

# Let All Creation Give Praise

## “Greening” Augustana Chapel

By Dan Roschke, (2006, M.Div.)

The graduating class of 2006 is excited to leave LSTC with a “green” chapel.

For many years, “greening the chapel” has been a dream of LSTC’s Green Zone—the group on campus which promotes environmentally responsible living, education and stewardship. That dream has come to fruition.

The class as a whole, guided by class convenor Liv Larson Andrews, heartily took to the idea. As early as October the vision began to take root.

The class covenanted with one another to “do the best we could” in our fundraising, with a goal of \$5000 in mind. Throughout the year, seniors found creative ways to raise funds for the project.

At an early fall meeting Michael Hagenow shared his excellent idea of having seniors supply preach, incorporate environmental theology into their sermons, and donate the earnings to the greening of the chapel.

In February, senior Zac Sturm planned and emceed a talent show. The event was a great success, as members from every class brought their talents, complete with accordion, bagpipe, stand-up comedy and plenty of audience participation. Throughout the evening, the refrain “Green the chapel!” accompanied performances. The event raised awareness about the chapel project and took in a free will offering.

During Lent, Ann E. Williams, Sara Olson and Kent Narum organized, set up and hosted an art show called “Pilgrimages: On the Way.” Quilters, potters, photographers, and painters in the LSTC community contributed pieces for the show. Many donated their art for a silent auction. The show’s kick-off event, held the evening before Ash Wednesday, gave the community a chance to see not only the visual art exhibit, but also performance art, poetry and interpretive dance. The art show continued to raise consciousness about greening the chapel. All proceeds from the silent auction went to the senior class project.

Meanwhile, Vice President of Operations Bob Berridge, New Testament Professor and Green Zone faculty advisor David Rhoads, Dean of the Chapel David Miller, and I researched the possibilities for greening the chapel. We chose an interior foliage design firm, met with them



Tropical plants surround the font and altar in the Augustana Chapel at LSTC

several times throughout the year, analyzed our options, and presented designs and costs to the senior class.

The senior class exceeded its fundraising goal! Thanks to all who contributed, with special mention to senior Steve Jerbi, the Augustana Class of 1956, and LSTC President James Echols. The chapel is now graced with plants, including philodendrons in the second floor windows and several species of palm.

The senior class gift is meant to be a first installment of greenery. We intentionally asked that the baptismal font and the altar be the starting points for positioning the plants, with future gifts adding from there.

Greening the chapel is a way to welcome all of God’s creation, even and especially in the sanctuary. “Life abundant” has become a visual reality in the Augustana Chapel, as we proclaim and celebrate the life that is ours through Christ. On behalf of the Class of 2006, I invite you to come and worship with us—all of us, both plant and animal—as all creation gives praise to God.