

LIFE AT THE SEM

September 2020

Ryan and Kari Maser

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For Kari and her students at Immanuel, Wentzville, MO.
- For Ryan as he continues with course work and prepares for interviews.
- For farmers, laborers, and the ag community as harvest begins and is underway.
- For teachers, professors, principals, school administrators, coaches, and others, as they work through many COVID-19 challenges in schools.
- For Concordia Seminary, as they seek to call their next president.

WHAT'S YOUR PASSION?

We all have good days and bad days, but when it comes down to it we generally enjoy the work we do. For many, careers or jobs are chosen and sought out because of a passion a person has for a particular subject, group of people, or interest.

And how satisfying it is to know that you can devote time to your passion! Whether it is caring for people in a hospital, advocating on behalf of others, using your hands and muscles to work the land or create a masterpiece, or even studying an area that peaks your interest, we often find a way to apply that passion to a career, job, or lifestyle.

In a book I recently read for my Creative Preaching class, the author discusses how to best channel our passion. Now, of course, there are things that we do not always get excited about with a particular job or career. In my case as a student, it would be writing lengthy, in-depth papers for class!

But how do we best use passion, even when we dread doing something we could care less about? The author of the book I read suggests reframing the thing you dread in terms of the thing you are passionate about. For example, if you are a salesman and you enjoy talking with people but dislike updating your contacts, you can view having updated contacts as a service to the people you enjoy interacting with. If I dread writing papers for a Seminary class but enjoy interacting with people and teaching them about Jesus, I can think about papers not so much as a requirement for a class, but as benefiting the people I will be called to serve someday soon.

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul helps reframe the passions of his hearers. In 3:23 Paul says, **“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for man.”** Rather than being focused so much on what they dreaded and aiming to please human institutions and structures, Paul connects the passion and joy of knowing Christ Jesus to the Colossians’ daily lives and work. No longer did the Colossian Christians need to see their faith in Jesus and their work as two separate things; rather, they could approach all areas of their lives (including the parts they dreaded or cared less about) as a way to live out their faith, honoring God and bearing witness to Him by serving and working for others wholeheartedly.

So what is your passion? What are the things you dread or could care less about in your work or in other areas of life? How does your faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection help you see your passion and the things you do not like to do in a new way? I pray that you recognize each day and each moment as an opportunity to live out with joy and passion everything God has called you to do.

OFF AND RUNNING!

We are already nearly one month into new school year, and what an experience it has been so far. Ryan has made the transition back to being a full-time student (after realizing how much reading and writing is required!) and is excited about all that he is learning in the classroom. In addition to course work, he has also been preparing sermons for a few

preaching opportunities at the end of September and mid-October. He also ran successfully for Post-Vicarage representative for the Seminary Student Association, which he looks forward to being a part of this school year. Campus Safety, time with friends on the soccer field, garden work, tinkering, and enjoying the gorgeous fall weather in St. Louis (which came early this year!) with Kari continues to occupy his spare time.

Kari continues to enjoy teaching her little ones at Immanuel-Wentzville. While a few of them give her some difficulty at times, her students brighten her day as she creatively works with them and see how the Lord is at work within them. Some of her latest weekly themes include apples, hotdog-and-hats, ice cream and many others! Kari has been busy with her Seminary Women's Association (SWA) duties as Sonshine Coordinator – picking out items and delivering gifts to the families of two new babies on campus!



Gorgeous Labor Day weekend at the Arch!

That is just a few things that we are passionate about. While not every day is “sunshine and rainbows,” we do recognize that it is all done to the glory of God, who has given us life, who redeems us by His Son, and who sanctifies us by His Spirit. As we reflect on those things, we are so very grateful for the ways you support us in our passions – to ultimately serve God and make his love in Jesus known to others. Thank you!

May God's peace surround you always,

Ryan and Kari