For the past fifteen years during freshmen orientation, parents of new Concordia students have been asked to stand up and greet the parents seated around them. After sitting down, the parents are asked, "Do you know what you have just done?" When no answer is forthcoming, they are told: "You've just met your son's or daughter's future in-laws."

Each year new students and their parents break away from one another at the beginning of an academic year. As the parting happens, parents leave campus with a prayer that God would keep their child safe, surround him with supportive people, and enable her to grow in mind, body, and spirit.

Each year the prayers of hundreds of parents are answered—sometimes in ways they do not specifically intend! Countless are the student couples that meet, fall in love, and marry. Some parents suggest "matchmaking" is a value-added feature of a Concordia education!

At Concordia, academic preparation occurs in the context of Christian community. Thus, learning the truth of God’s plan for a man and a woman in marriage happens in the classroom, in chapel worship, in conversations with faculty members, in pre-marital counseling sessions with the chaplain, and through the daily witness of professors, staff members, and classmates.

This issue of *Issues in Christian Education* explores God’s pattern for and contemporary challenges facing Christian marriage. Dr. Bryan Salminen states: “Marriage is so big, so wonderful, at times so complicated, that all the books in the world never seem to do it justice. Nevertheless, the Word of God has a firm persuasion that marriage is indeed a great gift from God.” Even on a Christian campus all that students need to learn theologically and operationally about marriage (Barnes and Stanley) cannot be learned. It takes a lifetime of work and commitment to learn the richness and wonder of God’s plan for His people in marriage. However, for many students, Concordia is a wonderful place to begin to learn what marriage is and how God would have people live as husband and wife. As Dr. Robert Rosin reminds us, “Christians understand that the wedded union exists because God has created it—both institution and particular marriage.”

Marriage is a "big deal"! It’s God’s "deal" for His people. May this edition of *Issues* strengthen us in our marriage commitments and enable us to help members of our congregations and persons in our communities better live out the unions into which God has placed them in order to reflect the fullness and joy of His love for us.