 a.m. hour last Sunday. During the summer, Jennie and I are teaching alongside a faculty of parents in KidsCentral, our children's Christian Education space. We focused the first four weeks on the 23rd Psalm. We've turned to the Lord's Prayer.

After the kids left my "Rabbi Time" and went to their age-graded classrooms, I remembered a passage in Paul's letter to the Galatians. He addresses them as, "My dear children, for whom I am in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 5:19).

I've never been in "the pains of childbirth." But I've witnessed contractions, labor, and delivery up close and personal on three different occasions and it was clear to me that when Jennie was in the pains of childbirth she was rather passionate about bringing a child into this world. When Paul tries to put into words how much he wants to see the people in his congregation formed in faith and that he's willing to do whatever it takes to make that happen, he speaks of being in "the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in them."

I share Paul's holy ache. I yearn to do whatever it takes to give birth to and help grow disciples of Jesus Christ.

At Coolwater Christian Church, the congregation Jennie and I began in Phoenix, I came up with an acronym for the faith practices of growing disciples. How do you grow as a disciple? You **JuST aDD WaTeR**:

Jesus first.

Serving according to your gifts.

Together with others in caring, accountable discipleship.

Devoted to reading the Bible

Devoted to prayer.

Worshipping God with heart, mind, soul, and might.

The breaking of bread at the Lord's Table and our tables at home.

Returning thanks to God by giving generously.

On Friday, I watched as a dozen men and women received Masters Degrees from Lexington Theological Seminary.

On Sunday morning, I watched as a dozen boys and girls engaged in their own education for ministry.

I'm proud both sets of students were under Central's roof.

And I'm grateful the Search Team will be making an announcement about staffing for the Minister of Faith Formation position soon.

