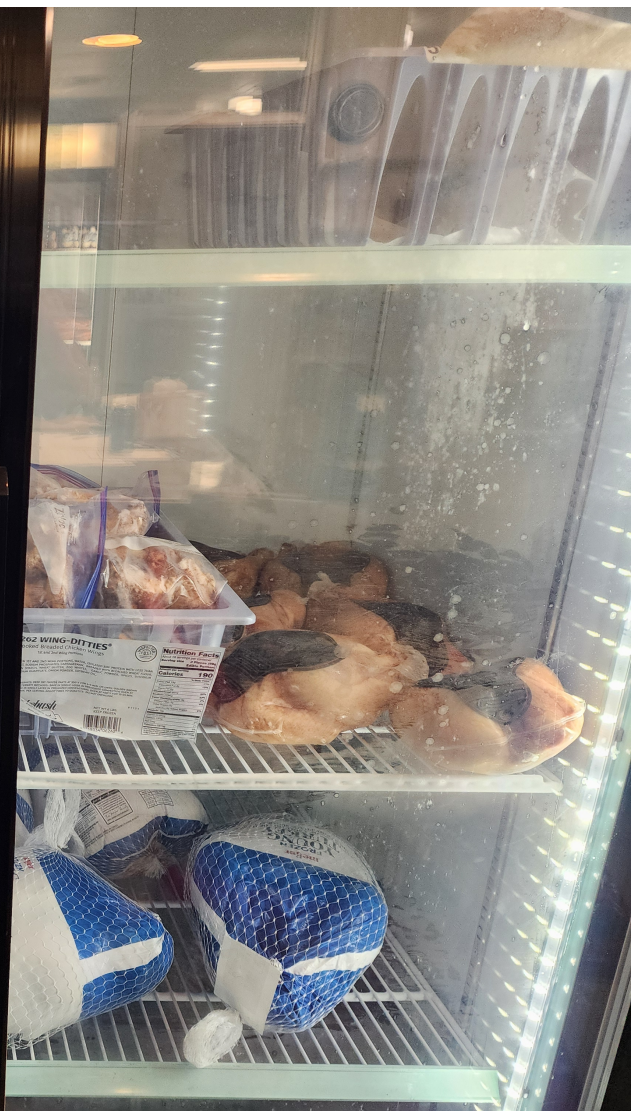


Grant Name	CTSFW Food Co-op to Purchase Freezers to Store Food for Seminary Students
Mission/Project Summary	The current CTSFW Food and Clothing Co-ops are outdated and present challenges, and will be constructing a new Food and Clothing Co-op to better serve the students into the future and continue to reduce this financial burden by providing students access to a Food Co-op at no cost. The Seminary seeks to provide newer and better walk-in cooler/freezers to store and display frozen goods for the benefit of the seminary students and families.
Project Description and Details	<p>In order to supply food for the students at the new Food Co-op building, the seminary will need to provide a walk-in freezer for long-term storage and smaller freezers for immediate access by students. Donors sometimes drop off large quantities of frozen food (especially meat) that must be stored in a reliable freezer. Students also need to be able to access frozen meat in the food shopping area. Currently, the main walk-in freezer space is shared with the seminary foodservice and is nearly 35 years old. Additional chest freezers in the current food shopping area are approaching 45 years old and are starting to fail and need to be replaced. A new freezer in the new building will preserve donated food (or food purchased with donations from LWML districts and others) and serve those who are studying to proclaim the Gospel around the world.</p> <p>Your past support for your future pastors and deaconesses shows your heart for our mission and your desire to help ease the financial burden as these men and women prepare for full time church work. An additional gift toward a walk-in freezer will demonstrate your commitment to providing the church with faithful, well-formed pastors and deaconesses for Christ's church here and around the world.</p>
The recipient must be affiliated with one of the following. Please select the one that applies to this request:	LCMS National
Amount requested:	\$10,000
Project Goals and Objectives	The current Food Co-op (located in the basement of the student commons) is difficult to access and the shopping space is cramped. Furthermore, some of the existing freezers are failing or are currently shared with the seminary food service. The Food Co-op would serve students and donors more effectively with a new home and a new freezer.
Budget Outline and Financial Plan	<p>The estimated price for the new building and all of the fixtures is around \$4 Million. CTSFW Food and Clothing Co-op intends to purchase a walk-in freezer and a commercial chest freezer. One commercial cooler/walk-in freezer unit may cost \$150,000.</p> <p>Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne asks the Rocky Mountain District LWML to prayerfully consider a \$10,000 gift to bless our students and their future pastors and deaconesses. This is one portion of the entire building cost. The Seminary will request additional funding for the new Food and Clothing Co-op from foundations, other LWML Districts and current donors to CTSFW.</p>

Additional Comments or  
Information

The Food and Clothing Co-op on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary plays a key role in helping students feed and clothe their families during their seminary years. Nearly 60 percent of the students are married with families. When the decision is made to leave their jobs and come to the seminary, the students no longer have the same income but continue to have the same financial needs. For many families, the spouse does not find adequate employment in Fort Wayne because employers know that they will only be available for a short time. Therefore, the families are thrown into difficult financial positions. The Seminary seeks to reduce this financial burden by providing access to a Food and Clothing Co-op. The Co-op is supported through donations from individual donors, churches and other organizations. The Food Co-op is currently able to supply between 80% and 85% of all food and household needs each month at no cost to the student. It operates as an actual cooperative with each family volunteering a certain amount of time each month in either the food or the clothing area doing work that needs to be done. They then receive points in exchange for their work. These points are redeemable each shopping day in the Food Co-op. Most food, household and personal products in the Food Co-op are given a point value, and the student and family may spend their points in any way they choose. The students also can shop in the Clothing Co-op at their own discretion during operating hours and take whatever they need for free; no points, vouchers or money are necessary in the clothing area. Because the Co-op is such a vital part of the seminary students' lives, it is important that the seminary continue to raise funds to supply food for the Food Co-op.



# Adding Strength to Strength Campus Master Plan | Co-op Building Project

From the Summer 2025 *For the Life of the World*








“With this moment comes an explicit and implicit charge: to do everything humanly possible to advance our confessional Lutheran theology at every opportunity, to continue to add strength to strength on the legacy of those who came before us.”

CTSFW PRESIDENT JON S. BRUSS

## NEW FOOD AND CLOTHING CO-OP

### Co-op Provisions

Below are just a few examples of what the Food and Clothing Co-op is able to provide to students, thanks to the generosity of donors. (Data from July 2023–June 2024)

-  1,920 gallons of milk
-  1,635 dozen eggs
-  20,003 lbs. of fresh fruit and produce
-  8,857 lbs. of pork
-  438 lbs. of beef

### Students say ...



“When I learned about the support services offered by the seminary—especially the Food and Clothing Co-op, my fears, and those of my wife, were greatly alleviated. The blessings of the Co-op far surpassed our initial expectations! Our grocery budget, which grew tighter and tighter after we arrived in 2021, was significantly eased by the Food Co-op’s consistent assortment of staples. The Clothing Co-op was a veritable treasure hunt. It kept my (constantly growing) family clothed and made our seminary rental feel like home.”

Nathan Raugutt  
2025 MDiv Graduate



“Being from so far away, with no family or friends nearby, I was anxious when I moved to the seminary, entering a very different culture and community. I have found support at every turn, including the Food and Clothing Co-op. I hail from the Pacific Northwest, where winters are very mild, so I was grateful for the generous donations of sweaters and winter coats, which helped me endure my first experience with temperatures below zero and wind that cuts like a knife.”

Brenna McGuire  
Deaconess Intern

To support the new Co-op and other master plan projects, visit [ctsfw.edu/support](https://ctsfw.edu/support) or scan the QR code. If you’d prefer, you may mail a gift or call CTSFW Advancement at (877) 287-4338.



# NEW FOOD AND CLOTHING CO-OP PROVIDING FOR FUTURE PASTORS AND DEACONESSES

*“Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:31–33)*

**T**he Food and Clothing Co-op at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), plays a critical role in easing the anxieties of seminary students and their families, who typically leave behind friends, other family members, and a steady source of income to study at CTSFW.

The Co-op, open to all CTSFW students, provides food, clothing, and household items at no charge. Students

**The Co-op, open to all CTSFW students, provides food, clothing, and household items at no charge.**

volunteer service time for the privilege of shopping. “For most of our students and their families, we can meet 70–95% of their needs,” says Deaconess Katherine Rittner, who has served as director of the Co-op for eight years. “When I talk to prospective and incoming students, especially the wives, you can see the fear and uncertainty lift when they hear that.”

The Co-op, set up like a small grocery store, is located on the lower level of the Student Commons. The Clothing Co-op is in Spiegel Hall, a former dormitory, and has fourteen shopping areas on multiple levels.

The shelves and storerooms in both places are overflowing, thanks to generous donations of perishable and non-perishable food items, clothing, household items, and monetary gifts from individuals and organizations such as the LWML (Lutheran Women’s Missionary League), congregations, and VBS and school groups.

“The love and support from the greater Fort Wayne area and around the country is overwhelming,” says Rittner. “I get three to four emails a week from donors about things they’d like to send us.”

## A New Home for the Co-op

As CTSFW moves ahead with plans to enhance the residential experience, one of its first projects will be a new Co-op, a space where everything will be under one roof on a single level.

Rittner lights up when looking at the Co-op plans that hang on her office wall. “We’ll have one department in one location. We’ll be able to work together as a staff on receiving and processing large donations. It’s hard to have the director in one place and the assistant director in another.”

She’s also looking forward to having no more stairs to navigate, which is currently a challenge in both Co-op



Architectural Rendering

Renderings: Design Collaborative



Proposed Layout

spaces. “Everything on one level! That will help so much with strollers, and parents won’t have to worry about little ones going up and down steps,” says Rittner.

The experience for shoppers will be much improved, with far more space for displaying and browsing the wealth of donated items, and shoppers and donors alike will benefit from plentiful parking next to the building.

If all goes well, construction of the new Co-op will begin sometime in 2026.

“This has been a dream since before I arrived on the campus almost twenty years ago,” said Rittner. “To be able to carry on the tradition of showing grace, support and love to our future pastors and deaconesses in such a functional and grand way is beyond imagination. I can’t wait!”