

2023 Southern Pastors Conference Indiana District—LCMS

Monday – Wednesday, May 1-3, 2023 (Six Sessions)

Speakers: The Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast & Rev. Ralph Blumenberg



The Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. serves as the sixteenth president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and professor of American Christianity and American Lutheranism. Dr. Rast joined the Department of Historical Theology in the fall of 1996. Previous to his seminary service, he was the pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church, Madison, Tennessee (1992-1996).

He received his B.A. in Theological Languages with a minor in Theology from Concordia College (now University), River Forest, Illinois (1986), and his M.Div. (1990) and S.T.M. (1995), both with a major in Historical Theology and a minor in Systematic Theology, from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. In 2000 he received the M.A. degree and in 2003 he successfully defended his dissertation, “Joseph A. Seiss and the Lutheran Church in America,” earning his Ph.D. in American Church History from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

As President of CTSFW, Dr. Rast launched a significant strategic planning process that has resulted in the funding and completion of a new library, the doubling of the Seminary’s endowment, successful audits of all business practices, the provision of a 100% tuition guarantee for all residential students, and steady enrollment in the face of significant demographic challenges. Dr. Rast has worked to ensure that the Seminary upholds its core values and vision in all it does so that it can continue to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all.



The Rev. Dr. Blumenberg has served Immanuel since 1985. Over 40 years ago, he married Jan (nee Wolka), a Registered Nurse. They have 3 grown and married children, Justin (Megan), Jennifer Rodgers (Jason), and Janneane Blevins (Ben), and six grandchildren: Ava, Ella, and Krista Blumenberg and Ryan, Easton, and Rhett Rodgers. He grew up the 4th of 6 children on a farm south of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and was baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church (Friedheim) near Decatur. He graduated from Concordia Junior College, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and began serving as a pastor at St. John Lutheran Church Pecatonica, Illinois, near Rockford. He enjoys gardening and yard work, target and skeet shooting, photography (esp. grandkids!), and playing with his grandchildren. A favorite Bible verse is Psalm 118:24: “*This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.*” It reminds us that each day is a gift filled with opportunity.