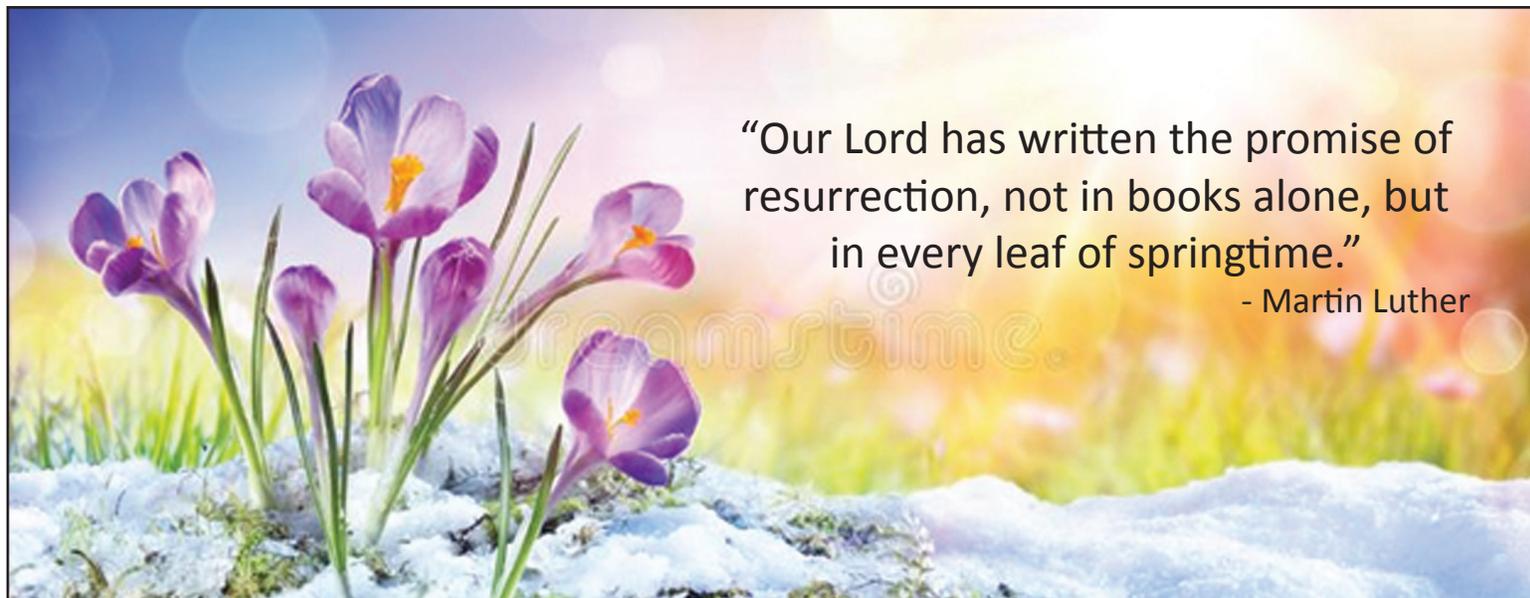


The Spiritual Caregiver

A Newsletter of the Ecumenical Institute for Pastoral Care



“Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf of springtime.”

- Martin Luther

Ecumenical Institute “Well Positioned” for CPE

by Roger Cauthon, ACPE Certified Educator

There is a phrase often used in the business world. That phrase is that a company offering a product or service is “well positioned” in the market. Reflecting on that phrase about companies enduring the pandemic and whether they will survive, I reflected on the Ecumenical Institute and CPE.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is facing many issues like the rest of the nation and even the world. New models for ‘doing business’ were needed for the pandemic lock down; new approaches to reaching ‘clients’ were needed as money and funding were challenged; aging population brought a smaller workforce; and people needed to be able to work from home without travel. These challenges were across the board for business, large and small; for educational institutions; for medical

care centers from hospitals to nursing homes to hospice; and even for local parish ministry in terms of worship and visiting members.

So, how did Ecumenical Institute for CPE fare in this difficult process?

New models for ‘doing business’ were already in place at EI before the pandemic started.

Offering both in-person and online learning modules, EI was able to continue all its CPE programs and expand them. The number of students has been consistent for EI over the past years at a maximal level available per Certified Educator with accreditation limits from the US Department of Education and the APCE national program. While in-person meetings for the group educational process were not possible, the online option took its place and groups continued.

Combined with this learning model,

EI has been able to have students placed in parish ministry, nursing homes, social service agencies and medical institutions throughout the pandemic. The students have taken the challenge of doing pastoral care virtually, in full protective gear, and being major supporters of overworked medical staff. The chaplains and pastoral care givers have often been the last person to talk with a patient who dies with family unable to visit. The chaplains and pastoral care givers have formed a link between loved ones that has been an emotional bridge for people facing the death of loved ones.

The number of ACPE centers nationally has decreased as medical centers have cut funding due to financial challenges. In Iowa alone the number of CPE centers that are

Continued on Page 3

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Leaving a Legacy for Your Community

**Times are
definitely changing.**

**Our nation's future
is unknown.**

**Our future
with God is known.**

Is there something you can do
for EI to continue our legacy of
faith based training?

The value of some assets
like farm land is high. What
planning can you do this year
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Contact Denise for more
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What Does the Ecumenical Institute Do?

by Rick Lampe

When I joined the board of the Ecumenical Institute (EI) a year ago, I didn't know much about what it did. I suspect that many people don't know about it nor why they would want to assist in its mission. Throughout this past year, I have learned that EI oversees Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) opportunities for individuals wishing to become hospital chaplains or to advance in their skills. During this time, I have been impressed by stories about how hard it is to find such CPE facilities and how appreciative our students are to find EI and to be able to take the classes in person or online.

Hospital chaplains are a necessary part of the emotional and spiritual journey that we each take as we are hospitalized for illness or accident. They also provide the support for families and individuals

as they begin the healing process of grieving for a loved one. Because their service happens quietly, they often go unnoticed, which is what they desire. But being behind the scene often leads to being lost in the operations of large institutions. Couple that with the limited number of people trained to provide this ministry and the situation ends with hospital chaplain positions being lost.

The Ecumenical Institute provides a meaningful presence in health care by giving hands on training in hospital settings while being guided by experienced educators. Without EI, many hospitals would not be able to find individuals who have the training and sensitivity to provide spiritual care for patients and their families. For these reasons, I am very proud to be part of this board and its ongoing work.

What is EI?

Ecumenical Institute (EI) is a non-profit accredited organization. EI provides training and resources for caregivers who strengthen the communities through caring and faith in daily life.

Mission – EI's mission lies within this transformational training accomplished through professional in-depth sessions, consisting of 500 hours of instruction and active practice.

Operating for over 50 years, hundreds of students have graduated from the Ecumenical Institute. Long distance learning has been provided for several years. In the professional field, EI's training is recognized as a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and is an accredited center with an ACPE Certified Educator. Students enrolled in college have often received credit toward their sought after degree from this unit. The unit provides an aid to seminary students by having hands-on, heart-to-heart training that is expected by their denomination prior to ordination. EI alleviates a growing shortage of pastors by providing more lay leaders equipped for caregiving. Graduates of the CPE program have become chaplains at hospitals, rural churches, nursing homes, and in the workplace, including factories. Many of the students are in jobs where they serve in social work, hospice, nursing and counseling. EI is striving to provide an innovative holistic approach to community care.

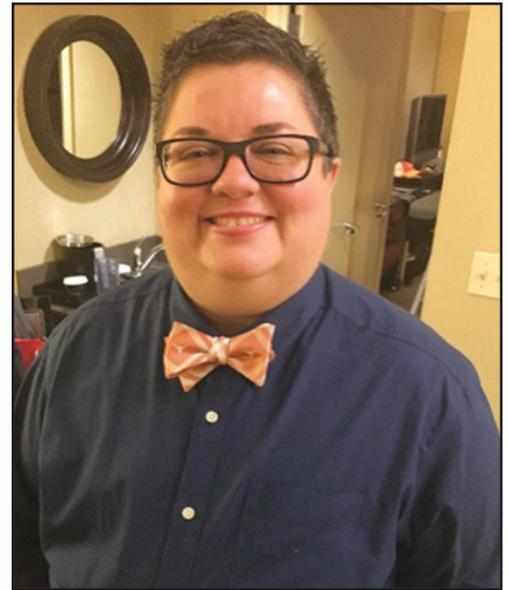
Who we serve? • Clergy • Community leaders/citizens • Caregivers
• Family members • Healthcare professionals • Those experiencing difficult situations • Hospitalized patients

How can we serve? Being present for someone experiencing spiritual, health, mental health, crisis and providing comfort, caregiving, listening and assisting in finding needed resources.

Welcome, *Reverend Jennifer Hall*

The Reverend Jennifer Hall (pronouns: they/them/theirs) is an ACPE Certified Educator and has worked in healthcare as a chaplain and chaplain educator for the past 14 years. Jennifer joins the Ecumenical Institute for CPE after serving as the Manager of Clinical Pastoral Education at UnityPoint Health – Des Moines. They are an ordained Christian minister and hold a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary, a Master of Administration degree in Criminal Justice Management & Administration with a specialization

in Chemical Dependence, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from University of Central Oklahoma. Jennifer has expertise in LGBTQ+ theory, chemical dependency, conflict resolution, critical race theory, and liberation theology. They frequently present on gender identity, sexual identity formation, LGBTQ+ healthcare competency, and diversity and inclusion. Jennifer is married to Dr. Cyndi Wiley. They live in a 1908 farmhouse with four cats, and two dogs. They recently celebrated their 18th anniversary.



Ecumenical Institute “Well Positioned” for CPE... Continued from Page 1

functioning with Certified Educators is down to only two, St. Luke’s College and the Ecumenical Institute who are partners in offering CPE training. Seminaries and denominations are now scrambling to find appropriate centers for their students and ministers to complete required CPE training.

Combined with the above, CPE faces a national shortage of Certified Educators. An aging population has brought the need for younger supervisors (Certified Educators) and

the process is slower than the demand requires.

And the population of students has changed a great deal over the past several years. It is increasingly difficult for students to travel to fewer and fewer CPE centers and spend a full three months gaining the educational and clinical experience needed. The ‘newer’ students are often second career people, have jobs that must be done, and work in churches that cannot have their pastor gone for several months.

How is Ecumenical Institute “well situated” in this environment?

El has distance education available. Students can attend the group education meetings online and then do their clinical experience in their home areas. Recent units for CPE have had students from across the upper Midwest including South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan,

Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Other groups from St. Luke’s College have had students from every time zone in the country learning together and

doing clinical works in their own states.

While other CPE centers are ‘new’ to distance education it is only beginning to be seen as an important and viable option. Ecumenical Institute has been here and prepared.

El has a secure financial base. While many CPE centers are dependent on the support of a large medical system and susceptible to its financial waves, El is supported locally with its endowment and ongoing annual support. El is able to offer some of the most affordable distance education available as El lives up to its mission of “supporting pastoral education” across rural Iowa and the upper Midwest. As supporters of El you are making a very valuable ministry available to those who are called to be care givers.

Well positioned? Absolutely.

Thanks to all of you supporting this ministry in the tradition of Fr. Gene Sitzmann. El is well positioned to offer Clinical Pastoral Education in northwest Iowa and beyond.

Training Faith Based Caregivers



Thank You Recent Donors of Ecumenical Institute

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None of this work is possible without the generous support of donors. Since the inception of the Pastoral Education Center in the late 1960's, the number of students participating has now grown well past a thousand. Imagine the countless lives these students have touched with the skills they've learned. With your assistance the number of students will continue to grow.

Please consider supporting the work of the Ecumenical Institute for Clinical Pastoral Education.

- New Gift for Ecumenical Institute
- Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____
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Thanks to those who have helped plan for the longevity of Ecumenical Institute. These fine individuals have given; and their gift will continue after they are gone. If your name was inadvertently missed or you would like to be added, please contact Denise Green.

Thank You

Special thanks to the
Erlandson Foundation for
their continued support.



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Ecumenical Institute is Accredited to Conduct
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