

far from new, it is the way that most of our schools were founded. It is indeed a new-old thing.

- ¹ Carl S. Meyer, *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986), 213, <http://www.librarything.com/work/1342/details/171707031>.
- ² John Hellwege, "Wilhelm Loehe: American Lutheranism's Distant Father," *Concordia Hist. Inst. Q.* 83.1 (2010): 2-17; Meyer, *Moving Frontiers*, 213.
- ³ Mark Alan Granquist, *Lutherans in America: A New History* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2015), 152.
- ⁴ Richard W. Solberg, *Lutheran Higher Education in North America* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1985), 151.
- ⁵ Solberg, *Lutheran Higher Education in North America*, 153-55.
- ⁶ Solberg, *Lutheran Higher Education in North America*, 156.
- ⁷ ["About us | History"](<https://web.archive.org/web/20181221044318/http://www.ccal.edu/about-us/#1465604237350-e676ef8b-0650>). *Concordia College Alabama*. Archived from [the original](<http://www.ccal.edu/about-us/#1465604237350-e676ef8b-0650>) on December 21, 2018.
- ⁸ Solberg, *Lutheran Higher Education in North America*, 156.
- ⁹ Meyer, *Moving Frontiers*, 387-88.
- ¹⁰ WIKIPEDIA, s.v. "Concordia University Ann Arbor."

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AD FONTES
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DOING A NEW-OLD THING

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UNDERSTANDABLY, QUESTIONS ARISE ABOUT THE founding of Luther Classical College as a Lutheran College that is distinctly a Missouri Synod school and yet not directly sponsored by the LCMS nor under the Concordia University System. While this seems unusual, we are really doing a new-old thing. In other words, this is a return to the historical approach. In the history of the LCMS, what is truly unusual is for our Synod to head up the founding of a school.

The LCMS has the unique distinction of having two seminaries that are both older than their synod. In a bold move of faith in 1839, the Saxon immigrants to Missouri founded a college in Altenburg, MO, now known as Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. This move was especially courageous considering the fact that by this point they had been in the U.S. less than a year, had already ousted their bishop, Martin Stephan, and were largely an unorganized group that had not yet settled questions regarding the legitimacy of their immigration. Nevertheless, they saw their need to produce pastors and teachers, so they formed this college.¹

Then in 1846, appeals by F.C.D. Wyneken led Wilhelm Löhe to sponsor a practical seminary in Ft. Wayne, IN. This school was

particularly unique in that its founder Löhe never set foot on the continent.² As a result, what is now Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne was founded by several pastors on two continents without any church body to connect it to. The following year, Löhe gifted this seminary to the newly formed Missouri Synod. Thus it and the College in Altenburg became the seminaries of the Missouri Synod.³

Even after the founding of the LCMS, the earliest colleges were also local efforts. In 1855, three pastors and two teachers founded a teacher seminary in Milwaukee. This school was then turned over to the LCMS and moved first to Ft. Wayne and then to Illinois, becoming Concordia University Chicago.⁴ Then in 1881, the Synod recognized the need for pre-seminary education and made an appeal for gymnasium-style schools. In response to this appeal, local efforts created schools in New Orleans, Milwaukee, New York, Concordia (MO), and St. Paul (MN) between 1881-1893. While the school in New Orleans closed after five years, the others became Concordia Wisconsin, Concordia Bronville, Concordia St. Paul, and St. Paul's in Concordia, MO.⁵

It was not until 1893 that the Missouri Synod, as a synod, opened a school. This teacher's college was formed in Seward, NE, and is now Concordia University Nebraska. This means that the seventh enduring school and eighth overall was the first one founded by the Synod in a top-down manner.

Interestingly, this was not to be a lasting model. As the Missouri Synod expanded to the West Coast, appeals were made to the Synod for more pastors and teachers. However, at the 1903 synodical convention, President Francis Pieper responded, "You must raise your own crop." This led to the opening of what would become Concordia Portland in 1905 and Concordia Irvine in 1906.⁶ Then in 1922 what would become Concordia Selma was founded independently but was supported by funds from the Synodical Conference.⁷

In 1921, the Missouri Synod opened what would become Concordia University of Edmonton.⁸ The last two Concordias were also opened directly by the Missouri Synod; the Synod

voting and opening what is now Concordia Texas in 1950,⁹ and Concordia Ann Arbor in 1964.¹⁰

This means that of the 14 schools at some time connected to the Missouri Synod, only four were actually founded by the Synod at large. This is not to suggest that it is wrong for the Synod to open schools, rather just that most of the universities and both seminaries were formed by local pastors, sometimes with help from afar, who were trying to answer the needs that they had before them. In this way, while it may seem like Luther Classical College is doing something new, it is actually doing an old thing.



Drawing of first campus of CTSFW on original 15-acre campus. Occupied by seminary from 1849-1861 and by Concordia College of Fort Wayne until 1957.

It should also be noted that once the Missouri Synod was formed, the men who founded schools did not do so in a rogue manner, rather they sought to keep themselves and their new institutions under

proper ecclesiastical oversight. In the same way, Luther Classical College is being founded under Mount Hope Lutheran Church, Casper, WY, which will issue divine calls to all ordained faculty under the ecclesiastical oversight of the President of the Wyoming District, who will do annual visits. Likewise, everything is being done with full knowledge and disclosure to the leadership of the LCMS.

It is far from original for a group of Lutheran pastors and laymen who see a need for excellent, quality higher education to meet this need by building a college for this purpose. The founding of Luther Classical College is in many ways doing an old thing that only seems new. In fact, a grassroots effort to found a Lutheran College based on classical education and Lutheran orthodoxy is