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Lutheran Mission Matters

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Journal of the Lutheran Society for Missiology

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CONTENTS

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Everyone may download either a PDF of the entire journal or individual articles for use at conferences, workshops, or in the classroom. These articles already have copyright permissions provided in the footer to help promote good missiology within the church.

The News tab is a link to the LSFM Facebook page, where posts impacting the mission of Christ along with news items are shared. Mission Work around the world and in the U.S. probably has never faced greater challenges or greater opportunities.

If you like the articles in this journal, be sure to visit the LSFM Web site to learn more about the challenges and opportunities for sharing the Good News of Jesus, and to join with a growing number of Lutherans committed to the missionary task God has given to His people.

Inside This Issue: Education in Mission

From the beginning the theme for this issue was something of a pun, a simple phrase capable of multiple meanings. Education by mission? for mission? in the midst of mission? Mission in the midst of education, as education, for education? Yes. Education conducted as mission? Establishing schools as mission/church planting practice—decades ago by Anglo Churches in non-Anglo contexts and now with American pre-schools? Helping people learn mission by classroom instruction or service learning? Yes. Etc.! My experience with education in mission goes back professionally some forty-five years; back personally to childhood when my parents opened a Sunday School in our house; back "Lutheranly" to Brother Martin's proposal to be sure to include girls in community schooling; and back essentially to our Lord who sends His disciples out to teach. (And I wonder what He meant when he used the word "teach" in His language!)

Am I willing to be taught, to be educated, to learn? Of course! I have a collection of academic degrees that says so, and I read this journal. Am I willing to learn in the submerged areas of my life, the 90% of my assumptions hidden from me by my own culture?[1] Am I willing to learn in those areas where I will meet my hidden sin? Am I willing to learn (in) the New Testament, which gives me fourteen ways to do the one Gospel without even mentioning sin?[2] Am I willing to go there, to be educated in mission? The informative, encouraging, and challenging materials in this issue, especially in an absolving relationship with our Lord, give us freedom for education in mission.

From the beginning of the preparation of this issue, the intention was interdisciplinary: educational theory, missiology, pedagogy, theology, administrative and management theory. From the beginning of the preparation of this issue, the intention was global: Lutherans serving in education and mission are part of a global movement. From the beginning of the preparation of this issue, it continues the journal's intention to serve as an international Lutheran forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of issues related to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ globally.

I am thankful to colleagues around the globe who contributed to the development of this issue. In the last analysis I am referring to those whose articles and other materials you find here, as well as to the *Missio Apostolica* Editorial Committee who walked with me through these months of soliciting, receiving, and reviewing these materials. The Editorial Committee kept me honest, in that the journal's purpose is more inclusive than a focus on education. Articles are welcome beyond any given theme.

In the months before the formal process on this issue began, a number of people informally responded individually as I asked their wisdom about "Education in

Mission": Bart Day, Tony Cook, Bill Hamm, Detlev Schulz, Nathan Esala, Jim Handrich, and Ray Schumacher, in particular. More than a year ago, brave souls saw my e-mails and considered a Google Docs process for digital conversation on the theme: William Obaga, Ted Engelbrecht, Jonathan Laabs, John Oberdeck, and Bill Karpenko. This introduction to this issue would double in size if I listed all their professional credentials and churchly positions. I can summarize: they care about education in mission—and any errors are mine.

In these days when the nature and practice of mission are debated—who should do what, where, when (an upcoming issue of this journal will explore that topic)—I realize that my thanks go first, after our Lord, to my parents, now long deceased. Lay people with significant personal (and sometimes financial!) deficits, they nevertheless educated me in mission. They opened that Sunday School in our house on the already "unfaithful" San Francisco Peninsula, ca. 1949. It was, by faith, a natural act on their part: The children in the neighborhood didn't go to Sunday School. They should not be deprived of the chance to hear Gospel, to be "missioned" by education.

My thanks continue with something of an editorial, closing this introduction and opening this issue. I am thankful to be part of the Lutheran Classroom Teacher tradition—as well as its "new" version, the DCE tradition—of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. What hours and months and years of educational ministry and mission have been offered by the sisters and brothers in that tradition! But how often might this church body and others be caught in a corner of that tradition, a focus on cognitive input?—doctrinally sound, to be sure, but simply cognitive? Can this issue of *Missio Apostolica* help us to take seriously Bloom's taxonomy or similar resources, that learning is a whole person adventure, affective and psycho-motor as well as cognitive? And that, when we are doing the cognitive, it runs on six different levels?[3] And also that the youth group at the swimming pool or the short-term mission venture can be our classroom, those with whom we play or those whom we serve being our teachers in mission?

An e-mail conversation about this issue asked whether the title for one group of materials, "Mission Observer," might be changed to "Encountering Mission." I didn't hold the deciding vote on that question, but I'm in favor. It reminds me that all the articles, from academically researched to personally reported, are an opportunity for whole-person, engaged education.

Our Lord said, "teaching them to *observe*," to do. The Augsburg Confession says that justifying faith is bound to bring forth good works.[4] How much do we need to learn yet—in mind, heart, and hands—about mission and about education in mission? I am grateful to the teachers, whatever their credentials, who invite us to learn in this issue.

We pray that this issue serves you and many others as education in mission, in Jesus' name.

Rev. Dr. Richard E. Carter, DCE
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Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

Endnotes

[1] "Culture hides more than it reveals . . . and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants," Edward Hall, "The Power of Hidden Differences," in *Basic Concepts in Intercultural Communication*, edited by Milton J. Bennett (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1998), 59; as cited by Nancy Hayward, "Insights into Cultural Divides," in Shanti Bruce and Ben Rafoth, eds, *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 2004), 2. I am grateful to Theresa FitzPatrick, Director of the Writing Center at Concordia University, St. Paul, for pointing me to this work.
[2] Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House,1960), 357, citing the earlier theologian John Gerhard, 1582–1637.
[3] See, e.g., http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html.
[4] R. Kolb, T. J. Wengert, & C. P. Arand, "The Augsburg Confession" in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 40 (AC VI).

Editorials

“Framing” the Age—Cautionary Observations

Marcus Kunz

Organizing narratives by periods, types, and similar schemes has long been a staple of historical analysis. The reason for doing so is sound. History is more than the simple listing of events in an accurate chronology. Neither events nor the people who participate in them are disconnected accidents that appear in random sequence. Historical analysis seeks to illuminate the deeper connections that allow us to understand more clearly the time and place we inhabit and the people who are around us.

Historical periodization is not neutral in its intentions. Even a simple genealogy such as “Abraham begat Isaac” implicitly frames a narrative that has an inner logic and a message to proclaim. The intentions of the broadest narrative framings are often obvious. Augustine’s six ages of the world located his life and work in a time expectant of Christ’s return. The fourteenth-century poet Petrarch coined the term “Dark Ages” (only recently abandoned) in order to define an earlier period’s culture as moribund and to distinguish the creative intellectual agenda of his time as a “rebirth” or “Renaissance” (still used today).

For at least two generations, a narrative announcing “the end of Christendom” has shaped much discussion about the Christian community’s life and mission in the world. Some tell the story broadly. Christianity is dying in an age defined by modernity’s secularism. Others—aware of Christianity’s explosive growth in the global south and elsewhere in recent decades—make a more nuanced claim. We have entered a post-Constantinian era in which established Christian churches are no longer “in charge” of society. Their control of the larger culture is collapsing, at least in the West.

Whether nuanced or not, this narrative framing is used to advocate for radical change in Christian life and mission. Consultants and bloggers have joined theologians and pastors of all confessions in offering a rapidly expanding body of proposals for an “emerging church.” The proposals range widely, for example, from

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engaging the latest technology and pop culture genres in contemporary worship to reclaiming historic liturgical practices and art in a turn to "ancient future" worship.

However, those who educate servants of the Gospel are wise to ask whether this narrative provides an adequate framing for understanding mission in our time. The issue is not simply whether the "end of Christendom" accurately describes the present moment but also whether it serves a truly evangelical end. Four larger questions are especially pertinent.

1. *Does the narrative accurately capture the messiness of concrete reality?* Even when nuanced, does the narrative that announces the death or collapse or end of Christianity's place in the larger culture accurately describe the complex reality of Christianity's status globally, or even in Europe and North America? Even the traditional measures of *institutional* vitality that are usually cited as evidence of decline are more ambiguous than usually acknowledged. Participation in Christian congregations and institutions in the United States still vastly outnumbers all other religious communities combined. Beyond participation in institutional life, the outlines of the Christian narrative and the significance of Christian symbols are still recognizable to vast majorities of North Americans (and Europeans), much more so than the core narratives and central symbols of any other religion. By a whole range of measures, Christianity continues to occupy a prominent and privileged place in these societies.

A more accurate historical analysis is that in North America and Europe the relationship between the dominant culture and its still most prominent religion is changing. Within that analysis, there is a range of questions to consider.

For example, in the United States membership in Christian churches constituted only a minority of the population in the United States at the time of its founding. Did "Constantinian" Christianity ever exercise cultural dominance in the national life of the United States *outside* the enclaves of transplanted immigrant communities the way it did *within* those communities? Was culture's supposed role of inculcating Christian teaching and practice only a passing moment in America's larger history, with a scope and influence larger in imagination than in fact? Is it possible that the influence of Christian teaching and witness, social service, and political activism on the American *national* culture may be greater *now* than at any previous time in the United States? Might it even be possible that the recent growth of disaffiliation from organized religion in the United States is a reaction against the growing *strength* of influence in *national* life of a particular kind of public Christian witness (what might be identified as a subvariant of "public Protestantism") that is experienced as toxic?

2. *Does the narrative make cultural **assets** and **opportunities** visible, as well as liabilities and challenges?* This second question follows immediately from the first.

The cultural context for mission in the United States and other places in "the West" is likely to be much more complex than the end-of-Christendom narrative usually allows observers to see.

One brief example illustrates some of the complexity. The song "Amazing Grace" has a familiarity, resonance, and power in the cultural life of the United States that is unparalleled by the religious song of any other religious tradition. President Obama sang it when he eulogized Clementa Pinckney and the other victims of last summer's shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The same song was on the lips of Kelly Gissendaner as she was being put to death by the state of Georgia on September 30. The familiarity of "Amazing Grace" is an asset for Christian mission in American culture. Its resonance and power open a space in the emotional life of many Americans for a witness of Jesus Christ.

Yet at the same time, the song's strong association with Anglo-American evangelicalism can be a hurdle for those communities whose witness of Christ is less millennialist and more sacramental. In other words, there are real opportunities and real challenges for mission in the larger cultural life of "the West" that a simplistic death or collapse narrative will not allow one to see, explore, or engage. A more adequately framed narrative will illuminate both assets and liabilities, losses and gains, as well as the ambivalences and ambiguities that attach to each.

3. *Does the narrative lead to greater responsibility and faithfulness in mission?* Recent politicized Christian polemic in American public life has included astonishing claims that, despite all the freedoms and advantages they enjoy in the United States, Christians are being "persecuted" and their faith is being "criminalized."

The narrative of Christendom's death or collapse easily plays into these distortions of American life and hides the reality of life-threatening persecution experienced by vulnerable religious minorities around the globe, including Muslims and others in the United States. This is no time for privileged American Christians to play the religious persecution card for partisan advantage in our petulant national politics. A more adequate and faithful framing for mission will lead American Christians to see the real peril of religious minorities both in the United States and elsewhere in the world and not to divert attention to themselves.

4. *Does the narrative allow us to see how God is acting?* Renewed attention to Trinitarian theology has reinvigorated missiological thinking. However, where the supposed collapse of Christendom frames the narrative, the call for radical change can reduce the Trinitarian influence to a set of missiological instructions. Then the

narrative curiously presents God as a detached observer (and judge?) of the church's striving, rather than as an active participant and force in the life of the world.

A more adequate framing for mission will foster a narrative rooted in the abundance of the Triune Life pouring out into the life of the world. Faithful preparation for mission will not get lost in laments that Christians are no longer "in charge" of the culture. An evangelical Trinitarian theology will invite those who serve in mission into the narrative of God's love for the world so that we, too, can approach it in a freeing love, rather than in a fear of collapse. Theological education for mission rooted in the witness of the Acts of the Apostles will provide apostolic vision that sees beyond the falling and rising of church institutions to a historical moment filled with fresh outpourings of the Holy Spirit, who is already at work in the places where we have yet to arrive.

Finally, when education for mission is no longer encumbered by the fearful narrative of lost control, it becomes free to tell of the healing and reconciliation for the world that Jesus embodied and enacted.

Is There Hope for Lutheran Education in the Inner City?

Marlene Lund

Introduction

Lutherans have a long tradition of supporting education. Martin Luther's letter "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" (1524) was written in response to the decline of church-run schools. Luther saw the reform movement as a way to affirm the responsibility of parents, the church, and the public authorities to ensure the education of all children. Luther said, "A city's best and greatest welfare, safety, and strength consist rather in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable, and well-educated citizens."[1] Luther, Melanchthon, and other reformers paved the way in advocating for a strong classical education for all regardless of wealth or stature.

When Lutherans came to the United States, they brought with them a desire to educate their children in church-run schools. When Henry Melchior Muhlenberg arrived in America in 1742, he was to assist the development of Lutheran churches and schools in Pennsylvania. Eight years later, his travels along the eastern seaboard took him to New York, where the first Lutheran school, St. Matthew, was established in 1752. Unfortunately, like many other struggling inner-city schools, St. Matthew closed its doors in 2005 after 253 years of ministry.

The determination to establish schools was even greater in the Midwest, settled by the Saxon Lutherans. "So important were church schools to them that when they organized what is now The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod the establishment and support of congregation parochial schools was listed as one of the primary purposes for the establishment of the Synod."[2]

When the public school movement began in 1821, Lutherans took two different paths. Older eastern denominations and more recent Scandinavian immigrant groups tended to favor strong public schools and saw the parochial school system as unnecessary. However, both The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod continued to advocate for and support congregation-based schools. This practice continues today.

According to their websites, congregations of the LCMS currently operate 880

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elementary schools and over 1,200 early-childhood centers and preschools, serving approximately 200,000 students. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America operates over 1,500 early-childhood centers, elementary and high schools. While many fewer in number, WELS also continues to operate and support schools.

Simply stated, a quality education is a way out of poverty. While many Lutheran schools continue to flourish, the sad fact is that many of the Lutheran schools located in the inner city have either closed or are in serious jeopardy of closing, often with enrollments of under one hundred students. Many factors contribute to the closing of inner-city Lutheran schools, including the strained economy, the loss of called teachers to the workforce, the rise of charter schools, declining church membership, and a loss of denominational loyalty. Churches need to be enmeshed in their local communities to thrive. Schools were and are one important way to accomplish that goal to make the church stronger.

Churches and schools can and must continue to serve the underserved in our cities by strengthening programs, using new methodologies, and embracing change.

I believe that innovation and change, although seen by some as a path worse than death, are the answers to our current dilemma. In 2008, the Center for Urban Education Ministries embarked upon a path to research schools that have proven sustainable while remaining true to their missions. Through this effort, called the Charlie Project, we conducted over two hundred interviews and site visits in many faith-based and private schools. The Charlie Project came to several conclusions:

- Governance structures for Lutheran schools must be changed so that schools are not dependent upon individual congregations for their survival.
- Alternative means of support, in addition to tuition, are required to sustain a school.
- Parents are savvy consumers and expect quality, innovative programs from schools.
- Lutheran schools need to be open to children and families of all faiths, no faith, and all incomes.
- New models and alternative designs must be explored in order to offer Lutheran education in inner-city areas.

Over the last seven years of work, several models for sustainable Lutheran education opportunities have emerged:

Philanthropic Model

This model encourages congregations without schools to “adopt” a school in the inner city and to support it with volunteers and finances. The model entails a concerted effort at development and engagement and requires a dedicated staff

person to build and to maintain these relationships. An example of this model is Holy Family Lutheran School in Chicago, which serves children living in a high-poverty area. The school has a large portion of its budget supported through philanthropy. This model assumes that Lutheran churches embrace and believe, as did the Lutherans of old, that education is an important part of our heritage and vocation.

Lutheran-supported charter schools with wrap around programs

Charter schools have become a growing part of the educational landscape. They are often located in the inner city and are sometimes blamed for the demise of traditional Lutheran schools. Some have shown excellent results, while some have been criticized for failing to produce significant progress for their students. The fact is that many parents who are struggling financially will never be able to afford a quality education that requires tuition payments. Charter schools led by Lutheran groups have proven a successful model for providing a quality education for children living in the inner city. Educational Enterprises Inc., a group led by Lutherans, has opened several charter schools in both Phoenix and in St. Louis. At the Lutheran-led charter schools in Phoenix, students in the EEI system for two or more years outperformed the local districts' average by more than 15 percent on state tests. The St. Louis schools are located in what were closed Lutheran school buildings. Both the Phoenix schools and the churches who own the properties in St. Louis are able to offer faith-based after-school programs to the children who attend the charter school. While many believe this is not the ideal solution, it enables us to serve our communities by providing a free, i.e., subsidized, quality education to underserved children while still being able to share the Gospel, albeit at a different time and in a different way.

Specialized Schools

Lutheran schools that serve special populations are ways to continue our Lutheran call to educate, but to do it in a very specialized way. For example, Lutheran Social Services of New York operates the New Life School, which serves students ages 8–21 (grades 3–12) whose educational and emotional needs cannot be met in a mainstream classroom setting. The students are taught in small groups and have shown remarkable progress to date. In addition, the Safe Haven Program, which also meets at the New Life School, serves children who have entered the United States as unaccompanied minors and who are either awaiting placement in foster care or to be reunited with their families. This school offers these children, who are often traumatized, hope for the future. In both instances, we follow our Lutheran call to educate and serve a very important niche in the alternative-education world.

Networks

The cost of operating a traditional Lutheran school can be streamlined by centralizing functions such as tuition collection, purchasing, human resources, and curriculum development. Lutheran Urban Mission Initiative (LUMIN) operates six schools in Milwaukee, WI, which share their mission, vision, and resources. It is often difficult for individual congregations to let go of the control of their school. However, this model has proven to be extremely effective for the churches that have adopted this model.

After-school Programs

Churches can also provide educational opportunities for their local public, Lutheran, or faith-based schools by operating innovative and effective after-school programs. One example is the McClintock Partners program in Charlotte, NC. In 2007, the church decided to adopt their local middle school, which, over the years, has led to an amazing ministry of volunteerism, special clubs, family nights, mentoring, etc. According to their website, the mission for McPIE is "to ensure that McClintock students have access to the support, opportunities, and resources which will provide them with the best education available anywhere and to ensure their future, life-long success in the twenty-first century world. We seek to create a sense of community centered on the school and to build social capital between people from different socioeconomic, educational, ethnic, and religious backgrounds."[3] While not providing a traditional educational setting, these volunteers help change the lives of children through the sharing of their individual expertise and enthusiasm.

Blended Learning Model

The Center for Urban Education is currently involved in a pilot program with four Lutheran schools around the country. This model, called "blended learning," is one that can cut budget costs, increase test scores, help close the achievement gap, and provide an increase in student motivation. Ultimately, this approach could be a deciding factor in whether these schools and the kind of education they provide will be available at mid-century. Due primarily to funding concerns, Lutheran schools have not kept pace with advances in technology. Now, Lutheran schools have an opportunity to be proactive and to get ahead of the technology curve by adopting a blended learning model.

Blended learning, according to the Clayton Christopher Institute for Disruptive Innovation, is "a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through the online delivery of content and instruction, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace and at least in part a supervised brick and mortar location away from home."[4] Blended learning is not just an initiative to make room for technology, but a fundamental redesign of instruction, using the technology

already available. Christopher posits that blended learning will lead to a systemic change in education, producing new school models, staffing structures, schedules, and resource allocation. It changes the factory model of education in order to meet the needs of twenty-first-century learners of many different types and abilities. An example of this model, which has been extremely successful, is Amazing Grace Christian School in Seattle. This Lutheran school, which closed its doors due to low enrollment, reopened as a model blended learning school. The school has become extremely successful and has recently added a high school to accommodate the students who wish to continue their education at Amazing Grace. They accomplish this all in an innovative, cost-effective, Lutheran environment.

Summary

Lutherans have a long history of advocating for and providing high quality education for children. There is hope for Lutheran education in the inner city, but only if we recommit to Martin Luther's call to educate all children. This means that we must be willing to change and to innovate, to open our hearts and our purses. For too long, the church has retreated from our inner cities. Taking a stand and putting our efforts into creating innovative models for Lutheran education are essential for the health and welfare of our children and our communities. "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." We need to teach our children to fish!

Endnotes

[1] Martin Luther, "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" (1524) in *Luther's Works, Vol. 45: The Christian in Society II*, eds. J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), 356.
[2] M. Kieschnick, "A brief history of Lutheran schools," *Lutheran Partners*, 22 (2), (2006, March/April): 38ff.
[3] http://christelca.org/ministries/change-the-world/mcpie/.
[4] "What is blended learning?" www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning.

An Open Letter to Lutheran Brothers and Sisters on Theological Education

Christopher M. Thomforde

Salutation

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

What follows is an open letter on the subject of theological education. It is addressed to you, the men and women of the Church who have direct responsibility for theological education and to all those of us who wonder about its current effectiveness and future vitality.

Theological education is a matter of concern among many throughout the Church and, currently, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the tradition which I call home, is focusing its institutional attention and imagination upon the way forward for its programs of theological education.

Many questions come to mind, when considering the future direction of theological education. Where are the winds of the Spirit blowing in our time; where is the Church heading? What are the obvious and subtle cries of the poor to whom the Gospel is addressed? Are we paying attention? How shall the Church respond? How does the Church prepare men and women to respond wholeheartedly and thoughtfully to the call to serve? Who is eligible to serve? What's at the heart of theological education: intellectual inquiry, skill training, or spiritual formation? How does the Church sustain those called to serve in their vocation? What might a viable financial model look like which can support the Church's program of theological education? And, of course, what's wrong with theological education now; what needs to be shored up, fixed, or brought to a close?

As an ordained pastor of the ELCA who has been the beneficiary of theological education in a variety of settings, who has served in a parish, in colleges and universities of the Church, and as president of The Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, I am most interested in the process of imagining the future of theological education. Given this interest and this experience, I write this letter to you, offering up a variety of thoughts for your consideration in hopes that the

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conversation about theological education among us might be focused, constructive, and faithful. What follows is not an argument in favor of a particular approach to theological education. Nor is what follows a prescription for a particular plan for this or that program of theological education. I write to you as one who cares deeply and professionally about the mission of the Church and as one who desires to make a contribution, however modest, to the conversation about the future of this mission and the programs of theological education which will be developed in support of it. What follows is something like the observations and insights from a friend, garnered for more than forty years of participation in the life of the Church, who simply asks, "As you think and pray and imagine and struggle and plan, have you thought about this . . . ?"

What follows is informed by my particular experience as an adolescent in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and as an adult in the Lutheran Church in America and subsequently the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I give thanks for these several traditions which have shaped my understanding of the Gospel and ministry. I am not as familiar, currently, with the dynamics of theological education within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or in the many other expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran tradition in North America as I perhaps should be in writing this open letter. What follows has something of an ELCA focus. But it is an open letter, for all to read. I hope that it might be helpful, informative, and suggestive to anyone, from any of the various Lutheran traditions in North America who takes seriously the work of theological education and who wonders about its future, in spite of its ELCA focus.

As I write, I am reminded of a passage from Martin Buber's *I and Thou.* Buber writes:

> Spirit become word, Spirit become form—whoever has been touched by the spirit and did not close himself off knows to some extent of the fundamental fact: neither germinates and grows in the human world without having been sown; both issue from encounters with the other. . . . . Again I am reminded of the strange confession of Nietzsche who circumscribed the process of inspiration by saying that one accepts without asking who gives. That may be so—one does not ask, but one gives thanks.[1]

Theological education, it seems to me, has to do with spirit, with word, with form, with sowing and germinating, with encounter, and with giving thanks.

Some Initial Thoughts

1. When Jesus sent out His disciples, according to Matthew 10, He charged them, "I send you out like sheep among wolves; be wise as serpents and gentle as doves." In so doing, I believe He set forth crucial principles for us to remember and to weigh as we consider the future of theological education.

2. “I send you”—The work of ministry has its origins, its authority, its foundation in Jesus and the Gospel He proclaimed and lived. The ministry of the Gospel is not about the good intentions or zeal of individuals or of committed groups of believers, as important as good intentions, zeal, and communities of believers may be. Nor is its vitality to be found in the strategic plans of the Church as an institution, as necessary as plans and institutions may be. In ministry, we are invited, called to, commissioned for, and empowered with the Holy Spirit to live in accordance with God’s work of reconciling the world unto Himself through Christ. The mission is God’s mission; we are invited to take part in the work of this mission. Theological education has to do with understanding what the authority and call of Jesus Christ might mean for us, in our generation and in our particular circumstances, and committing ourselves to servants of Christ for the sake of both neighbors and strangers.

3. “among wolves”—The world into which we are sent and in which we live is not now nor has it ever been a friend of the Gospel. In North America, we imagined that the world was friendly to the mission of the Gospel through the Church during the 1940s, ’50s and ’60s. This was an illusion projected by American civil religion and its many agencies, one of which was American Protestantism. The reality of the world’s animosity is not something to be regretted or bemoaned or even feared. Rather it is a fact of life to be taken as a given. It is a dynamic to be better understood, through theological education, so that the mission of the Gospel of God’s love for this world might be better realized.

4. “wise as serpents”—The wisdom or “Sophia” articulated in Proverbs 8 and 9, as well as in Psalm 104, manifests itself in creativity and shrewdness, in bringing harmony out of chaos, in transforming depravity and want into wellbeing, and in engaging in life with hospitality at the crossroads of the city. Theological education, for the sake of the mission of the Gospel, has to do with living and acting wisely.

5. “gentle as doves”—The character of those engaged in the mission of the Gospel is to be one of gentleness, empathy, even innocence. The prophet whose words are remembered in the Suffering Servant Songs of Second Isaiah articulates this attitude with particular beauty and force. The Church remembered these words as it sought to better understand the life and work of Jesus. If we are to be about His ministry, by His invitation and with His edification, may we be shaped and informed by His character, as well! Theological education has as much to do with engendering and forming the character of the Suffering Servant in us as it does in strengthening our hands for service and enlightening our minds to the truth of the Gospel.

6. Thus theological education has many different but complementary dimensions. Among these are:

- The understanding or confession that ministry is God’s work to which we are called, by Grace, to participate;

- The discerning and the affirming of one's call to the ministry of the Gospel;
- The discovery and acceptance of one's own giftedness by the Holy Spirit to serve well;
- With the necessity to become wise in understanding the world, the Gospel, and the praxis of ministry;
- With the shaping of one's heart and soul and mind through prayer, life in community, intellectual inquiry, use of the means of Grace, and spiritual formation;
- And with the ongoing admonition and encouragement by brothers and sisters within the life of community, which sustain a life of ministry.

Some Practical Considerations

7. Considering the future of theological education in and through the Church, particularly the ELCA, is a matter of stewardship. Stewardship has to do with managing the resources of the household of God's people for the sake of mission and ministry. The good and wise steward helps to develop the context within which ministry can be lived out. Therefore, the consideration of the future of theological education has to do with questions about the use of the Church's financial resources, its human resources, its traditions of faith and worship and service. Stewardship has to do with considering the life of the world in which we now live in order to imagine what life might look like in years to come, given the current trajectory of things. Stewardship has to do with understanding what "The Gospel" has meant historically, of acknowledging and celebrating the traditions which have shaped us in the past. Given the movement of life into the future and given the traditions within which we stand, how can we, as good stewards of the mysteries of God, imagine future programs for the preparation of the faithful for the ministry of the Gospel? Finally, stewardship has to do, perhaps foremost, with discernment. Where are the winds of the Spirit blowing and how do we align the resources of the Church with God's movement so that our imagination and planning might be in harmony with God's work? We do not want to be found clever and strategic but, ironically or sadly, out of tune with the very One and the very ones whom we seek to serve.

8. "What's reasonable?" can be the kind of question we bring to bear upon our discernment, our imagination, and our planning. By saying this, I believe that reason is one of God's gifts to be used by us in matters of stewardship and governance. Theological education is a matter of the First Article of the Creed, creation. It is not a matter of salvation or of sanctification. With regard to matters of creation, God has blessed humankind with reason as an instrument to be used for the sake of the long-term effective use of resources and for the generating of equitable relationships among the people most immediately involved in ministry. "What's reasonable?" is a God-given, reliable guide to our discourse and planning for the future of theological

education. “What is easy to accomplish?” “How can we avoid disturbing the current equilibrium?” “Why change anything?” are the kinds of questions to be avoided.

9. In this regard, I would also urge us to consider “What’s daring and new?” as a question to test our thinking and planning. From time to time, the “daring and new” can become captive of the “best” or the “expedient” or “the doable” or what seems “good enough for now.” “What’s reasonable?” challenges our sense of stewardship while “What’s daring and new?” challenges our imagination. Both challenges are called for now, I believe.

Some Concepts to Consider

10. Ministry: God’s mission in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit is alive and active in the world, both within and outside of the activity of the Church. When we pray, “Thy kingdom come,” we affirm the coming of God’s reign of righteousness and justice, and we pray that it may come to us, as Luther says. Theological education functions in support of this mission, turning men and women in the direction of the movement of the Spirit. It frees us to recognize, claim, and give thanks for our own vocation/giftedness/charism. It attunes our ears to hear the cry of the poor and equips us to serve. It informs our lives to grow into the shape of Christ. Theological education is, therefore, a means to an end and not an end in itself. Ministry is the means by which God’s mission by the Holy Spirit generates faith in men, women, and children through Word and Sacrament.

11. Ministers: Currently the ELCA recognizes a variety of “ministers.” Among them are all the baptized, AIMs, Diaconal Ministers, and Clergy/Pastors. Others expressions of Lutheranism in North America have a variety of designations and orders of ministry as well. The LCMS has a wonderful tradition of recognizing the ministry of its parochial school teachers and its Deaconesses. While we are considering the future of theological education, is this the time to re-order the ministries of the Church according to the principles articulated in the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* document (*Faith and Order Papers* no. 111, the World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1982)? Such a re-ordering would bring the ELCA and other Lutheran expressions into greater harmony with the Biblical, the Church’s Tradition, and Ecumenical understandings of ministry and the ordering of ministers of Word and Sacrament. Also, such re-ordering of ministries would provide more widely recognizable titles of office to those called to serve.

12. Finances: The buildings and grounds of the seminaries, their endowments, and the personnel of the various educational ministries of the ELCA all represent a considerable heritage/inheritance from the church’s past. They will also call for ever greater investment of capital in the future. What is the viable, long-term financial model which will provide support for theological education going forward? How buildings-and-grounds-centric should theological education be in the future? What

must be taught and learned "on campus" and what can be taught and learned "off campus"?

13. Pedagogy: How are the discoveries of neuroscience and psychology into how men and women learn to be incorporated in the Church's theological education curricula and settings? How is the ever expanding world of information and educational technology to be incorporated in the Church's theological education curricula and settings?

14. Resources outside of the Church: How might the vast educational resources outside of the Church's immediate circle of direct influence and control, like the colleges and universities of the land or The Corporation for Public Broadcasting or National Public Radio, or city, state, and national library systems and archives be made use of to support the theological educational programs of the Church? How do we reduce redundancy?

Some Straw Models Consider

15. Let me propose some straw models for theological education. They are proposed to encourage discussion around some particular points of reference. None is meant to be definitive. Each seeks to come to terms with the property, the endowments, and the human resources currently in place which need to be addressed as we consider the future of theological education and the finances involved to support them. Also, each seeks to address issues of what I would call a foundational curriculum for theological education, which includes Biblical studies, History, Philosophy, Greek and Hebrew, Psychology, Sociology, and an understanding of the Lutheran traditions in particular. In addition, each seeks to address the issue of training ministers for the praxis of ministry and for providing opportunities for the critical reflection upon one's own practice of ministry through internships and fieldwork. Finally, each seeks to address the issue of spiritual formation for ministry which includes learning how to pray, living and worshiping in community, and spiritual direction or guidance. As you will see, different models imagine different emphases and different locations for these various ingredients, so to speak, which make up the whole of theological education.

16. A West Point Model: This model is, to some degree, in place now in the LCMS and the ELCA: a campus, possibly owned by the Church, to which students come to live and to study with faculty. It has a distinguished heritage. What follows modifies the current model. The work of theological education would be focused upon one seminary campus. Students and faculty would live and study and worship together. Opportunities for fieldwork and internships would be provided for and supervised from this one campus community. Such a model has the advantage of financial viability. The maintenance and operation of one campus makes more sense, in many ways, than the maintenance and operation of many campuses scattered

throughout the land. Also, a kind of "esprit de corps" could be developed among ministers who had had a shared, common experience of theological education. Such a common experience could nurture not only an "esprit de corps" among ministers of the Gospel but also an understanding that ministry is not a personal undertaking and adventure in Grace but an expression of the whole Church, for the sake of the Gospel in service to the world and for the glory of God. Finally, the "West Point" model could position the seminary to be the "thought center" of the Church, where open inquiry, study, and conversation about the controversial issues confronting the Church could be entertained on behalf of the Church as a whole.

17. A University/Academic Model: In this model, the Church would cease to operate and manage its own seminary campuses, now scattered around the country, and, instead, would partner with one or perhaps two university divinity schools, which have a tradition of Lutheran interaction (Yale or Chicago, for example) and designate them as the "official"/"approved" site for Lutheran theological educational preparation for ordained ministry. A Lutheran House of Studies on the campus would provide "a home" for students preparing for the Lutheran ministry, offering opportunity for spiritual formation, and supervising off-campus internships and fieldwork.

The possible benefits of such a model include greater long-term financial viability, living together in community with other Lutherans and with other brothers and sisters from the broader ecumenical world. The intellectual challenge that comes with studying at a major research university could also enliven theological education. The interaction with students and faculty from other professional schools like law, medicine, and business could provide students of theological education with a variety of insights into the context and practice of ministry.

18. A Bishop/Chapter House Model: This is a model that has been used by the Church earlier in its historical experience to good effect. In this model, theological education would be focused not upon places or campuses, but upon the work of several Bishops, people recognized by the Church for their giftedness as teachers and mentors. Bishops and the synods in their care would be designated as "official"/"approved" teaching sites for Lutheran theological education. In addition, faculty members would be called to assist the Bishops in this ministry. Students would follow an apprentice model of education: living in community, discerning their own giftedness through the active work of service, discovering the meaning of the Gospel under the tutelage of the Bishop and the faculty members of the Chapter, being equipped to serve, and being shaped in the Christian life by daily prayer.

Possible benefits of this model could include greater long-term financial viability. Given the fact that many people now preparing for ministry through theological education come from a variety of backgrounds, geographical locations, and levels of family responsibility, the Bishop/Chapter House model would allow for a broad regional rather than central focus. I could imagine the office of the Bishop

being strengthened by recognizing it for its teaching ministry. Students would be "learning by doing," and this model of pedagogy could serve the various needs and learning styles of students better than the traditional, classroom method. Finally, the educational methodology of working with a mentor while learning how to serve could enhance the central importance of understanding ministry as relational and missional rather than hierarchical and administrative in nature.

A Concluding Thought

19. Jesus charged His disciples to be "gentle as doves and wise as serpents" as they lived out their call to ministry. Martin Luther King, Jr., charged the members of his congregation to be "tough minded and tenderhearted" as they lived out their lives as children of God for the sake of justice. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel thought a person could be filled with awe and wonder as well as committed to "mitzvah," the doing of good deeds for the sake of one's neighbor, in response to God's work and word in the world. Theological education is a means of preparing and supporting men and women to hear God's call to serve their neighbor in love for the sake of the Gospel and to be enabled to live out that call day by day. Over the millennia, the Church has discovered many ways of providing theological education for its members. Now, the Church sets out, once again, to imagine a new way of doing theological education. Whatever shape the Lutheran theological education programs may take in the days to come, may God's people be not only learned and well trained but also people shaped and formed by/into the character of Christ as well.

Blessings to you, one and all!

Endnotes

[1] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 176.

Why Lutheran Education in Africa?[1]

Glenn Fluegge

As an LCMS missionary and theological educator in Africa for some fourteen years, I was asked a few years back to give a presentation on the work to which God had called us. I diligently set about preparing the presentation but was immediately confronted with a rather heavy question: Why are we even involved in theological education in Africa? The question hit me rather unexpectedly. I am quite accustomed to talking about "what" we did in Africa. But this was different. This was a question of "why?" Is education for the Lutheran churches in Africa really that important?

Similar questions continue to confront our synod. Why are we as a church body involved in theological education in Africa? Is it really worth the sacrifices and resources that our church invests in it? Are our education efforts in Africa really that important?

It is sometimes helpful to look back in history to be able to see the bigger picture that we miss when we focus only on the present. It may prove helpful, then, to take a look at Germany some five hundred years ago during the Reformation. I would not be so presumptuous as to say that sixteenth-century Europe is the same as, or even similar to, twenty-first century Africa. That would be irresponsible historiography. Nonetheless, I think that there are some interesting parallels that shed light from the past on the present situation in Africa.

There are parallels, for instance, between the challenges faced by the German Lutheran churches shortly after the Reformation and those faced by the churches in Africa today. The first of these challenges is that of the traditional religion. Christianity was nearly universal in Europe some five hundred years ago, but it was often intermingled with the traditional folk religion of spirits, magic, and witchcraft—the remnants of a pre-Christian culture that lurked just beneath the surface of popular understandings of Christianity. Similarly, the traditional African religion of ancestral worship and animal sacrifices continues to threaten seriously the churches of Africa today. In many parts of Africa, even the strongest Christians are constantly beset with temptations to revert to former beliefs and practices, especially for significant events and ceremonies or in times of trial, e.g., birth, wedding, death.

Glenn Fluegge and his wife, Susan, were called as LCMS missionaries to Togo from 1998–2009, where Glenn served as lecturer and director of the Centre Luthérien d'Etudes Théologiques, an international seminary that trains pastors for Lutheran churches throughout Francophone Africa. He then served in South Africa as lecturer at the Lutheran Theological Seminary from 2009–2012. Glenn currently serves as director of the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center and professor of theology at Concordia University Irvine, CA.

Syncretism, the mingling of Christianity with elements from the Traditional African Religion, continues to challenge the African church.

A second challenge to Christianity is that of the multitude of sects and cults. During and after the Reformation, a host of sectarian movements, many Anabaptist in nature, sprang up all over Europe and seriously threatened to undermine the newly formed Lutheran churches. Luther even felt compelled to come out of a forced exile at the castle of Wartburg to reprimand Andreas Karlstadt, a fellow professor at the University of Wittenberg, for having given in to dangerous Anabaptist tendencies. Throughout his life, he and other Reformers spent considerable time and effort combating these movements and convincing Christians of the danger these sects posed to the very Gospel itself. Similarly, a vast number of sects and cults have risen up and grown alarmingly popular in Africa today. Mormonism, Eckankar, and Jehovah's Witness have strongholds from West to East to Southern Africa. These sects from the United States are joined by a host of cults originating in Africa, such as the Celestial Church of Christ and the Kimbanguist Church in Congo. Self-proclaimed African prophets, mingling elements of Christianity with African Traditional Religion, gather significant numbers of followers in almost every country of Africa.

The third challenge is perhaps the most serious of all. At the time of the Reformation, the German lands and, for that matter, all of Europe was at the brink of war with the Muslim Turks. Having conquered Constantinople (Europe's "doorway" to the East) some fifty years earlier, the Turks were at Europe's doorstep and eagerly awaited the opportunity to invade. With the Turks came their religion: Islam. Islam is also at the doorstep of Africa today, or, more accurately, Islam is already entering through an open door. Islam is not just in northern Africa. The vast majority of the populations (around 98%) of many countries in West Africa, e.g., Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Niger, are Muslim. In countries such as Togo and Nigeria, it is split rather evenly between Christians and Muslims. Central and Southern Africa have fewer Muslims, but the numbers are growing. It is most alarming, however, to see Muslim "missionaries" at work in Africa. According to a recent conversation with the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo, Muslim merchants, financed and sent from northern Africa, are arriving daily to settle in Congo. (Trade has historically been a primary means of spreading Islam).

I have traveled with countless Muslims during my time in Africa, but for the first time I recently witnessed Muslim missionaries "at work" in the Ethiopian airport. Five Muslim men, most probably Imams, sat on prayer rugs in the center of the waiting room surrounded by people on all sides. After they had strategically placed themselves, they began the ritual prayer, bowing with foreheads to the ground, followed by the rhythmic reading of the Quran. At one point, two of them very strategically left the group and asked a young African man who was watching to join them so that they could split into pairs and continue the reading. All of us in

the waiting room watched with curiosity. Then, while they ate a small meal, one of the men took out a bag and offered a date to every person in the room. This open proselytizing by Muslims took me by surprise. They were on their way to Togo, where Christianity and Islam are fairly evenly balanced. (For more information on the religious landscape of Africa, see http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1564/islam-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa-survey.)

There are other parallels with sixteenth-century Europe as well. When we talk about the Reformation, we focus mostly on those famous events with which we are so familiar: Luther's vow to become a monk on the road to Erfurt, the nailing of the Ninety-Five Theses on the chapel door, Luther's courageous response at the Diet of Worms, etc. What we often forget is that shortly after these famous events and after the break with the Roman Church had become more or less apparent, the Christian church in the German lands found itself in a state of utter chaos. Christianity was very widespread, almost universal, but the Church had lost its shape. Things were a mess. Most devastatingly, in separating from the Pope and the Roman Church, the new "evangelical" (Lutheran) churches lost the very structure that provided them with spiritual leadership. In addition, monasteries and cloisters, along with the accompanying monastic schools, were shut down. Consequently, there was an alarming shortage of well-prepared pastors and preachers so desperately needed to lead the newly established church.

Christianity in Africa is extremely widespread and is considered by many to be the world's most rapidly growing church. There are roughly twenty million Lutherans in Africa alone. Often because of this widespread growth, many churches in Africa do not have adequate structures in place to provide the desperately needed pastors and preachers. In Lutheran churches all over Africa, ranging from Guinea to Togo to Nigeria to Kenya, there is an alarming shortage of well-prepared pastors. The recently planted Evangelical Lutheran Church of Guinea, for example, can already boast of over 150 congregations and preaching stations and yet has only five ordained pastors. Although this example is perhaps more dire than most, the problem is not at all unique to Guinea. In fact, it is so widespread that it could be called a crisis.

There is yet a final parallel between the religious context of the German lands back then and Africa today—a parallel that is often overlooked. European society at the time of the Reformation was an oral society. Printed books were becoming more popular since Johannes Gutenberg invented the moveable type printing press some seventy-five years earlier, but the vast majority of Europe was still illiterate, and their lives revolved around an oral-aural way of sensing the world around them. With the Lutheran Reformation revolving around a written Word (as opposed to the "inner Word" of the enthusiasts), there was a sudden, desperate need for an educated clergy that could read, interpret, and preach this written Word. Africa, too, is comprised mostly of oral societies, probably even more so than in sixteenth-century Europe,

where systems of study had for centuries been based on hand-written manuscripts. And just as the Reformation church found itself in need of an educated clergy, Lutheran churches in Africa today are also experiencing this same need. It should not come as a surprise that Pentecostalism is growing rapidly in Africa and that even many of the larger mainline Protestant churches have charismatic tendencies. Pentecostal and charismatic approaches to Christianity accentuate the immediate activity of the Holy Spirit and relegate the written word to a position of secondary importance, a tendency that coincides well with oral societies and yet poses a challenge to traditional Lutheranism.

Some five hundred years ago, in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges—sectarian threats to the church, chronic lack of well-prepared pastors, and the inherent challenge of the written Word in an oral society—the Reformers set out to rebuild the church from the bottom up. And where did they start? Education. As early as 1524, Luther wrote a letter "To the Councilmen of all the Cities in Germany that they Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," in which he exhorts the councilmen: "My dear sirs, if we have to spend such large sums every year on guns, roads, bridges, dams, and countless similar items to insure the temporal peace and prosperity of a city, why should not much more be devoted to the poor neglected youth?" (LW 45, 350) A few years later, Philip Melanchthon, Luther's comrade at the University of Wittenberg, developed a curricular program of study in a booklet of instructions for those conducting parish visitations. This curriculum subsequently provided the basis for the establishment of schools throughout much of Germany. Melanchthon was so adamant about education and such an intriguing teacher himself that he became known as the *Praeceptor Germaniae* (Teacher of Germany).

Luther and the reformers did not emphasize education purely for the sake of being educated. They realized that good and faithful leaders in society are brought about through sound Christian education. This was nowhere more true than in the church. Education was seen as of the utmost importance for the health, well-being, and growth of the church. The transformation of the church (and society) would be through the education and transformation of the pastors. In "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," published in 1530, Luther bemoaned the lack of leadership in the church and exhorted parents in no uncertain terms to send their children into the ministry. He and the other professors at Wittenberg had already set about completely revamping the entire university curriculum so that it might produce the well-prepared pastors that the German church so desperately needed.

The strategic emphasis placed on education by the reformers has become a legacy of Lutheran churches around the world. We see a continuation of this legacy in the fact that our Lutheran forefathers arrived in the United States and immediately set about building schools. To this very day, education has been a hallmark of Lutheranism. Why? Because the original Lutheran Reformers believed that education was of crucial importance for the well-being and growth of the church.

Is it really worth it for us to be involved in education in Africa? History shouts a resounding: YES! Lutheran education (both theological and general) is one of the most important ways in which we can come alongside partner Lutheran churches in Africa today.

Perhaps a final warning is called for here. Education is a long-term investment focused on decades rather than tomorrow, on generations rather than years. That it rarely produces immediate gratification or results may discourage us into focusing only on those ministries that bring more immediate results. Let us bear in mind, however, that Luther, Melanchthon, and the other Reformers never really saw the immediate results of the educational reforms that they worked so hard to bring about; yet the following generations reaped the harvest. The long-term benefit of investing in the education of Lutheran churches in Africa is immeasurable.

Endnotes

[1] A shorter version of this article was first published as "Why Lutheran Education in Africa?" in *Lutherans Engage the World* 1, no. 1 (2012): 2–4. The article has been expanded as it appears in this issue of *Missio Apostolica*.

Editorial en español

Educación para la Misión

Mark "Marcos" Kempff

No existió, ni existe, ni existirá otra persona como Jesucristo. Nadie puede vivir una vida perfecta y a la vez sobrellevar todas las penas y culpas que todos sufrimos en esta vida. Nadie, como Jesús, ha demostrado un amor incondicional. Nadie murió como él, dando su vida como precio para perdonar toda nuestra maldad. Nadie, ni con todos los avances de la ciencia, después de muerto, puede resucitar al tercer día, para vivir eternamente con un perfecto cuerpo humano.

Después de su resurrección de los muertos, Cristo ascendió al Padre y "está sentado a la diestra de Dios Padre Todopoderoso." Como el Señor resucitado y exaltado, él reina en todo el universo con la majestad de Dios, todavía reteniendo su humanidad, que ha sido glorificada y que participa del poder y majestad divinos. Dondequiera que Dios esté y ejerza su soberanía, allí está Cristo, ejerciendo la soberanía de Dios también según su naturaleza humana. El reinado de Cristo, el Dios-hombre, el crucificado-resucitado, se realiza entre los que son de él, entre los suyos, por medio del Evangelio, la obra del Espíritu Santo y los Sacramentos. Cristo reina mediante su amor y a través de la obra del Espíritu Santo, nuestro santificador. Solamente Jesucristo, el verdadero y auténtico Dios-hombre, puede prometernos: "Y yo estaré con ustedes todos los días, hasta el fin del mundo" (Mateo 28:20). ¡Lo promete y lo cumple!

Cristo hizo todo esto para darnos paz, amor, esperanza y vida eterna. Con su muerte y resurrección, Cristo nos da el perdón de los pecados, sin que nosotros lo merezcamos. ¡Qué preciosa promesa de Jesús! Ahora podemos proclamar estas Buenas Noticias entre todas las naciones. ¡Es la misión a la cual Cristo nos ha llamado!

En este volumen de *Missio Apostolica*, Usted, querido lector, encontrará una importante colección de artículos relacionados con la formación misiológica y teológica de quienes hemos sido llamados a la misión de Dios. Este llamado nos apasiona porque hemos sido llevados a la fe en Jesucristo por medio del Espíritu

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Mark "Marcos" Kempff was born in Guatemala, grew up in Central America, and served as a LCMS missionary in Latin America for thirty-three years (Venezuela and Panama) as a DCE, theological education program developer, professor, church planter and theological education network facilitator. He is currently at the Center for Hispanic Studies of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as instructor and administrative assistant.

Santo, y hemos recibido (y seguimos recibiendo) su encargo para anunciar y proclamar el Reino de Dios. El encargo se hace corporativo cuando los cristianos se reúnen como congregación en torno a la palabra de Dios, se hace personal en el camino de la vida cuando uno, según su vocación, anuncia las Buenas Noticias de Jesús. La proclamación, motivada y sostenida por el Espíritu Santo, anuncia el perdón, transforma corazones, cambia vidas, trae esperanza, promueve la reconciliación y asegura el consuelo a las personas que son declaradas total e incondicionalmente justas por el amor de Jesucristo y la gracia de su redención.

Por eso la educación para la misión de Dios es vital para la iglesia, tanto en el ministerio de cada congregación como en la vida de cada creyente.

Agradecemos al Comité Editorial de *Missio Apostolica* por la oportunidad de incluir este breve editorial en español. Al leer los siguientes valiosísimos artículos, recomiendo considerar los siguientes cinco pensamientos:

1. La formación del pueblo de Dios instruye a cada miembro a ser discípulo y a caminar junto al Señor Jesucristo para servir al prójimo comunicándole el amor de Dios.

2. La promoción e incentivación de diversas vocaciones sirven para "hacer misioneros" en diversos contextos.

3. La capacitación, por ejemplo, Bíblica, teológica, sociológica, psicológica, en y desde el campo del diario vivir, sirve para promover la misión de Dios.

4. La misión de la iglesia, fomentando el trabajo coordinado y en equipo, multiplica esfuerzos.

5. Cada persona, reconociendo sus capacidades, posibilidades y esfuerzos, así como también sus necesidades, limitaciones y frustraciones, es llamada a anunciar las Buenas Noticias de Cristo.

Demos gracias a Dios porque él ha obrado en Cristo la salvación a favor de toda la raza humana.

Nuestra nueva vocación misionera nos motiva a:

a. Aprovechar todas las oportunidades que se presentan para acercarnos a otras personas, aún en sus desafíos, a fin de ser instrumentos de Dios para el bienestar de esas personas, al promover el cambio, el crecimiento, la madurez, la innovación y mejoramiento personal en el nombre de Cristo.

b. No tener miedo de experimentar, correr riesgos y aprender de las inevitables dificultades, equivocaciones y sinsabores de la vida, en el nombre de Cristo.

c. Conservar un espíritu emprendedor y optimista aún ante el fracaso y los reveses; alimentar y abrazar todo lo que levanta el ánimo y ennoblece las oportunidades de anunciar a Cristo.

d. Incluir y capacitar a otros a fin de compartir una visión, donde los valores, el interés, la esperanza y los sueños no se apaguen.

e. Promover la cooperación y la colaboración al destacar metas en común, fomentando la confianza mutua.

f. Motivar a otras personas al delegarles autoridad, poder de decisión para escoger entre alternativas, apoyo para desarrollar competencias y destrezas y recibir responsabilidades importantes.

g. Ser un ejemplo de Cristo para otros mostrando congruencia entre conducta y valores, en el nombre de Cristo.

h. Saber usar los logros y los desafíos para promover y edificar compromiso a la misión de Dios, en el nombre de Cristo.

i. Reconocer las contribuciones de todos los que colaboran en esta misión, celebrando con regularidad la obra de Dios entre nosotros, en el nombre de Cristo.

Y sobre todo, ser agradecidos. Jesús murió en la cruz. Allí dio su vida para el perdón de nuestros pecados para restaurarnos a una relación de paz con Dios nuestro Creador y nuestro prójimo. Esta es razón suficiente para dar a conocer quién es, qué fue lo que hizo por la humanidad, cómo actúa a favor de nosotros y qué hará en el futuro y por la eternidad.

Solo a Dios sea la gloria.

Articles

Missionary Use of the Gospel as Hidden Curriculum

Andrew R. Jones

Author's Note: *For reasons of security and sensitivity, the following article omits names, places, dates, and other identifying details.*

Abstract: Christ instructs His disciples to make disciples of all nations, but in today's world some nations refuse missionary activity of any kind. Through anonymous interviews with missionaries in countries which do not openly welcome missionaries, Andrew R. Jones highlights the tension between following Christ's commission and living within the legal parameters of such a government. This article compares such missionary activity to the educational concept of "hidden curriculum," showcasing how missionaries in these contexts are able to share the Gospel despite the challenges and limits of their situations.

Is lying permissible for the sake of the Gospel? Missionaries are facing this question with increasing frequency in many international contexts. I spoke with a group of missionaries who recently served in a location where the term "missionary" was unusable. The nationals in said location thought of missionaries as spies sent to take over their country. Anyone bearing the title "missionary" was entirely distrusted.

Despite this hurdle, several teacher-missionaries accepted positions in language schools to teach English. However, other personnel in these schools did not know that these teachers were simultaneously serving as missionaries. There was no communication about the mission organization serving as a backing agency whose primary purpose was to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

It was a complex and compromising position. The teacher-missionaries' official purpose was to build relationships with their students and seek opportunities to share the Gospel with them both inside and outside of the classroom. It involved a fair

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amount of bending the truth, and a fair amount of blatant lying. For many, this approach presented a moral dilemma.

Since the goal was to share the Gospel, many of these teacher-missionaries felt compelled to share the Gospel as often as possible, but doing this too overtly could have resulted in expulsion from the country. It was common for missionaries to report a reluctance to share the Gospel inside the classroom in a direct way. The Gospel was used as a sort of "hidden curriculum." Hidden curriculum is an education term referring to what the teachers and school administrators hope students will learn through the day-to-day experience of simply *being* at the school.

Shane Martin phrased it this way: "The hidden curriculum consists of the values, beliefs and messages we give our students in the informal, non-instructional areas that permeate the entire school culture."[1] For Martin's school, one goal was the promotion of diversity. Their hidden curriculum for this goal included hiring a diverse faculty, focusing on a hospitable and welcoming environment, and finding ways to incorporate students' diverse experiences into the classroom. In Martin's case, the agenda of a hidden curriculum did not need to be kept secret. It was implemented as a school-wide, systematic strategy. The goal was hidden in that it came through informal, non-instructional means, but it was not kept secret. The promotion of diversity is a goal which does not need to be concealed.

In some contexts, the promotion of the Gospel needs to remain concealed. The group of teacher-missionaries I spoke with did not have such a school-wide system at their disposal. They wanted the Gospel to permeate their classrooms, but they had to keep their intent hidden on multiple levels. The Gospel had to remain hidden, coming through informal, non-instructional methods; moreover, even these informal, non-instructional methods had to be concealed from the school administrations with whom they were working.

The Department of Education in this location had its own hidden curriculum, which conflicted with the goals of the teacher-missionaries. The Department of Education fostered a strong sense of patriotism and conformity. In this context, becoming a Christian meant entering into a small minority and risking the all but certain loss of employment, family, and friends. Conversion was not common. It was culturally unacceptable and the Department of Education's hidden curriculum reinforced this element of the culture. Despite the culture's intolerance of conversion, Christian identity was acceptable so long as Christians were from a country where Christianity was the norm. Each teacher-missionary I spoke with was asked on numerous occasions: "Are you a Christian?" Students generally thought all Americans were Christians, rich, and lived like celebrities. The teacher-missionaries helped clarify that they were American and Christian, but they were not rich and lived in modest apartments on modest salaries. It was acceptable and expected to be an American and a Christian, but as stated above, the word "missionary" carried a weight of distrust.

In working through the tension of being teacher-missionaries, but not being able to admit this openly, the group found that certain practices were not possible (or at the very least dangerous), but there were other strategies which worked rather well.

In describing school culture, Stephen Stolp and Stuart C. Smith point out three levels of school culture.[2] The first and most visible level is "tangible artifacts." In Christian schools, these may include a cross or other artwork depicting biblical scenes.

The second level is "values and beliefs." If a literature professor's favorite author is Jane Austen, he or she will likely assign some of Austen's books for every course. The professor does not have to state this value and may not even be aware of the value being showcased. The value is not evident in one course, but it becomes more noticeable over a longer period of time.

The third level of school culture is the "underlying assumptions." This is the most hidden of the three levels. These underlying assumptions often exist in policies and practices that have been in place for many years and are now taken for granted. They can be seen in the dress code or the length of class periods.[3]

The teacher-missionaries could not adjust the school-wide culture; they could only work individually. The first level—tangible artifacts—could not be adjusted to their preferences. Wearing jewelry, such as a cross, was acceptable, but they could not remove any of the artifacts already in the room serving the hidden curriculum of the Department of Education. Classrooms were communal and used by multiple teachers, so designing classrooms with artwork and other artifacts was also out of the question.

The second level of values and beliefs proved more fruitful. An effective strategy for sharing the Gospel was raising student curiosity with the hope of getting them to ask questions which would lead to further conversations about faith. Some topics were more suited for this than others.

Each teacher-missionary I interviewed mentioned "holidays" as one of the most effective topics for bringing forward the hidden curriculum of the Gospel. Working on Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter was not fun, but it afforded opportunities to share the practices and beliefs behind these holidays and share the Gospel in a non-evasive way, presenting the holidays as facts about Christians. A typical conversation might be as follows:

Teacher: Christians celebrate Easter because they believe Jesus was killed and rose from the dead three days later, on Easter Sunday.

Student: Are you a Christian?

Teacher: Yes, I am.

Student: So why did Jesus have to die if He was just going to come back to life again?

Teacher: Jesus died and was raised to forgive the sins of the world.[4]

One teacher shared an experience from teaching on Easter Sunday. The students were learning the passive voice. Several examples seemed fitting. Jesus was betrayed. Jesus was denied. Jesus was beaten. Jesus was crucified. Jesus was raised. The students then had to name the agent in each passive sentence, e.g., Jesus was betrayed *by Judas*. Jesus was denied *by Peter*. This practice allowed the teacher-missionary to put forward the narrative of Holy Week through the lens of the passive voice.

Another effective topic was traditions such as weddings and funerals. One teacher-missionary told her classes about her sister's upcoming wedding. The students were so curious about the service that they asked to see the order of service. The teacher-missionary brought in *Lutheran Service Book*, and they read through the marriage rite together, learning vocabulary and hearing God's Word through the rite.

The above stories provide specific examples of bringing the Gospel forward through values and beliefs. However, much of the hidden curriculum for teacher-missionaries in such contexts exists in their own underlying assumptions. These teacher-missionaries strove to be trustworthy teachers, people who help students through problems. It was evident that these teacher-missionaries cared for their students more than other teachers in their respective schools. Pairing this compassionate attitude with the known fact of their being Christians was the most basic function of the hidden curriculum. They shared the Gospel explicitly when it was appropriate and showcased the effects of the Gospel implicitly at every possible opportunity. The Gospel had transformed these teacher-missionaries into the compassionate people who cared so deeply for their students.

These teachers were technically "missionaries" in that they were sent by a mission organization, but it seems to me that they were simply living out their vocations. They were English teachers and Christians. They fulfilled their vocation as teachers by being the best teachers they could be, caring about their students and preparing engaging lessons. They fulfilled their vocation as Christians by sharing the hope that was in them when an appropriate topic arose.

Further development of hidden curriculum for missionary use might better lend itself to a term such as "unspoken curriculum." The term "hidden" may carry baggage unfitting to missionary service, while "unspoken" does not carry such a nuance.

As we live in an increasingly un-churched and de-churched context, we can learn a few lessons from these teacher-missionaries. Establishing yourself as a trustworthy employee, neighbor, boss, and customer is essential to today's relational world. Being interested in other people's lives, cultures, and traditions is fundamental to growing in fellowship. Perhaps the next time you're in the grocery store you can comment on all the Christmas decorations with a fellow customer. A

helpful question in such a dialogue might be, "How do you celebrate Christmas?" Think about how you would answer such a question. Does it bring to mind stories from your childhood? Can you hear the music in your memory? Can you taste the food?

Imagine having such conversations with your hairdressers and bank tellers, your co-workers and cashiers. Imagine learning their stories and sharing yours. If your hairdresser trusts you with his or her story, and there is a plot twist in that story, they may very well share that plot twist with you. They may share about a death in the family, a struggle with children, or any number of things. The Gospel has transformed you, just as it has transformed those teacher-missionaries. Your care for your neighbor can shine through as you learn their stories.

Getting people to share their stories is a Gospel handle that can allow us to share our story. We are a part of a bigger story. Our story points to the grander story of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Endnotes

[1] Shane P. Martin, *Catholic Diversity for Catholic Schools: Challenges and Opportunities for Catholic Educators* (Washington, DC: National Catholic Education Association, 1996), 24.
[2] Stephen Stolp and Stuart C. Smith, *Transforming School Culture: Stories, Symbols, Values & the Leader's Role* (Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse, 1995), 35–40.
[3] For more on levels of school culture, see also Kent D. Peterson and Terrence E. Deal, *The Shaping School Culture Fieldbook* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002). Peterson and Deal lay out four levels of school culture similar to Stolp and Smith. They are: visions and values; ritual and ceremony; history and stories; architecture, artifacts, and symbols.
[4] This is an oversimplified conversation, but similar conversations were commonly reported.

Destroying Education to Save It

Paul Hillmer

Editor's Note: *Education in mission? This article is about education. It is about the mission of higher education. It is also an article in mission. The author takes humorously and seriously in a public university lecture not only the mission of his discipline but also his "own flawed, selfish, sinful self" and the kind of Christian love that "requires strength, maturity, self-possession, kindness, and a willingness to give others the same grace we crave for ourselves."*

Abstract: The following article is slightly adapted from the 14th Annual Poehler Lecture on Faith and Learning, delivered by the author at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN, on March 3, 2015. It is a rumination on the increasing commoditization of higher education and its corresponding emphasis on job preparation. While reflecting on the possible implications of these trends, Hillmer also considers how commoditization has shaped American Christianity and promotes the sustained significance of the liberal arts.

At 54 years old, what now seems like such a tender age, I am confronted with a cold, Mesozoic reality: I am a dinosaur. A hurtling asteroid has already radically changed my environment, and the only question I now face is how long I will survive? I am also a historian whose vocation is not to provide neat and tidy answers to complex questions, but to identify various discrete components of the past and consider if all aspects have been properly identified, considered, and contextualized. Because there is usually a dominant historical narrative written not so much by those who are most correct as by those who are the most powerful, I tend to look for underreported narratives written by underdogs and losers. I provoke people to reconsider their inherent narrative and include, as well as respect, other points of view. In short, history encourages me to love my neighbor as myself.

There is no doubt that education, particularly higher education, is changing at a dizzying pace. The question is where all this change is taking us. Certainly it is taking us to a place where education will look even less like that of my youth than it already does. In order to keep pace with economic, social, technological, generational, and other changes, education as we have known it for centuries will likely be destroyed in order to be saved.

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But to what kind of "destruction" am I referring? I have no idea. (This, by the way, is an answer we should all provide more often. We far too frequently offer or are asked to offer an opinion about something for which we have nowhere near enough information to even consider *having* an opinion. But we offer one anyway. Here endeth the first digression.)

Will education be destroyed like the caterpillar is "destroyed" to create the butterfly? Will a slow, earthbound, limited form of education be replaced by a transcendent, boundless education that helps its students take metaphorical if not actual flight? Or might it be more like what economist Joseph Schumpeter called Creative Destruction?[1] In an era when education has become more and more commodified, will the free market's rather messy way of delivering progress define our path of change?

Or might education's "destruction" be reminiscent of the great management-labor conflicts of decades past, such as when Will Carnegie's grown-up son Andrew articulated the rights of labor, went fishing in Scotland, and had his partner Henry Clay Frick bust the union in Homestead, PA, precipitating violence and retribution that poisoned the steel industry for decades? Will we see broader conflicts in higher education such as those seen recently at Gustavus Adolphus College or the MNSCU System?[2]

Or what about a dystopian metaphor? On February 7, 1968, American forces obliterated much of the South Vietnamese village of Ben Tre. When reporter Peter Arnett asked about the incident, an army major allegedly replied, "It became necessary to destroy the town to save it."[3] In their efforts to remain viable in the face of massive change, will our institutions of higher learning so poorly embody a university education that we will wonder if they were worth saving?

Forces beyond our control

Much of the change we are currently experiencing is fueled not only by educational and technological forces, but others often far beyond our ken or control. The advent of for-profit entities, despite their often low graduation and high loan default rates, and our government's one-size-fits-all response, particularly in the area of financial aid, has complicated our task considerably. As the pool of potential undergraduates has diminished, imperatives of financial stability, even survival, have unleashed a sobering reality with which boards of regents and executive administrators have long contended, while faculty and staff have been, if not oblivious, certainly insulated. Then there are the crises of our own making. For years we deferred the growing issue of affordability, while politicians and planners ignored the reductions of support for education and the middle class. Our church body never envisioned the need for an endowment for its colleges until it faced significant decline. The situation in which we now find ourselves is placing and will continue to

place pressures on the quality and even the fundamental definition of higher education.

Distortions of Christian perspectives

Lutherans hold to the doctrine of original sin. As Mary Ann Evans (aka George Eliot) colorfully put it, "We are all of us born in moral stupidity, taking the world as an udder to feed our supreme selves."[4] In an environment of swift and uncertain change, people tend to place themselves or *be* placed in certain camps and spend as much time as necessary entrenching their own opinions and vilifying those of their rivals to ensure their own peace of mind and sense of superiority. In this kind of unpleasant contest, the key element is power. In a university, one might argue, knowledge is power. Socrates and Plato argued that an idea is the most powerful, the most real thing in the universe. But historians tend to agree with George Orwell: "Who controls the present controls the past . . . [W]ho controls the past, controls the future."[5] History—or more generally, information—does not speak for itself; rather it is shaped by human beings into a narrative that may be instructive or may be manipulative.

Twenty-first century American Christians often, to our detriment, not only ignore these realities, but make matters worse by employing a kind of pseudo-spiritual reductive deduction:

I want something
I pray for something
I get that something.
Therefore God wants me to have that something.
Those adversely affected by my having it should accept their role in the Divine Plan.
People who disagree with me are not only against me; they are against God.

It's doubtful that we actually believe this, but it is often how we behave. Now you might rightly say, "Look here: materialism is hardly uniquely American." True. But Roland Delattre suggests that starting with Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson and continuing all the way to Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker and Joel Osteen, Americans have suffered from what he called "Supply-Side Spirituality," the belief that material abundance rather than scarcity is the inherent nature and destiny of every true American.[6] All too often we believe we are meant to have our way.

One of the great American Christian minds of the twentieth century, Reinhold Niebuhr, would want to slap us back into reality. (By the way, I have always wanted to study how American society went from upholding people like Niebuhr as spokesmen for Christianity in the public arena, to the 1980s when the go-to guy was Jerry Falwell. Here endeth Digression #2.) Niebuhr writes, "The Christian faith ought to persuade us that political controversies are always conflicts between sinners and not between righteous men and sinners. It ought to mitigate the self-

righteousness which is an inevitable concomitant of all human conflict."[7] "The will to live," he concludes, "becomes the will to power."[8] As different interests contend with change, it is easy for individuals and especially, Niebuhr would argue, groups with a common interest, to become Machiavellian. After all, in a contest between the two, most people would rather win than be right. The winner, after all, controls the discourse and proclaims he is right even if he isn't. Even Jesus' disciples couldn't control themselves. After witnessing His death and resurrection, after sitting at His feet for forty days as He prepared them for what we now call Pentecost, they asked a completely self-interested, political question: "Lord, are You now going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" These impulses, as natural as they are, are both anti-Christian and anti-higher education.

It's not that powerful people are bad and powerless people are good, but consider a corollary to 1 Timothy 6:10: the love of power is the root of all kinds of evil. It is often the case that those who seek power the most, especially power that privileges one interest over another, should be trusted with it the least.

Power and pragmatism

A discussion about power and the problems associated with it is important, because colleges and universities have moved from an era of partnership in decision-making to one of increasing centralization. This transition may indeed be necessitated for a number of reasons already enumerated, but in the midst of dizzying change that power must be wielded judiciously. By what yardstick might it be assessed? Using both Christianity and history as a gauge, one question and its corollary are most instructive: Is there a cost to telling truth to power? Is the practice encouraged in the spirit of Christian humility, as well as the understanding that multiple perspectives are key in the decision-making process, or is it discouraged, even punished? This question is the same whether one is the power in the scenario, the peer, or the peon, and the issue so old and pervasive that it is one of the many reasons faculty seek tenure.

Since historians examine minority opinions, and since I now hold a minority opinion, I'd like to ruminate on the nature of higher education in my own shrinking universe. A ship is safe in harbor, but that's not what ships are for. A university is safe following the latest trends and popular expectations; but that is not what universities are for. Yes, one must be realistic. Only obscenely well-endowed schools have the luxury of even considering such a credo. But we're going to remain in my universe for a few minutes.

High schools are already spending more time on math, science, and "career skills." Governors in Florida, Texas, and North Carolina say that they will refuse to spend taxpayer money on students majoring in the humanities. Virginia law now requires all institutions to list their majors and the starting salary each of its

graduates can expect.[9] These and numerous other forces suggest that higher education must focus more and more on career preparation. Yet here are a few problems to consider: First, many freshmen come to school undecided. Most recent statistics indicate that 50–70% of them change their majors at least once; most at least three times before they graduate.[10] Going through a fast-tracked, more career-based program won't work for some. Second, a thorough scan of various university career counseling sites reveals a common theme: This generation will be changing not only jobs, but *careers*, on several occasions during the course of their lives. By spending more time on a single area, are we really giving our students the best preparation for their future? Some students prepare for a job they eventually abandon. For example, the Minnesota Department of Education reports that this state loses a third of its new teachers within their first five years.[11] Across the board, people often see their jobs simply as essential but unpleasant means to an end. A 2013 Conference Board survey reveals less than 50% of American workers were happy in their job.[12] Then there's the current state of our public discourse.

Cultural forces

Some of us remember the days when newsmen were the most trusted people in America. Today we primarily have two types of mainstream media: divisive and banal. The former encourages us to hunker down in our own intellectual bunkers, hearing only what strokes our egos and rationalizes our biases. It primarily provides scapegoats for rather than careful analysis of the pressing problems of our day. The latter features the cute, the gossipy, the violent, the disastrous, the sybaritic**,** and the eye-catching, often served with a heaping helping of hysteria: political coverage more akin to stenography than journalism, and—my favorite—invitations for mutually ignorant people to "weigh in" with their opinions, as if news programs can't afford to alienate a single viewer or sponsor.

These days the news is influenced as much by advertising revenue as sitcoms and reality shows. Money—when used to tell us what to buy, how to vote, and what to think—has become all but synonymous with power, determining what the media say and don't say, driving to an ever-greater degree the most important decisions in health care, bathing our every experience in product placement, and surveiling our every real and digital movement to better identify our buying habits. Most disturbingly, with the help of our openly partisan Supreme Court, money pollutes our political process with unlimited sums from special interests masquerading as social welfare organizations. Money—often in this context better described as lucre—not only equals power, it equals free speech. As Mark Leibovich has opined in his illuminating but depressing *This Town*, our so-called public servants are now a permanent feudal class of insiders who never leave Washington and are happy to enhance their personal welfare at the expense of representative government and the common good. DC is now the wealthiest city in the nation, home to seven of the

country's ten wealthiest counties. "Political Washington," he writes, "is an inbred company town where party differences are easily subsumed" by a desire to gain wealthy corporate patrons to help with reelection and through which one can find a cushy corporate job in retirement. "Cowardice," concludes Leibovich, "is rewarded every step of the way."[13] In short, linking information and politics to commerce has contributed mightily to the debasement of public discourse.

What do Christians have to say on these important public issues? We are mostly silent. Perhaps it's because we would rather win than be right on our issues of choice. Should we be so shocked, then, that Millennials have less and less interest in the church, the news, and the political process?

A little more than a hundred years ago, John Alexander Smith wrote, "Nothing that you will learn in the course of your studies will be of the slightest possible use to you . . . save only this, that if you work hard and intelligently you should be able to detect when a man is talking rot, and that, in my view, is the main, if not the sole, purpose of education."[14] Hyperbole aside, in a society where power, expressed primarily through money and repetition, are destroying our ability, even our desire to think critically, deeply, and compassionately about anything, this purpose seems every bit as essential in the age of the internet as it did in the age of the fountain pen.

What is higher education for?

What is higher education's role in addressing these pressing social, intellectual, and spiritual problems? In my shrinking universe, no one answers, "Spending more time on job preparation" or "If only we could find a way to make the liberal arts relevant." It's understood that in the body of education, the body politic, the body of society itself, the liberal arts are the connective tissue that holds everything together and helps everything make sense. In my universe, any message, any text is only as important as its context, its subtext, and often its pretext. Words are understood properly only when I know who says them and for what purpose, when I listen to thoughtful critical responses, and when I have a sense of whether the narrative is really even starting in the right place to create the greatest opportunity for objective understanding. In my universe, much is ineffable, which is why I lean so heavily and so happily on art, music, literature, and drama in all of their rich forms. It's why after a worship service a meaningful song often sticks in the heart and mind longer than a good sermon.

But you needn't take the word of a dinosaur. When the American Academy of Arts and Sciences assembled a fifty-four-person commission in 2013 to contemplate the future of the Humanities and Social Sciences, passionate advocates arose from perhaps unexpected places. James McNerney, the CEO of Boeing, said that high-tech manufacturing requires skilled engineers, but they wouldn't advance without a broader array of skills, especially communication and interacting with culturally

diverse others. According to General and Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, weapons can protect national security only so far. Equally essential are the understanding of foreign languages, foreign histories and cultures, and different beliefs and ethical systems. The longtime head of Lockheed Martin, Norman Augustine, described as "The Father of STEM," stated that collecting evidence, weighing interpretations, and making arguments, core skills for creative workers and good citizens, require broad training across the arts and sciences. America's single greatest educational deficit, he said, is in history.[15] (I'll be sure to send him a thank-you note.)

Even so, we live in a culture that has commodified pretty much everything, including religion. During an earlier period of my career, I read a number of histories studying the development of American Christianity with a critical eye. There are those who might ignore or even scorn their views, but I have never understood that impulse. It is a curious but common phenomenon to find Christians within their own circle of faith freely admitting their sins and failings, while suddenly becoming "perfect" when attacked from the outside. As a result we often miss out on valuable opportunities to gain wisdom and insight and engage in constructive dialog. Leaders in the Catholic Church are learning a very hard and very expensive lesson on treating the institution of the church as if it were as unassailable as God.

The church and higher education—one view

Here is just one example of a critic who has something useful to say both to the church and to those of us who teach at any level. In *Selling God,* R. Laurence Moore asserts that from the beginning, American religious leaders participated in a process through which "religion's initial role 'in the marketplace,' its acting as an independent influence," gave way to its second role, "cooperation in making itself a competitive item for sale." This was inevitable, he argues, since the church can only "remain culturally central insofar as it learns to work with other things that are central."[16] Clergymen in the colonial period, for example, often wrote their own versions of sensational, even lurid stories popular at the time, justifying their methods by concluding with a moral lesson. But that's not why people read their stories. Owing to the first amendment and numerous state laws denying churches state funding, ministers strove to fill seats and maintain their status as influencers and arbiters of high culture. Churches influenced many positive social changes, such as improvements in numerous public environments, but their desire for popularity and prosperity, as well as new forms of entertainment in saloons, parks, theaters, camps, sporting arenas, and vaudeville shows, and new technologies like the Nickelodeon, cinema, phonograph, radio, and television led them to one compromise after another. Christians were often active participants in, rather than passive victims of, this transformation since, in Moore's view, religion must either "keep up with other cultural aspects of national life, including the commercial forms, or it has no importance."[17] Did church leaders set out to create a market system of competing

denominations, or to become "deeply implicated in a commercial means of tapping popular sentiment" that made the church captive to popular tastes and norms?[18] Even Moore says no. Nonetheless, they did. Are all of Moore's arguments and presuppositions unassailable? Of course not. Is there far more than a grain of truth in his observations and more than enough cause for the church to think both seriously and penitentially about them? Most certainly.

Education as commodity: a force to contend with

Until the last thirty or so years, higher education was largely insulated from the commercializing effects of our culture. There were enough students to go around, a broad consensus about the value of a college degree, and no great need to spend money on advertising. The best hope middle-class parents had for making their children's lives better than their own was to invest in higher education. But then came, among other things: trickle-down economics, the twenty-four-hour news cycle, NAFTA, a lowering birth rate, wage stagnation, and the Great Recession. Since middle-class incomes didn't keep pace with the cost of higher education, parents began fearing for their children's post-graduation job prospects. In that context, the process of commoditizing higher education has kicked in with a vengeance. The dominant narrative, "making college pay"—immediately, overtly, and primarily professionally—is coinciding with protean changes in information and communication technology that have accelerated our expectations that everything should be easy, free, and immediate, while making available massive amounts of information once the exclusive domain of professionals like doctors, lawyers, and yes, college professors.

In this environment, education seems marketed more as a private asset than a public good. Particularly for its fastest-growing segment, online degree completion and graduate programs often marketed to working adults, convenience is the key component in selling the "product," and understandably so. For example, the ad for Lindenwood College's Accelerated Degree Program reads, "Get your degree. Keep your life"[19]—a great slogan perhaps carrying an unintended message: education should be easy. No sacrifices should be required. We can't ask too much of you. In this environment, students often see themselves as customers; and, as the old saying goes, the customer is always right. This perception can blur the line between education and commerce, between a teaching relationship and a transactional one. In this environment, the erosion or even the eradication of classes and subject areas without an obvious vocational link can be seen as a necessity. Many schools are cutting pieces out of what for many, many years has been considered a seamless cloth; and the first thing deemed expendable, or at least reducible, are the humanities. Like it or not, this is what the marketplace is demanding. After all, as Larry Moore suggests, those who wish to remain competitive, perhaps even those who wish to survive must "keep up with other cultural aspects of national life,

including the commercial forms, or [they have] no importance." As a result, tensions between educational and market imperatives are likely to only increase.

Toward a conclusion

Given the amount of time I've spent questioning some of the assumptions of the contemporary higher education marketplace, you might justifiably think "this speech is positively Shakespearian: a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."[20] I'm not saying that the world or even the university would be better if everyone studied more history. (I'm thinking it, but I'm not saying it.) Yes, students certainly need to be prepared for life in the modern world, with all of its scientific, mathematical, technological, commercial, ethical, and other challenges; and certainly we must do all within reason to help students graduate with as little debt as possible. Yes, career preparation is critical. But these ideas aren't getting equal time here, because they don't need it. They are everywhere. Nothing that is truly of benefit to our students is objectionable. But shouldn't we think about both the long-term and the short-term, about how students will make a living *and* have a life?

Since World War II, one of American higher education's marks of greatness is that it has boldly proclaimed that a broadly-based, intellectually challenging education that creates thoughtful, informed, active citizens is not meant for elites only, but for anyone who wants it. What concerns me about its current direction is that it seems to imply that was a mistake.

Where do we go from here?

So what is the future of higher education in this country? If I knew, I'd be on my private jet flying to another high-priced consultation. My task is to examine underreported aspects of the past, including the recent past, that may help us illuminate our experience. These observations do not come from a fear that higher education is doomed or its leadership ill-informed. What all this means and where it will all lead will be decided by people not only more powerful but more broadly aware than I. But I hope they won't mind people outside the circle expressing legitimate concerns or respectfully testing an assumption or two.

What is the best environment in which these changes will occur, at least at universities wishing to uphold Christian teaching? At first blush, my answer will seem so simplistic and silly that you'll probably wonder if I flew to a Colorado head shop and smoked my way through a ganja buffet. Let's talk about love—1 Corinthians 13, to be precise—and in my final digression, let me simply say this chapter is the most egregiously misappropriated biblical wisdom in the history of American Christendom. As you must know, nowhere in this chapter is there any indication that St. Paul's observations are meant for married couples. So when he says love is patient, kind, not boastful or proud, not self-seeking, easily angered, or

willing to dishonor others, and incapable of keeping a record of wrongs, he isn't showing us how to treat those we already love better. He's speaking to and about all of us. For our purposes he might say, "If I get A's in all my classes but don't have love, I am fingernails on a chalkboard. If I get the best teaching evaluations of all time and execute more scholarship than all my colleagues combined and don't have love, I am the longest, most boring meeting ever. If I enhance the prestige and guarantee the financial security of my university but have not love, I am nothing."

The role of love (Love conquers all)

Since love is such an abused, multipurpose word in our language, we might use "respect," or resisting the urge to turn people or their ideas into abstractions or obstacles. Immanuel Kant said it well: People should not be treated merely as a means to other people's ends.[21] Perhaps we could manage to view 1 Corinthians 13 in a Christocentric rather than an egocentric way. The former understands, "This is who Christ calls me to be"; the latter insists, "This is how others should be treating me." Perhaps we could transcend the binary tendencies so deeply ingrained in our culture: black or white, right or wrong, Republican or Democrat, Tastes Great or Less Filling. Perhaps we need not commit to always being swift and efficient or slow and deliberate, emphasizing the institution or the individual, or looking more like a corporation or a community. And at all times, I must start any conversation I have with anyone, no matter how contentious it may be or how right I think I am, with a clear sense of my own flawed, selfish, sinful self. I should be the publican in the back of the church crying out, "Lord, help me, a sinner," or the person using the jaws of life to extract the redwood from my own eye before commenting on the speck in my neighbor's.

Power may be the ultimate aphrodisiac, as Henry Kissinger once famously proclaimed, and in uncertain times it is the weapon to which we most readily resort; but love is the ultimate expression of who we were created to be. This is neither a "Minnesota Nice" kind of love that smiles and nods but never says what needs to be said, nor a "take no prisoners" kind of love, where the message, no matter how valid or urgent, is undermined by the tactless or dismissive way it is delivered. It requires strength, maturity, self-possession, kindness, and a willingness to give others the same grace we crave for ourselves. I for one have a long way to go in simply understanding it, to say nothing of living it; but it's worth the effort, both as a Christian and a historian.

In Proverbs 16:16 we read, "How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver." What will "wisdom" and "understanding" mean in higher education and in society in the future? What do they mean now? I don't know, but I can tell you this: There is not a day that goes by that I am not reminded of and grateful for the tremendous privilege I've been given to be a learner,

a scholar, a teacher, an author, and a colleague alongside a truly inspiring group of faculty and staff. And, dinosaur though I am, I will enjoy looking for an answer to this and other questions until I am extinct.

Endnotes

[1] The market "incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism." Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 83.
[2] See https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/02/07/gustavus-adolphus-faculty-push-back-against-president-aid-confidential-leak-site and www.startribune.com/local/blogs/282621881.html (accessed December 15, 2014).
[3] See http://aphelis.net/destroy-village-order-save-unknown-1968/ (accessed November 19, 2014).
[4] George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), 211.
[5] George Orwell, *1984* (New York: Signet Classics, 1977), 35.
[6] Roland Delattre, "Supply-Side Spirituality: A Case Study in the Cultural Interpretation of Religious Ethics in America," in *Religion and the Life of the Nation*, ed. Rowland A. Sherrill (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 84–108.
[7] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Why the Church is Not Pacifist," from *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr* (New York: Yale University Press, 1986), 114.
[8] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Know Press, 2001), 14.
[9] See http://today.duke.edu/2013/10/rhbcollegeboard (accessed January 11, 2015).
[10] See http://www.nbcnews.com/id/10154383/ns/business-personal_finance/t/college-freshmen-face-major-dilemma/ (accessed January 11, 2015).
[11] See http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_26829333/minnesota-schools-trying-retain-young-teachers (accessed January 11, 2015).
[12] See http://www.conference-board.org/blog/post.cfm?post=1927 (accessed December 27, 2014).
[13] Mark Leibovich, *This Town: Two Parties and a Funeral, Plus Plenty of Valet Parking* (New York: Penguin Group, 2013), 104. The "cowardice" comment was made on Bill Moyers' show, August 23, 2013.
[14] See http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/27314.html (accessed December 19, 2014).
[15] See http://www.humanitiescommission.org/ and http://today.duke.edu/2013/10/rhbcollegeboard (accessed January 11, 2015).
[16] R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 6.
[17] Moore, 65.
[18] Moore, 119.
[19] See http://www.lindenwood.edu/lead/ (accessed December 14, 2014).
[20] Macbeth, Act 5, Scene 5.
[21] This is known as Kant's "Mere Means Principle," or "Second Categorical Imperative." See http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-moral/ (accessed January 22, 2015).

The State of Adult Catechesis/Confirmation in the LCMS

Mark C. Larson

Abstract: In the late 1980s, the LCMS confirmed around thirty thousand adults per year in its six thousand congregations.[1] Now the average is between two or three adult confirmations per congregation per year, about half of the level of the 1980s and as recently as fifteen years ago. This article explores the nature of and need for adult catechesis, examines obstacles and opportunities inherent in LCMS culture and U.S. society in general, and calls for a renewal of this vital ministry in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

In the late 1980s, Synod officials opined that couldn't a great, doctrinally sound, mission-driven denomination like the LCMS—with its exceptional parochial school system, respected institutions of higher learning, and evangelistic auxiliaries—confirm more than five adults per congregation per year? The answer seemed self-evident in the affirmative. Fast-forward to today. The average is now between two and three adult confirmations per congregation per year, depending on the method of counting.[2]

Observations about the state of adult catechesis/confirmation, however, need to go beyond a discussion of the numbers or lack thereof. How did we get to this point? Is the church even raising the issue in its conversations? Are congregations asking how they can be more effective in sharing the crucified and risen Christ with those with whom they have contact? Is it even relevant to examine this issue, or is it an institutional relic in a post-denominational era?

Whether it is called adult confirmation or something else, the church's function of integrating new believers into the life of the church remains a central purpose as commanded by Christ Himself in Scripture. To begin the conversation, this article examines the nature, current state, need, and internal and external influences.

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What is Adult Catechesis?

In the Greek, κατηχεω (to catechize) means to "'sound from above,' e.g., to address from a stage, . . . 'to instruct someone.'"[3] It is used much more rarely in the New Testament than διδασκω, the more general word for "to teach." Arguably, it connotes a more formal, intentional setting (instruction), although its use may be insufficient to define clearly. Examples of the use of the word in bold below include:

> "Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to **instruct** others, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor 14:19).
>
> "Let the one who is **taught** the word share all good things with the one who **teaches**" (Gal 6:6).
>
> "He [Apollos] had been **instructed** in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught[4] accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25).

For the purpose of this article, adult catechesis is used synonymously with adult confirmation. In its entirety, it is the process of the church by which the Holy Spirit, through the Means of Grace, takes a person from a state of unbelief to new life in Christ. This new life most definitely includes saving faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, but also includes repentance to a holy life according to the pattern described in Scripture (Rom 12:1; Gal 2:20, etc.). It includes adult baptism if the catechumen has not been baptized,[5] but also includes integration into church for those joining from other faith traditions, whether or not they were recently active.

Whatever it is called, the process by which former unbelievers become disciples of Christ is a Biblical mandate. The highly familiar com*mission*ing passages of Scripture (Mt 28:18–20; Mk 16:15–16; Lk 24:46–48; Acts 1:8) make clear the essential task of the church in relation to the world is to bear witness (μαρτυρεω) to the Gospel. The Matthew 28 passage with the imperative (μαθητεύσατε) "make disciples" clarifies that this proclamation has the unequivocal purpose of conversion and discipleship of the former unbeliever. The testimony of other places in Scripture (Jon 3:1–2; Ps 51:13; 1 Tim 2:3–4) and the repeated narrative of conversions in the book of Acts indicate that this process, whatever it is called and however it is practiced, is not an institutional relic.

While discipleship is a lifelong process, this article limits its focus to catechumens deemed by the church to have reached the point of sufficient understanding of and agreement with the doctrine of the church, as well as a lifestyle consistent with it, to be able to partake in the Lord's Supper, that is, communicant *membership*.

Do We Still Need Adult Confirmation?

This brings us to the "M" word, *m_____ship!* It probably does not surprise you that this term has fallen into disrepute. "People, especially young people, don't become members of organizations today." "This is an institutional, bureaucratic term." This is all true enough. The term does not need to be defended. Yet the concept remains that a local congregation comprises people, people who have more or less formally entered into a mutual understanding with a local congregation that they are under its spiritual care. Certainly practices and expectations of that mutual covenant differ from congregation to congregation, but they exist. One pastor described this relationship as "those who call this church home." "Membership" is a workable word among us, especially as it is used beyond the local congregation, even as we are aware of its limitations.

The same disagreement exists about the relevance of both the term and the concept of "adult confirmation." Additionally, assertions are made that some churches don't even practice adult confirmation anymore. This assertion usually refers, not to churches that are inactive in this area, but to churches that are assimilating large numbers of new people. The facts tell a different story. These congregations instruct new "members" in some manner and in fact are more likely to report them in the annual statistical report.[6] It is true that practices in regard to adult catechesis vary, but it still needs to be called something. The term, "member," while imperfect, is as good as any.

Increase in "membership," while imperfect, is also a valid measurement of outreach. A case is made that adult baptisms would be a better measurement to reflect actually reaching lost people, since adult confirmations include believers who join LCMS congregations from other faith traditions. The bottom line is that this ambiguity between Kingdom growth and migration within the Kingdom exists in every category of accession. For example, even people gained by transfer from another LCMS congregation may actually have been won back from unbelief, even though they had been listed on another congregation's membership roll. An additional benefit of retaining the current categories is that it allows for comparisons to previous years.

These issues may deserve some attention for the sake of good order. However, there is a better reason why the traditional LCMS practice of adult confirmation is essential: It is most at home in LCMS theology. Many recall *Dialog Evangelism*,[7] a "Lutheranization" of *Evangelism Explosion*.[8] It was quite popular in the Synod in the 1980s. I am fan of this program in that it was a great discipleship tool that clarified the Gospel for participants and gave them confidence to be lifelong witnesses. I owe my love for evangelism today to this program from many years ago. However, for some there was always a bit of dissonance. While *Dialog Evangelism* never diminished adult instruction, the outline taught in this program sought a "confession

of faith" in someone's living room. While our doctrine is that a person comes to faith instantaneously,[9] we are not overly concerned about that moment, which is often imperceptible, even to the new believer. We are more concerned with the process of catechesis and identification with the body of Christ, which takes place over time. This is why the practice that we have called adult confirmation has been present and needs to continue.

How is it going?

It would be no surprise to most that the state of adult confirmation ministry is less than desirable. Taking the figures from the 1980s as a lackluster start—at least as it was perceived at the time—they have only continued to decline. This decline is more recent than many people think. For years 1995–1999, there were still nearly 30,000 adult confirmations each year. Since then the number has been declining. In the last year available at this writing, 2013, 10,789 adult confirmations were reported. Keep in mind that the change in the way that the Synod reported adult confirmations may account for a significant part of this decline[10] (See footnote 2). The practice of not carrying the number of adult confirmations forward for non-reporting congregations make the statistic sensitive to the percentage of churches reporting; 2013 was a particularly poor year.[11] However, any analysis would support that we are confirming half or fewer of the number of adults that were confirmed in the late 1990s.

The decline in adult confirmations also affects the number of child baptisms. The LCMS is baptizing many fewer children than thirty years ago, from about 60,000 reported in 1987 compared to 21,318 in 2013. Even adjusting for the change in the manner of reporting, which may account for about 12,000 of this decrease,[12] this number is halved. I have no quarrel with those who point out that current Lutherans are having fewer children and should have more. The biblical mandate of Genesis 1:28 to *"be fruitful and multiply"* does not have an expiration date. However, the low birth rate is only part of the reason for the decline in child baptisms. As pastors who confirm adults know, it is normal that their children will also be baptized. The decline in child baptisms is due in part to the decline of adult confirmations.

What is holding us back?

The adage is "culture eats strategy for breakfast."[13] Kraft noted, "Most of what we do and think is more habitual than creative. It is our regular habit to follow the cultural guidelines (roads) taught to us as we were growing up."[14] Strong internal and external cultural forces affect the practice of adult confirmation in the LCMS.

Beginning with internal forces, we know that there is a commitment and love for missions within the LCMS, but there are behaviors and attitudes that dampen it. This culture finds roots at times in doctrinal issues, at times in our history and culture. Whatever the source, it manifests itself on the national, district, and local level.

The biblical doctrine that the Holy Spirit alone brings about faith through the Means of Grace no doubt adds nuance to the practice of adult confirmation. There are strong opinions on both sides of the issue on whether or not it is proper to set goals and expectations in the area of conversion. Since the Holy Spirit is the One who brings people to faith when and where He pleases, is it even proper to expect any level of accountability in this area?[15] Can we count? Some in the LCMS say yes and cite the numerous places in the book of Acts that counted that very thing (2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 11:24; 19:7). Others go so far as to refrain from inviting people to join the congregation after they have completed an instruction class lest an impression be given that they had a role in their conversion.

There is also the often-discussed false dichotomy between faithfulness and mission. While it would be an oversimplification to deny that there are conundrums at times as the Word meets the world, there is no mission if there is no message.[16] This issue deserves a full discussion and can only be raised as an issue here. Suffice it to say that, rightly or wrongly, it may dampen our efforts toward adult confirmation.

LCMS cultural manifestations find their influence as well. On the national level, it is safe to say that the story of adult confirmation is currently missing from the narrative of the church. For example, those congregations that actively confirm adults are not celebrated. Those that do not bear no stigma. For a time in the 1980s and 1990s, the Synod's publications listed congregations that confirmed more than fifty adults. It was later reduced to thirty-five. Then this "honor roll" was stopped altogether. In the same article, the percentage of congregations that did not confirm any adults was reported. While the report did not point to any one congregation, at least it sent a signal that this was not the way things should be.

What is true on the national level seems to be true on the district level as well. While the degree to which this observation is true is hard to quantify, most people would be hard pressed to cite many examples of districts that highlight the importance of adult confirmation. While there may be others, the only example I know of after many years of conversations around the church is the Wisconsin North district which has had the practice of giving *The Golden Sickle* award to congregations of various sizes who had the highest number of adult confirmations.[17] Is this record of outreach considered important in the election of district officers and the appointment of other leaders? Do district presidents highlight this issue in their presentations, celebrate those who are effective, or perhaps even (evangelically or otherwise) question a pastor about the lack of adult confirmations?

On the local level, as congregations are involved in the call process for staff, is the track record of adult confirmations of candidates considered? Do congregations hold their pastors accountable for outreach at the same level as they do for shut-in and hospital calls? Would members be willing to receive spiritual care from qualified lay members in appropriate circumstances in order that outreach can receive a higher priority for the called staff?

A key event in the life of a congregation is the installation of a pastor. As he stands before God and his congregation, he vows to uphold the teachings of the faith, to live a holy life, and to care for the existing flock. A stark omission is that at no point in this rite in the current or previous agendas do pastors vow to "seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10). Such inclusion would seem appropriate according to the biblical commissioning passages mentioned above. The prophet Ezekiel scolded the shepherds of Israel for shirking this responsibility among others: "The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, *the lost you have not sought*, and with force and harshness you have ruled them" [emphasis added] (Ez 34:4).

In March 2013, Lutheran Hour Ministries conducted a survey to inquire about local adult confirmation practices in one LCMS district. The purpose was to seek a fuller understanding of the differences in congregations that confirm adults and those that do not. Additional information was gathered through follow-up phone calls

Reasons for congregations not confirming adults included, as one would expect, pastoral vacancy and attempts that did not lead to fruition. Another common response was that the congregation was too small to attract members. Yet the most striking insight was this: congregations lacking adult confirmations often indicated that it was their practice to wait for people desiring adult confirmation to present themselves before scheduling a class. This was done instead of scheduling a class and then actively seeking participants.

Whatever factors cause a lack of priority has also led to a lack of innovation. Simply put, the church has not been "minding the store," continually developing resources, skills, and institutional expertise in this area. If a pastor were about to begin a membership class for the first time, what curriculum would he use? While he could find traditional resources that use a printed curriculum and a classroom format, it would be difficult to find resources that take advantage of new, emerging technologies. (To the credit of Concordia Publishing House, it does offer a number of resources for new member ministry in the printed format.[18])

The use of the Internet is so pervasive in our culture, and yet we lack digital and/or video resources available for this key ministry. Can social media and online education be used to foster adult catechesis? Can the church make use of distance education models, online meetings, Facebook and other digital tools to accomplish goals congruent with adult confirmation? Would these tools also allow the

catechumen to develop relationships and identification with the church outside the classroom setting? Why has the church not been investing its "mental capital" in this ministry? It is evident that LCMS practices around adult confirmation have not kept up with the changes in technology.

When Lutheran Hour Ministries has asked what it might provide to strengthen adult confirmation ministry, by far the most common response has been video or other electronic material. Lutheran Hour personnel researched electronic resources for adult confirmation, but found only locally produced material, usually recordings from the congregation's membership classes. In response, LHM developed an online, digital course on Christianity called *GodConnects* (www.lhm.org/GodConnects), which was released January 2015.

External forces can also hinder our mission efforts. For the Christian who takes the Bible seriously, the changes in North American culture in the last decades have been disquieting to say the least. It seems that the seeds of change that were sown in the past have come to bear abundant fruit in the last few years. As the philosophical underpinnings of the West have shifted from modernism to postmodernism, the church faces great challenges to retool its ministry to the lost. This is most certainly true of adult confirmation ministry where the very purpose is to meet the culture.

In the recent past, Christian behavior was often consistent with and enforced by society. A man and a woman, when married, were expected to be faithful to each other and remain married for the rest of their lives. While sin has always abounded, sexual activity outside marriage was at least recognized as sin. Church attendance, to some degree, was expected. The concept of absolute truth was generally accepted, even if there was not always agreement on it.

Arguably much of the current curriculum and practice surrounding adult confirmation in our churches has not changed to meet this new reality. In the past, it was nearly enough to explain the differences between Catholics and Lutherans and receive assent to our view. Now the church needs to include in its strategy changing, not only doctrinal understanding of the catechumen, but worldview and lifestyle as well. The most common example is couples living together before marriage. Every pastor in ministry knows how difficult it is to deal with this issue in the context of church weddings and membership. Other examples include homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, and the like. Yet perhaps the most threatening is the rejection by postmodern thinkers of Christianity's exclusive truth claims. The teaching that Jesus is the only way to heaven grows increasingly dissonant to postmodern ears.

What can move us forward?

To be sure there are powerful elements within LCMS culture that encourage adult confirmation ministry. Perhaps the strongest is our conviction that there is no salvation without Jesus Christ. It is clear from Scripture that "There is salvation in no

one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

While the church and individuals may not always act in a way that reflects this belief, we nonetheless believe it. It is a part of our orthodox faith. If only the Bible taught the annihilation of souls, that would be easier to bear; but it doesn't. It teaches the eternal punishment of hell that is both unimaginable and just. Our orthodoxy on this issue, coupled with our love for others that they may avoid this fate, moves us to evangelize those across the dinner table and across the seas. It is an urgent task; we know it and believe it.

This urgency has been reflected in many ways. It is espoused by entities within the church from corporate Synod to local congregations. The mission statement of the LCMS includes "vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world." The current three-part vision statement of "Witness, Mercy and Life Together" continues to emphasize witness. The tagline of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is "Lutheran Women in Mission." Concordia University–California was founded as the Great Commission University, and nearly every congregation that has a mission statement restates the Great Commission in some way for their context.

From this commitment to reach the lost, evangelistic efforts have arisen through the years. Preaching-Teaching-Reaching in the 1950s, Dialogue Evangelism and Witness Workshops in the 1970–80s, and, most recently, Ablaze are prominent examples. While each had its strengths and weaknesses—and came and went, as is to be expected—they nonetheless accomplished good in their time and demonstrated that within the LCMS culture is a sincere desire to evangelize.

As noted above, in any given year, only about half of the approximately 6,150 LCMS congregations report adult confirmations. If the names of these three thousand congregations were flashed **one per second** on a screen, it would take **53 minutes** to see them all. On the face of it, this is discouraging. However, perhaps we can be encouraged in that the LCMS has an amazing unused capacity for outreach. Not discounting the power of the Gospel, some congregations are in such a state that they would have difficulty attracting new members from a human perspective; however, hundreds, maybe thousands, of the churches are sufficiently healthy to add new members if they took a few simple steps to do so.

The LCMS is a large denomination with the capacity to have a major impact on our country and world. Think of it this way: The LCMS has nearly as many congregations (6,150) as the combined number of Walmart (4,540)[19] and Target (1,795)[20] stores in the U.S. Very few people in the United States do not have one of these department stores within a convenient distance. While, admittedly, LCMS congregations are not as strategically placed, their capacity to make an incredible impact on our country should not discounted.

Another opportunity for outreach is to use our schools more effectively for evangelism. The scope of the opportunity is vast.

> More than 2,300 early childhood centers and preschools are operated by congregations and Christian day schools within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. More than 129,000 children, ranging in age from infant/toddler to five years of age, are involved in these programs. Additionally, our congregations operate 945 elementary schools, which serve 107,000 students.[21]

Around 25% of the children that attend our churches are un-churched.[22] Imagine the ideal scenario for evangelism: (1) a long-term relationship, (2) an understanding that the Gospel will be shared with someone in the family every day, and (3) involvement in a critical aspect of life. That is the situation with un-churched children in LCMS schools. We have the time to patiently develop a relationship and share the Gospel. Who has not heard the stories of un-churched children going home and insisting to pray at mealtime? Terry Schmidt, Director of Schools for the LCMS, comments:

> Many of our schools reflect the population demographic of their surrounding community. That creates many opportunities for mission and outreach. Last week 10 students at Concordia Pilgrim . . . were baptized. Baptisms at school chapel services are becoming quite common and are greatly celebrated. When the pastor engages his community through his Lutheran school the Holy Spirit works in powerful ways.[23]

While it is true that the *sitz im leben* in which we find ourselves in twenty-first-century America is not what the LCMS is accustomed to, it should be also recognized that these changes could in fact be opportunities.

To begin with, the new technologies that seem to be devised almost daily provide the church opportunities to communicate the Gospel in new and impactful ways. These media usually are not bound by geography and often have a global reach. Often new technologies allow access to a large number of people at a low or even no cost for the technology itself. While they are accessible and affordable, it is naïve to think that their uses do not require significant investment. Someone has to generate the content, monitor and analyze the activity, and follow up with those who are contacted. As we catechize adults, it is safe to say that new technologies have not been tapped as they could be. Can adult confirmation courses be taught online? Can we develop "flipped classrooms"?[24]

Beyond technology, the advent of postmodernism and the decline of modernism are not all bad. Modernism[25] was no great friend to Christianity. Its emphasis on the scientific method and the ability of people to solve their own problems runs directly counter to God's ability to act outside nature, as well as to the biblical doctrine of the depravity of man. History has also given modernism a well-deserved shellacking.

Choose your twentieth-century genocide of over one million:[26] Communist China, Nazi Germany, Congo, Communist Soviet Union, WWII Japan, Ottoman Turkey, Communist Cambodia, North Korea, Ethiopia, Biafra (Nigeria). Progress? While those who were raised in this modern milieu will find it comfortable, many aspects of it are incompatible with Christianity, and perhaps we should not grieve its passing as "those who have no hope."

Postmodernism, while no particular friend of Christianity either, especially in its deconstruction of the concept of truth, gives room to some elements that are not completely alien to a biblical perspective.

Alasdair MacIntyre, a Scottish philosopher, proposes forms that may find effective use by the church today: (1) community, (2) narrative, and (3) practices.[27] This perspective has been advocated by Dr. Joel Bierman as well.[28]

A community is a distinct group with which one may identify. The church is a community. In fact, the definition of the word εκκλησια as "called out" demonstrates the unique identity of the church. The book of Acts records the story of the nascent church as community to the point of adopting the concept of communal property (2:44–45) and intimate daily life: "And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:46–47a).

The church as community is a powerful force, both for the believer and the one yet to believe. For the believer, the community helps establish the identity of the individual: "This is who we are; this is who I am." The unbeliever may become a part of a Christian community by social association before theological confession. This concept is articulated in different ways: "They *belong* before they *believe*" or "The church loves them to Christ."

Secondly, narrative is the story of the community, whether large or small. The use of narrative is consistent with the Bible. In fact, one can argue that the Bible is in essence the narrative of God's interacting with His people. It is the story (in the non-fictional sense) of the events and people who share their identity of God's people from the creation. You can take your pick: the story of creation, the history of the people of Israel (especially how the narrative of the Exodus is recounted in the Passover), the parables of Jesus, and the like.

Narrative is like culture; it is present whether realized or not. A story is told. Unintentionally, congregations may develop an unwanted narrative. The treasurer's standing before the congregation on Christmas Eve and imploring a large offering to cover a financial shortfall tells a story. The clergy scandal of the Roman Catholic Church is an unfortunate part of their narrative. If attention is paid to the narrative, it can become a powerful tool to establish the identity of the congregation.

Finally, practice is the third component. Practice is how the community lives out its narrative. Practices are specific activities observed on a daily basis. Again, these

are intrinsic to the church, which, through the centuries, has been an advocate of particular practices, at times called rites or rituals. Sunday worship, liturgy, the monastic offices, meal prayers, and the so-called "quiet time" are but a few examples.

These are not new concepts that MacIntyre suggests. They have never been absent from the church. Perhaps it is time to discerningly wipe away that layer of dust that may have accumulated on them during the modern era and put them to good use again.

Conclusion

As we look at the current state of adult catechesis/adult confirmation in the LCMS, the following issues merit our conversation:

1. *A call for the renewal of adult catechesis*—This essential activity of the church has fallen out of our collective consciousness and receives insufficient attention. The trend lines are alarming. Membership in the LCMS is declining by about 100,000 baptized members every three years. More importantly, the number of people disconnected from Christ in the United States growing is by about one percent per year[29]—about three million souls. Adult catechesis/confirmation deserves to be on the agenda of the church at the local, district, and national level.
2. *A call for increased investment*—God willing, conversation about adult catechesis and renewal of the same will result in proposed new strategies and activities, which will require investment of human and financial resources. As best practices for adult confirmation are gathered and new technology deployed for the promulgation of the faith, choices will be faced regarding how to invest resources. Investment in this area is vital.
3. *Rebalance our approach for a new age*—The shift from modernism to postmodernism may require the rebalancing of the rhetoric used in adult catechesis. We at least need to inquire about how the rhetoric we use to present the faith to catechumens connects with them. How can we customize our approach to our specific audience?
4. *Create a catechetical culture with accountability*—We need to once again emphasize the importance of this ministry. In the same way that congregations create a culture by "telling the story," the church at large needs to do the same at all levels. When we tell the story of how *Shepherd of the Local Geographic Formation* confirmed a good number of people, it is the story of all of us. At some point, can accountability (or some dissonance) be created for those who do not confirm adults?

Is there hope? Do we have reason to believe that our beloved LCMS has the willingness and strength to be renewed to fulfill the Great Commission? There are

many, both within the church and outside of it, who may say that it is nearly impossible. However, a Barna study sponsored by LHM in one LCMS district uncovers a reason for hope and identifies our people as amazing indeed.

Perhaps you have heard the statistic from Barna's polling about the discouraging number of Christians who are able to identify the way of salvation. They asked those surveyed what they believe will happen when they die. The survey choices are either works-righteousness, universalistic, or this "right" answer: *"When you die you will go to heaven because you have confessed your sins and accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior."*

This question was asked in a survey commissioned by LHM as well. (The question about salvation was reworded to remove the word "accepted" to be more theologically accurate.) What was the percentage of lay members who chose the correct answer? **97 percent**! We should be truly amazed and encouraged by the finding![30] The Gospel is the essential power of mission (Rom 1:16); our people get the Gospel! What could be better? The good news continues. When asked if they had a personal responsibility to share the Gospel, **91 percent** either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

The people of the LCMS are theologically sound and willing to witness; that makes them an amazing people. We have reason, not only for hope, but for the expectation that God will do great things through His people by the power of the Gospel.

Endnotes

[1] _____ *Lutheran Annual 2013* (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House), 759. Throughout the article, statistics are taken from the *Lutheran Annual* of the appropriate year.

[2] After 1999, the Synod changed the way it counted adult confirmations. Previously, if a congregation did not submit an annual report, numbers from the previous year were included in the next year's report. Today, if there is no report, these numbers are reported as zeros. The method also applies to child baptisms, junior confirmations, and "total gains from outside."

[3] Gerhard Kittle and Gerhard Friedrick, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 422.

[4] Note that in the Greek the word for teach here is not a form of εκκλησια, but διδασκω.

[5] Those who are familiar with the annual statistical parish report for the Synod know that there is no distinct category to report adult baptisms. They are included in adult confirmation, based on the assumption that any adult that is baptized has been catechized.

[6] Mark Larson, "Thirty-four Congregations Top the List for Adults Confirmations" (*The Lutheran Layman*, Lutheran Hour Ministries, May-June 2013), 7–8.

[7] W. Leroy Biesenthal, *Dialog Evangelism* (St. Louis: Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Board for Evangelism, 1973).

[8] D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1970).

[9] "Conversion proper, that is, the creation of faith in the grace of God takes place in the moment in which the Holy Spirit kindles a spark of faith in the heart of a sinner." Frances Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House), vol II, 461.
[10] The change in the manner of reporting adult confirmations occurred between 1999 and 2000. The decrease in reported adult confirmations between those years was 7,973.
[11] For statistical year 2013, only 59% of congregation reported; http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/2013-statistics, accessed April 23, 2015.
[12] The change in the manner of reporting child baptisms occurred between 1999 and 2000. The decrease in reported child baptisms between those years was 12,076.
[13] Peter Drucker is credited with this saying. It was made famous in 2006 by Mark Fields, president of Ford Motor Company. Torben Rick, "Strategy or culture: Which is more important?" accessed April 23, 2015, http://www.torbenrick.eu/blog/culture/organisational-culture-eats-strategy-for-breakfast-lunch-and-dinner/.
[14] Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1996), 31.
[15] Perhaps we could say in a few words that this process could be compared to farming, an apt analogy since the Bible compares the Word of God to seed. When a farmer sows seed, he does not know how the seed grows, but he knows something. He knows that the soils should be tilled and fertile. He studies and experiments on the ideal planting depth and spacing. There must be moisture and warmth for the seed to sprout. After it sprouts, the faithful farmer continues to cultivate the crop, always waiting and looking toward the harvest. Is he assured of a harvest? By no means! Hail, drought, disease, and the like may rob even a diligent farmer of the harvest.
Christians sow the seed of the Word of God. They know the seed is good and produces fruit according to the Lord's will. Are there ways to more effectively scatter this seed and cultivate the field for a harvest? Are many congregations simply not scattering this seed outside their current membership? In the end, we do what we know to do, but rely on the Holy Spirit for the harvest.
[16] For a further discussion on this issue, see Dr. Robert Kolb's article in the *Concordia Journal*, Summer 2014.
[17] Rev. Dwayne Lueck, district president, Wisconsin North District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, e-mail, May 9, 2014.
[18] Concordia Publishing House, "New Member Education," accessed April 23, 2015, http://www.cph.org/c-1172-new-member-education.aspx?REName=Education&plk=1319.
[19] Walmart, "Our Locations," accessed April 23, 2015, http://corporate.walmart.com/our-story/our-business/locations/.
[20] Target, "Corporate Fact Sheet," accessed April 23, 2015, http://pressroom.target.com/corporate.
[21] The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, "Educating Our Children," accessed April 23, 2015, http://www.lcms.org/schoolministry.
[22] Terry Schmidt, Director of Schools, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, e-mail, May 1, 2014.
[23] Ibid.
[24]"The flipped classroom is a pedagogical model in which the typical lecture and homework elements of a course are reversed. Short video lectures are viewed by students at home before

the class session, while in-class time is devoted to exercises, projects, or discussions." http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eli7081.pdf, accessed April 23, 2015.

[25] http://anthropology.ua.edu/cultures/cultures.php?culture=Postmodernism and Its Critics, accessed April 23, 2015.

[26] http://www.scaruffi.com/politics/dictat.html, accessed April 23, 2015.

[27] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

[28] Joel Bierman, *Knowing Right from Wrong.* Lecture delivered at Lutheran Hour Ministries, St. Louis, MO. April 2014.

[29] Pew Research Center, "Nones on the Rise," accessed April 23, 2015, http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/.

[30] There are a couple of caveats to keep in mind. First, the survey was answered by people who regularly attend church. They were either at worship or a church meeting when the survey was administered, or they were committed people who cared enough to respond when asked. That would likely make the salvation response higher than, say, conducting a phone poll where respondents would self-identify as Lutheran, notwithstanding any connection to a congregation. In addition, the question was reworded to be more accurate theologically to Lutheran ears.

The Written Word Enriching Minds and Souls: a Case Study of the Function of the Religious Literature Provided by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS)

Sam L. S. Yeung (楊力生)

Abstract: This essay examines the function of the Literature Department as a provider of sound Lutheran literature on behalf of The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod. The paper notes the relevance of the written and proclaimed Word in Lutheran theology and the function of the written Word as God's means of enriching the human mind and soul. The paper then describes the service of the Literature Department of the LCHKS to its congregations and schools as well as to the Chinese audience worldwide, including a view of the historical origins of the department.

Relevance of the Written and Proclaimed Word in the Lutheran Theology

The origin of the Wittenberg Reformation, which was the inception of the Reformation as such, can be traced back to the discovery of theological category of the Word as transcending a simple aggregate of words which are said or notated.[1] For Luther and Melanchthon, the Word was a means of divine revelation and salvation because, by virtue of the Word, God revealed His condemnation of sin (Law) and His acceptance of sinners for Christ's sake (Gospel).

According to John 1:1 and 1 John 1:1–3, prior to the Incarnation, God the Son existed as the Word (Logos) that in time by operation of the Holy Spirit became a human being. That God-man, the Savior of the universe, was, on the one hand, living to fulfill the Law in place of sinners; on the other hand, He was teaching the Law and the Gospel, bringing the disclosure of who God is towards the world to completion.

Furthermore, Christ's disciples bore testimony to His person and to His work, and that testimony was finally recorded under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit so that the following generations could be exposed to the life-transforming

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proclamation of the divine benevolence founded on Christ's life and death in place of humankind.

From the Lutheran perspective, the Holy Spirit employs the Word to accomplish His twofold purpose: namely, to make all people aware of their original condition as defined by sin and to lavish on those sinners God's mercy and forgiveness, anchored in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The Word, by which the Spirit's agenda is carried out, cannot be reduced to a quote from the Scripture, but it is also an actualization of the biblical message in a written (religious literature) or oral (sermon) form.

Consequently, the Reformation theology postulated a multifaceted concept of the Word in the sense that the proclamation of the biblical truth made by every Christian in his or her own words stems from the biblical testimony to Christ as the very Word of the Father. It should be noted that the verbalization of the biblical message has a power integral to the Scripture on condition that the content of one's proclamation conforms to the biblical archetype.

Therefore, not only reading the Scripture but also all preaching and every piece of theological literature, as far as it corresponds to the biblical fountainhead, is invested by the Lord with a divine power to bring those who encounter it to faith, as well as with a divine power to sustain their faith until the very end. In the realm of salvation there is no activity or status unrelated to the Word. In addition to the written (Bible, literature) and proclaimed (sermon) Word, God has united His Word that conveys the remission of sins to the water (Baptism) and to the bread/body and wine/blood (Lord's Supper).

From the Scriptures, it is evident that God committed Himself to use His own Word to act upon His creatures and to be proactive within the world which He had created. Let us notice that according to Genesis 1:3, as interpreted in the light of John 1:3 and Hebrews 11:3, the world was called into being solely by means of the Word. Thus, both the creation of the universe and the restoration of fallen humankind to fellowship with God were mediated by the phenomenon of the Word.

Speaking of the distinctive features of Christian religion, it could be argued that the essence of Christianity is communicated as a meaningful message (propositional truth). Furthermore, the Great Commission implies that the Scripture and faithful expositions thereof must be translated into languages native to people to whom the whole counsel of God is to be preached.

The Augsburg Confession (Part I, Article V) and the section on "Comprehensive Summary, Rule and Norm" in the Formula of Concord (both Epitome and Solid Declaration) emphasize that to extend God's kingdom of grace meant, on the one hand, to preach the Gospel by means of which the Spirit changes human heart and, on the other hand, to inculcate and to fortify the knowledge and experience of the Gospel by continual preaching and teaching.

No formation or education in the Christian faith can be practiced without translating the Bible into languages native to the audience and apart from the religious literature available in people's tongues because neither the languages of the Scripture (Hebrew and Greek) nor the languages of the Reformation (Latin and German) are commonly used in far-flung Christian communities, especially in the Far East. Because Christianity is a religion of the *message*, not of magical rituals, it is obvious that not only the Bible, but also solid religious literature, ancillary to the Scripture, should be translated into the languages of the globe.

Written Word as God's Means of Enriching Human Mind and Soul

By means of the written Word, the Spirit is enriching both human understanding and the human soul and heart, since God's action upon a sinner is holistic. First, a sinner is declared innocent in God's sight on account of Christ's substitution. This act or verdict is called "justification." Second, a justified sinner is being renewed and brought into compliance with God's will. This process of transformation, which is never perfect or complete in earthly life, is termed "sanctification." Consequently, the justified human being is regarded (viewed) by God as holy with reference to Jesus' work, whereas the work of sanctification in a believer is an ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

In Lutheran theology, the renewal of human mind and the renewal of human soul (heart) are interrelated, because God-given faith leaves an imprint on the intellectual and volitive dimension of a human being. Although faith manifests itself in terms of will, faith should not be based on emotions or personal opinions, but rather must be embedded in Christ's person and work as revealed in the Scripture.

Therefore, the written Word conveying, explaining, analyzing, and discussing the biblical message, which could be labeled as the religious literature, is empowered to make an impact on its audience. This impact is twofold: intellectual, because human knowledge is enriched; and spiritual, given that the human heart and soul are regenerated and properly nourished.

Those two aspects of the Word's operation on human beings are truly interdependent, because the biblical message is both meaningful (the sphere of reason) and transforming (the sphere of heart). If the religious communication were not meaningful, it could not transform a recipient's heart, whereas the transforming proclamation must be meaningful because only the content of the proclamation, not the sheer act of proclaiming, can change a recipient's heart. Consequently, stark proclamation would be of no avail unless what is proclaimed is pregnant with the meaning that alters human status in God's eyes.

It could be argued that a vibrant translation activity in the Age of the Reformation arose not only from the necessity of disseminating the tenets of the Reformers, but also from the spiritual needs characteristic of every Christian

irrespective of time and place. Given that faith comes from hearing the message about Christ's redemption, the task of selecting, translating, and printing the valuable religious literature, which reflects, studies, and expounds the truth of the Scripture, eventuates from the necessity of sustaining (preservation) and spreading (mission) Christian faith. Therefore, the Age of the Reformation produced so many Bible translations (Luther's German Bible, the KJV, etc.), and most theological literature peculiar to the Wittenberg Reformation was accessible in both Latin and in German.

Consequently, Luther's Catechisms, which were originally composed in German, were translated into Latin, while Melanchthon's Loci (Theological Commonplaces), which were initially written in Latin, were translated into German under the auspices of their author.[2] Mindful of the spiritual potential inherent in a solid, comprehensive and lucid religious literature rooted in the Scripture, the Reformation literati labored through the rough seas of translation and did not hesitate to experiment in devising a theological vocabulary that previously did not exist in the vernacular languages but was unique to the ecclesiastical Greek and Latin.

Origin of LCHKS Literature Department

The history of the Literature Department is inseparable from the emergence of The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod (LCHKS) which originated from the mission activity of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Hong Kong.[3] In 1913, LCMS missionaries came to China in order to preach the Gospel along Yangtze River [长江] in the provinces Hubei [湖北省] and Sichuan [四川省]. In 1949, due to the change of the political situation in Mainland China, LCMS missionaries planned to return to the United States via Hong Kong. However, when the missionaries were staying in Hong Kong, they found there many refugees from Mainland China. Most of the refugees were speaking the dialect with which the missionaries were familiar. Thus, LCMS missionaries realized that Hong Kong, too, was a mission field, and they resolved to stay there. At the very beginning, they set up shelters for worship in Tiu Keng Leng [調景嶺] called also Rennie's Mill in English. Since at that place many refugees were living, the missionaries reached people in the public areas and on the streets.

Given that the mission activity could not be separated from the religious literature, the missionaries had to write, publish, and distribute evangelism materials, such as pamphlets and posters, among the refugees who were their target group. Since the very basic evangelism resources were indispensable for conveying the saving message, the Lutheran religious literature was developing rapidly.

One year after LCMS missionaries arrived at Hong Kong, namely in 1950, they were able to reprint the Chinese edition of *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*[4], which was based on the first Chinese translation of 1929. The latter was a memorial to the 400th anniversary of Luther's Small Catechism, which was

launched in 1529. In 1952 a revised translation was published[5] and, in the 1950s, the Chinese version of Luther's Small Catechism had been printed at least five times.[6] Moreover, the editions of 1954[7], 1958[8], 1965[9], and 1974[10] should be listed too.

Thus, the Gospel ministry by means of the Lutheran theological literature had been initiated prior to the formal establishment of the Literature Department because it would be inconceivable to build a Lutheran congregation without Lutheran theological materials translated into the native language, printed and shared with people. The solid theological literature produced by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, and later more specifically by the Literature Department thereof, provided a sort of standard and transparent confessional reference for the missionaries, native ministers, and new believers. This was simply a matter of identity. It is legitimate to say that without such materials a sense of Lutheran identity as distinct from the general Protestant mainstream would never have solidified in Hong Kong, where the most old and prevailing form of the Protestant Christianity was not Lutheran but rather associated, on the one hand, with the Anglo-Saxon dissenter and, on the other hand, with the Anglican Church (Sheng Kung Hui [香港聖公會]).

Luther's Small Catechism is still offered by the Literature Department, and it has been reprinted over ten times from 1949 onwards. In The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, the Small Catechism is used primarily in the courses preparing new believers for Baptism, and it indeed enjoys considerable popularity similar to that in the European or American Lutheran church bodies, regardless of their affiliation. In practical terms, it could be argued that, among the documents belonging to the Book of Concord, Luther's Small Catechism is best known to common believers.

In 1962, Victor Hafner, LCMS missionary, moved to Hong Kong from Taiwan and commenced teaching in Concordia Theological Seminary operated by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod. Rev. Hafner was also appointed to establish formally the Literature Department of LCHKS, which took place in 1962. He was the first Director of the Department and was also engaged in recruiting numerous part-time volunteers who helped the ministry to grow. Since 1970, the Literature Department has begun employing the full-time staff and thus became more professional.

From the historical point of view, the objective of the Literature Department was twofold. On the one hand, the Department has been established to nourish and to fortify faith and understanding of LCHKS members. On the other hand, the Department has ventured to share the Gospel in its Lutheran circumscription beyond The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, given that the literature produced was available to everyone who was able to read Chinese characters.

The LCHKS Literature Department as a Provider of Lutheran Religious Literature for a Chinese Audience

The religious literature produced by the Literature Department is comprehensive because it embraces positions instrumental in the mission work and evangelism within the primary and secondary schools run by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod. Consequently, this literature not only communicates Christ to adults and children within the reach of LCHKS but also engages the Christian community by means of sophisticated projects, such as Chinese edition of Luther's Works. The latter endeavor is aimed at promoting the tenets of sixteenth-century Lutheran theology in Chinese.

The Literature Department has been established as a publishing hand of The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod. Thus, the Department has been tasked with conveying and explicating the biblical truth to LCHKS ministers, teachers, and students and with instilling the core values of LCHKS (Commitment - Compassion - Community) in them.

From a pragmatic perspective, the Literature Department provides what The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod really needs, because comprehensive instruments of instruction and edification consistent with a conservative Lutheran theology are secured. Therefore, LCHKS is equipped to deliver the saving message to non-Christians, to help its members grow in spiritual terms, to train the candidates for the ministry, and to facilitate a theological development of its ministers.

In Hong Kong there are many Christian publishers, but most of them would lack a definitive denominational identity. Therefore, their offerings are diversified and are seldom focused on the one area of theological literature. It is common to see that Hong Kong publishing houses, including Christian publishers, must be market-oriented and thus often prove to be merely receptive to and respond to the interests of their anticipated audience.

For these reasons, in my opinion, Protestant churches in Hong Kong should not resign from their publishing activity precipitately. Rather, Protestant church bodies are obligated to preserve, contextualize, and promote their literary legacies, which should be precious to their members. Church publishers should be proactive, and, instead of following the preferences of their audience, they ought to stimulate the interests of their readers.

As the sole publishing house of The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, which is one of the largest Chinese Lutheran churches, the Literature Department is dedicated to making Lutheran resources accessible to the Chinese audience of Hong Kong, Macau, Mainland China, and Taiwan, while not losing sight of overseas Chinese in the United States, in Canada, or in the Far East (in Malaysia for instance).

Nonetheless, the Literature Department is not intent on competing with other Hong Kong publishers in terms of a number of titles but rather on ensuring the Lutheran character of its publications so that LCHKS congregations and schools might be convinced of the confessional integrity of its offerings.

The groundbreaking (at least from the Chinese perspective) publication that originated from The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, was Luther's Small Catechism, as already noted.

In 1969, the Chinese version of the Book of Concord[11] was completed by Erhardt Riedel, who was a second LCMS missionary to China and eighty years old at its completion. The Chinese version of the Book of Concord has been used by all Chinese Lutheran churches, not only by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod.

In 1986 the Literature Department launched a classic textbook of the conservative Lutheran theology by John Theodore Mueller[12], which could be construed as an epitome of Francis Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*. The Chinese version of Mueller's compendium[13] was translated by Erhardt Riedel, and it became a standard textbook for teaching Lutheran doctrine at Concordia Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. By virtue of that single-volume course in the Lutheran systematic theology, both the candidates for the ministry and those already serving in the ministry could refine their understanding of the Lutheran tradition. In connection with Mueller's masterpiece, it is appropriate to refer another seminal work, namely to Walther's *Law and Gospel*, which was translated into Chinese[14] in 1989.

At the turn from the twentieth to the twenty-first century, the Literature Department, aided by LCHKS and the LCMS, initiated the project of the Chinese edition of Luther's writings, which was defined as a Chinese adaptation of the American 54-volume edition (Luther's Works). The project of transplanting Luther's writings into Chinese is undertaken by partners in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan, and in the United States. The Chinese edition of Luther's works is supposed to embrace fifteen volumes, with each volume containing approximately half a million of Chinese characters. By 2015 the Editorial Committee, which has been formed, identified which of Luther's writings might be considered to be most relevant from the Chinese perspective.

Regarding the structure of the Chinese edition of Luther's works, four categories were identified: (1) Reformation Writings, (2) Faith and Society, (3) Commentaries, and (4) Sermons. The entire edition is to be published both in the traditional Chinese characters (繁体中文), which are still commonly used in Hong Kong and in Taiwan, and in the simplified Chinese characters (简化字), which prevail in Mainland China.

Since the project of the Chinese edition of Luther's works is aimed at acquainting the Chinese audience in the Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and in the Chinese Diaspora with Luther's legacy and at inspiring Luther scholarship in the Chinese world, it is worthwhile involving major Mainland

publishers so that the aforementioned edition can be available in official bookshops and might enjoy all privileges of books published legally.

Given that Luther studies are flourishing in Mainland China, the aforementioned edition will be in demand. Such a project is certain to face challenges. First, a pool of professional translators endowed with a theological expertise is limited. Second, there are not many Chinese Luther scholars experienced in the field of translation who can serve as editors in that project. By August 2015 the first[15] and second[16] volumes of the Chinese edition of Luther's works have been released. The next three volumes are anticipated in the foreseeable future.

In view of its mission, the Literature Department is committed to serve The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod and the Chinese Lutheran community worldwide by providing Chinese theological materials expressive of conservative Lutheran theology. At the same time, the Literature Department explores a variety of theological fields and topics, which could be relevant to the anticipated audience. Therefore, the Department envisages diversifying its offerings in order to cover the major areas of the Protestant theology: biblical studies (OT & NT), systematic theology, practical theology and spirituality, as well as church history. Needless to say, the amount of meaningful and sound Lutheran texts circulating in English is overwhelming. Thus, the translation of them would be beneficial to the Chinese Protestant Christianity and particularly to the Chinese Lutheran communities.

Speaking of the contribution of the Literature Department to the Lutheran theology in Chinese, more publications should be mentioned. In 1992 the Department cooperated in publishing a selection of Luther's texts on faith and society[17] edited by Rev. Dr. Ip Tai Cheong, the incumbent President of Concordia Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. In the sphere of Lutheran worship, the liturgical agenda by Erhardt Riedel[18] and the works by Daniel W. Lee[19] are to be mentioned. In addition, the Literature Department published a contemporary Lutheran catechism[20] and spirituality studies.[21]

The Specific Function of the Religious Literature in LCHKS Schools

In considering The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod, no one should lose sight of its schools and social services (Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service). To be precise, the congregations, schools, and social services constitute the LCHKS as it is known to us today. In this respect, it can be said that the Lutheran witness, which historically originated from LCMS mission activity in Hong Kong, was well-balanced, unifying the parish life and the schools and charity services to Hong Kong society.

In 2015 there were twenty-two kindergartens, six primary schools, six secondary schools, four night schools and two special schools operated by the LCHKS in Hong Kong. Moreover, The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod runs an international

school in Hong Kong (Concordia International School Hong Kong), administers two international schools in the Mainland China (Shenzhen and Foshan), and is developing two new international schools, one on the Mainland and the other in Macau. Thus, teachers and staff within the LCHKS school system can be estimated at one thousand persons, while the number of students exceeds twenty thousand.

Religious curriculum and spiritual activities are permissible within the Hong Kong school system, which to a large extent relies on the schools established and operated by church bodies and charitable organizations. Therefore, the schools run by the churches can keep a religious profile.

The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod fosters cooperation between its schools and its congregations that are located on the school premises. In view of the religious curriculum to which every church body operating a school is entitled, the LCHKS takes the opportunity of providing religious instruction within its schools. For this purpose, suitable religious instructors must be trained. Those who teach religious subjects must be Christians and should be trained at Concordia Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. Thus, the theological integrity of the religious instruction delivered within LCHKS schools is ensured. Neither training religious instructors nor the religious instruction in itself would be possible without proper materials.

Regarding secondary education, in Hong Kong there are approximately 150 Christian secondary schools. Accordingly, two types of religious textbooks might be identified. Some textbooks are published by denominational publishers and others by trans-denominational publishing houses. Since in the Hong Kong context a process of developing new school resources always involves significant manpower and funding, in practical terms it is debatable whether new religious materials for the schools must be prepared and released.

Nevertheless, it transpires that none of the textbooks mentioned above really conform to the doctrinal standards adhered to by the LCHKS. Thus, the question arises whether a conservative Lutheran curriculum should be advanced if the materials available at present do not serve completely a purpose delineated by The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod.

In 2012, the LCHKS formed the Committee on the Christian Moral and National Education, which is intended to work with the Literature Department on developing a complete series of the religious textbooks designed for the LCHKS secondary schools. The Committee invited senior ministers and teachers serving in the LCHKS to author and to edit that series in line with the principles of the conservative Lutheran theology, which shall be presented in a vivid way to the Hong Kong Chinese audience of the twenty-first century. The initial volumes of that series are anticipated in late 2015, while the entire project might be finished in 2017. Afterwards, the Literature Department is tasked with preparing the religious resources for LCHKS kindergartens (including songbooks) and primary schools.

However, it should be emphasized that the Literature Department has already equipped LCHKS kindergartens[22], as well as primary[23] and secondary[24] schools, with some materials which, while distinctively Lutheran, were yet not comprehensive enough.

Conclusion

From the Lutheran perspective, God acts towards the universe and upon humankind by means of His Word. By the divine Word, the Lord continues to enrich minds and souls of those who trust His promises. God's very Word is Christ, to whom testimony was borne by His disciples as guided by the Holy Spirit. As a consequence of that testimony, the New Testament solidified and was counted among the sacred writings by the early Christians. Ultimately, the message of the Bible must be communicated to people from all walks of life in their native language, which usually happens either by sermons or through religious literature. The latter is the reason why the Literature Department exists.

Observing a genuine proliferation of Luther studies in Asia[25] and holding them in reverence, The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod contributes to those efforts so that Luther's heritage and the Lutheran legacy can reverberate once more, this time in the Chinese-speaking parts of Asia.

Endnotes

[1] The present section draws on the following positions: Paul Timothy McCain, ed., *Concordia The Lutheran Confessions: A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006). Edward W. A. Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine: A Popular Presentation of the Teachings of the Bible* ([s. l.]: [s. n.], 1952). John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers and Laymen* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1934). Heinrich Schmidt, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Verified from the Original Sources*, trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1889).

[2] 岳誠軒,（墨蘭頓的「德文教義要點」(1556年)──更正教神學教導的本色化嘗試,《山道》, 期 29 (2012)：頁112–141.

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[5] (Hong Kong: 福音道路德會書報部, 1952).

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[13] John Theodore Mueller, 《基督教教義學》 [*Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers and Laymen*], trans. Erhardt Riedel (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 1986).
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[15] Martin Luther,《路德文集卷一-改革文獻I》[*Chinese Edition of Luther's Works*], vol. 1 (Reformation Writings I), ed. Andrew Ng Wai Man (Hong Kong: Literature Department LC-HKS, 2003).
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[17] Martin Luther,《路德文集-信仰與社會》[*Luther's Works on Faith and Society*], ed. Ip Tai Cheong (Hong Kong: Concordia Welfare and Education Society, 1992).
[18] Erhardt Riedel,《聖事儀式》[*Liturgy*], (Hong Kong: Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Hong Kong Mission, 1959).
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[21] Gene Edward Veith,《十字架的神髓—路德的靈命觀》[*The Spirituality of the Cross: The Way of the First Evangelicals*], trans. Peter Kwong-sang Li and Daniel Kam-to Choi (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 2004).
[22]《新編生命種子廿一世紀學前教育宗教課程》[*A New Seed of Life in the 21st Century Preschool Religious Education*] (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 2008).
[23]《學校詩歌》[*Primary School Hymnal*] (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 1977).《小學聖經課程》[*Primary School Religious Education*] (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 1977).
[24]《樂弦──頌歌詩選》[*Praise*] (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 2003).
《豐盛的生命靈德課程》[*Abundant Life: A Spiritual and Moral Education*] (Hong Kong: Literature Department LCHKS, 2015).
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Teaching Cross-Cultural Evangelism

Jim Found

Abstract: Evangelism is conducted within human cultures and is supported by knowledge and understanding of cultural contexts. To that end, this article presents frameworks for lifelong learning about cultures and religions, provides basic premises for learning to announce the salvation message in the context of a given culture, and illustrates the importance of familiarity with the culture for the nurture and support of new Christians.

I have been teaching about how to share the Gospel with people of other cultures and religions ever since 1997, following my return from serving on Taiwan. A complete study of a new culture is a lifelong project, and so I felt my role as a teacher was to provide frameworks for lifelong learning. I believe that one learns as one takes a concept and then does something with it—in this case, deciding where it fits into one of the frameworks. These frameworks at the same time enable a person new to the field to know what to learn in order to get started, that is, by learning enough about a new culture to make friends, learning enough about the new religion to explain the Gospel, and learning enough about the culture's attitude toward religious change to be supportive in the challenges faced by a new Christian. I hope these approaches will help you in your teaching.

Understanding a New Culture

Following are some frameworks into which students can place the welter of facts they are learning about a new culture. First, they can create a grid to record how a given group of people treats major life events by listing life events on the left side and the ways that they are treated along the top. For example, some cultures treat a funeral as a family affair, and others as a communal affair. This tool helps students to analyze a culture in a systematic way and provides ideas for questions they can ask the people in that culture. Students would analyze their own culture as well as the culture they are learning about.[1]

The "onion diagram" created by Dr. Gene Bunkowske[2] is a valuable tool for analysis. It places someone's first impression of a new culture, "what is seen," as the

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outermost of a series of concentric circles. Each layer represents a deeper insight into that culture, finally reaching the center, called "ultimate allegiance." That allegiance might be to a local god, to the tribe, and often to family. The circle adjacent to the center is labeled "worldview"; the rest of the circles serve as paths to apprehending that worldview.

Another useful activity is constructing "contrasting pairs" of attitudes, such as "time-oriented versus event-oriented," in which the students determine where the culture fits along the spectrum between the two extremes. Students themselves can create more such pairs.[3] It is important to note that an individual one meets in another culture may deviate from his own culture's norms to some degree. The desire to find out what that individual really thinks helps to determine what to talk about with him.

Pointers for those planning to enter a new culture include the following: (1) See yourself as a learner, not as one who knows all the answers and needs to enlighten those to whom you are sent. (2) See yourself as a servant, not as a criticizer. (3) Be determined to adapt to the customs of the culture, even those you do not agree with. (One American I knew who came to Taiwan seemed to be on a personal crusade to break down the taboos of the locals and free them up to be more like Americans. His actions actually impeded building trust with the host culture). (4) Be content to take the role of guest. You will never be an insider, but being a guest gives people of the other culture a chance to show hospitality and frees you from the unspoken obligations expected of a native. On Taiwan, for example, there are unwritten rules of gift-giving, which the foreign visitor is not expected to know. (5) Regard your feelings of dependency as an asset for bonding. (You're giving the host people a chance to play the role of helper.) (6) Visualize cultural barriers such as language, age, and differences in education level or social stratum as "stepping stones" to be crossed.

Language study is an essential part of understanding a culture. Many characteristics of a culture are embedded in its expressions and proverbs. Using the heart language engages you more deeply in conversation. Asking for help in the language is a method for getting to know people. On Taiwan, I used to carry a photo album of my family as a conversation starter to use while riding on the bus. Since language learning is also a lifelong process, I advise people to take charge of their learning process by deciding on a life activity they prefer. It could range from ordering food or mailing a package to leading a small group Bible study. As students reach each goal, they have a sense of accomplishment, which encourages them to keep going toward the next goal.

Understanding a Religion

As a framework for the study of a culture's religion, I encouraged students to place the facts they were learning into categories. At a minimum, these should include the religion's view of God, of the human problem, of the hoped for solution (salvation), and of the means toward that solution. I also used Ninian Smart's seven categories for the study of religion (rituals, stories, ethics and laws, doctrines, spiritual experiences, organization, and objects) as ways for them to organize their findings.[4]

As the student researches the culture and religion, he is looking for the words and illustrations that will help to communicate the salvation message. After all, this is how God has communicated with us. When God talked to Abraham, He did not expect Abraham to learn a new vocabulary. God used the familiar Canaanite word for God; and God used the culturally familiar way to make a covenant. As time passed, God, through His actions, filled these terms and concepts with richer meaning. It has been the same every time God's message has crossed to a different culture. Each time, the presenter had to use the words and customs of the receiving culture and gradually fill them with the biblical meaning.[5] I regard the attempt to express God's message using the words and concepts of the receiving culture as my working definition of the word "contextualization."

Communicating the Message

No matter what country the students go to, their life of genuine love and willing servanthood does make an impression and may lead to relationships with people, but the Gospel itself is a message that is to be expressed in words. The framework I use to teach the Gospel message is based on the four topic areas that are found in the Gospel conversations in the Book of Acts[6] : (1) the reason a savior is needed, (2) the person and work of Christ, (3) inviting a response, and (4) proclaiming the benefits promised through faith in Christ. This framework can be stated briefly as "Problem-Answer-Response-Benefits." It provides a way to organize the new insights and illustrations accumulated through the years, but it is also simple enough to guide a believer in presenting the Gospel.

The first topic, "problem," has to do with separation from God due to sin, which leads to symptoms such as guilt and to a consequence: eternal punishment. This is the topic on which students offer ongoing insights into ways to teach about God's Law in the new culture.[7] On Taiwan, one soon learns that there is a difficulty in using the word that the Chinese Bible uses for "sin." This word in everyday usage means "crime," that is, something you could be sent to prison for. Thus, the normal reaction to being told you are a sinner is "but I have not done anything worthy of being sent to prison." On Taiwan, I did not use that word for sin when introducing the Gospel, but rather said "did wrong" or "disobeyed God." A Chinese Christian

gradually picks up the content of the Christian usage of the word "sin" through exposure to its usage in the Bible.

"Answer," the second topic, is the heart of the Gospel. The "answer" is Jesus—who He is and how He has brought about atonement. For this category, the student searches for culturally meaningful ways to explain such biblical concepts as ransom, substitution, sacrifice, and victory over Satan.[8]

In cross-cultural sharing, you are involved in a process involving three cultures: the original Hebrew culture into which God embedded His message, your own culture, and the receiving culture. Sometimes the receiving culture is more similar to the original culture than your own is! Don't overlook going back to the original culture to get ideas for explaining concepts. Since the people of Taiwan are accustomed to temples and ceremonies, in follow-up conversations I like to explain atonement by talking about the lid on the covenant box in Solomon's temple, where wrongdoing was forgiven by the application of blood.

I believe that the third topic, "response," should be presented as a gracious invitation to believe rather than as a law to be obeyed. That does not mean your friend will actually repent and believe at that moment, because that response is brought about by the Holy Spirit. But Peter and Paul did not neglect to tell people what the response would look like. On Taiwan, faith needs to be explained carefully as a trusting in the heart, not just an outward conformity, because the people are accustomed to showing allegiance to gods in outward forms, such as feasts and bowing with incense sticks. In many cases, families are not troubled when a member announces a belief in Jesus, but resistance appears when it "becomes real" to them through a public act, such as Baptism.

The fourth topic, "benefits," is clearly Gospel in nature, because it consists of God's promises. Many of these promises correspond to the problems that surfaced in topic one. For example, "forgiveness" is the answer to "guilt," and "acceptance" is the answer to "shame"; thus, this framework is usable whether the culture is guilt-oriented or shame-oriented.[9] Chinese culture through the years has valued "becoming truly human" through the cultivation of virtue. Many who have this ideal also recognize they are not living up to it. It is meaningful to them that the new life brought by faith in Jesus produces the very result, such as the fruit of the Spirit, that the culture values.

These four topics are useful aids for understanding any world religion. When a person discovers what each world religion believes about these four topics, it becomes apparent that most religions place the "self" as the "answer" called for in topic two, and so they are without a savior. This makes it obvious that the salvation message is truly "good news."

The four-topic framework organizes the content for an evangelism conversation in a way that avoids a mechanical approach; yet it gives definite direction. Just as

Peter touched on all four topics, but used different words each time, we hope our students will continuously expand their insights into each of the four topics so that they will be able to share them by using words and illustrations suitable for the listener. Using the framework keeps our focus on our role, which is to pass along the message, as opposed to passing along an experience that the listener should try to copy. God will give the new believer his own experiences. The framework must never become a limitation on the course of the conversation; one trusts that the Holy Spirit will guide, and afterwards one believes that the Spirit can use whatever was shared. Even if all four topics are not brought up in a single conversation, one can remember what has not yet been shared and bring it up at another time. Each of the four does not have to be shared at great length, because it is from the listener's feedback that one knows which concepts require more clarification. It is important to help the student learn the skills that will allow the conversation to go forward.

Conversation Skills

To teach conversation skills, I use a framework briefly stated as "avoid cut-offs and misunderstandings, and watch for handles and bridges." I urge the students to avoid saying things that would unnecessarily terminate the conversation, to search for ways to cope with misunderstandings, and to bring up the Gospel in a natural and relevant way. By "handles" I mean making use of some element of the person's religion, and by "bridges" I mean connecting with a person's human problems or aspirations.

As an example of an unnecessary cut-off, consider a conversation with a Muslim friend. The friend has probably been told that calling Jesus the "Son of God" means God conceived Jesus with Mary in a human way. Because the evangelist's research would have alerted him to this probability, he would avoid using that phrase early in the conversation or without a full explanation, knowing that the Muslim would regard that title as blasphemy

An example of a misunderstanding would be using the Chinese word for god. Chinese have many deities, so it is not clear if I simply use the word "god." I preferred to say "the God who made everything." That does not mean I thought the listener believed that there is a God who made everything, but it was as a way to denote the God I was talking about. Another noted example of misunderstanding involves the listener in India who had to explain to an evangelist why people were not responding to his call to be "born again." He said, "That is the very thing we are trying to avoid." In cross-cultural sharing, it is not unusual for a person to misunderstand what you said. You must rely on asking and listening and re-expressing and finding illustrations to help the receiver of your message come closer to grasping the intended meaning.

Handles and Bridges

Using a "handle" to make a transition to conversation about Jesus is done by listening until you hear something that reminds you of one of the four topics. For example, imagine a conversation with a Muslim friend. He states that one admirable quality of his beliefs is "submission to God." You recognize your friend has brought up a word relating to topic three (response) and that he (not you) has moved the conversation into the salvation message. You might then say, "Submitting to God is really important to me too." By saying this, you are affirming the importance of the topic he has brought up, and so now you are together in topic three of the salvation message. You then want to make a transition to topic one (problem), and you might do so by continuing with "but I'm aware of how often I'm not very submissive. Can I tell you more about that?" If your friend agrees, you then talk about topic one: about your sinful nature, how it fills you with guilt, and how you deserve to be punished by God. You may ask your friend if he can relate to any of those feelings. Your purpose then is to move from topic one to topic two. You might say, "But even though I deserve to be punished, I know that God will give me eternal life. May I tell you why?" If your friend agrees, he has given you permission to share the Gospel with him—the meaning of Christ's death and the significance of His resurrection.

This same approach can be used when your friend reveals a problem in his life. If the problem is "lack of meaning," you notice that he has initiated the Gospel conversation for you by bringing up something that belongs to topic one (problem). If it is "hope for eternal life," you realize that he has brought up topic four (benefits). In all cases, you then attempt to use his statement as a "bridge" to approach the salvation message and then try to touch on each of the four topics.

Your goal is that your friend will eventually understand these four topics, no matter whether it is during a single conversation or a series of conversations. You become better at witnessing as you understand the four topics more thoroughly, and as you consider how to present each topic in a way that your friend will understand. When you know your friend has heard the message, you ask what he thinks about it, and his reply shows you what to do next.

Answering Objections

The person to whom you are witnessing may finally understand the message, but not accept it. You then ask what part of the message he does not agree with, and that reveals the area that needs further conversation. For example, if he says he is not a sinner, you can proceed by telling him why you know you are a sinner. On the other hand, he may agree that he is a sinner, but not agree that Jesus can be of any help to him. Or, as someone on Taiwan said to me, "I would rather pay for my own sins." Remember that your friend's revelation of his feelings to you is precious. His answers have enabled you to discover that the Holy Spirit has not yet brought him to

saving faith. You cannot bring this change about by arguing, but you can converse together as friends about his viewpoints, while continuing to share the Gospel, for it is the Gospel that is "the power of God unto salvation." Lack of acceptance does not necessarily mean you did something wrong. You rest in the confidence that, since the message is now in the person's memory, the Holy Spirit can use it at the right time to draw the person to faith. A survey taken on Taiwan in the 1970s revealed that those who became Christians said that they had rejected the Gospel seven times (on average) before they came to faith.

I think some Christians are reluctant to begin a Gospel conversation because they are afraid objections will come up that they can't answer. Therefore, I tell students that evangelism and meeting objections are two different things. If you share the Gospel message, but your friend does not agree with your answer to one of his objections, you still have evangelized. The value of talking about objections is that it prolongs the conversation and makes it possible to deepen your friendship. Do not regard your conversation partner as an opponent; rather, look at him as a friend seeking the truth together with you.[10]

In my first extended Gospel conversation on Taiwan, the "answering objections" phase went on for three months. Fortunately for me, since I was only at the beginning stages of learning the language and culture, the person's English was good enough to enable us to communicate, and his objections were not specific to his culture. What he brought up were the universal objections you might hear from anyone, such as wondering why the innocent suffer. As I look back now, I doubt that I answered each objection so thoroughly that my response couldn't be disputed. But my friend did hear that there was an alternative to his viewpoint, and that was enough for him to move on to his next question.

That experience has led me to tell students that even if we do not have an "indisputable" answer to a given objection, we can still say why the existence of the objection has not caused us to lose our faith in God. That is always an authentic answer. After three months, my friend finally did say something specific to his culture: "If I became a Christian, my mother would get angry." When I heard that, I was encouraged. It meant that he had been pondering the possibility. I looked at it not as a hard-core objection, but as an "excuse." The remedy was not argument but encouragement. I told him that he was probably right, but that many others had gone through this experience, and God had given them the grace to endure. Later that same night, he did profess faith in Christ. His mother did later come to terms with her son's change of religions, and she began going to church too.

Supporting a New Believer

After your friend makes a profession of faith, your need for cultural understanding increases so that you can stand by him as undergoes the possible

rejection by family and the loss of his support system. You will arrange for his Baptism, and ideally the pre-Baptism instruction will be by a local pastor in your friend's heart language. You'll want to share the Bible verses that provide assurance and show him what he has become in Christ.[11] In terms of the onion diagram, his ultimate allegiance has changed to God, and this allegiance will work its way outward through the other layers to affect his values, behavior, and stewardship of material things. Guiding this process is one way to understand the term "discipling."

You can make use of the "four topics" as a framework for your friend's daily Christian life, which is a life of confessing sin, remembering Christ's work and turning to Him in faith, thus being reminded again of forgiveness and eternal life. You need to help him think through which of his previous life customs are compatible with his new faith and which need to be discarded. On Taiwan, for example, the new Christian will regularly face the decision about whether to eat food offered to idols. The local congregation probably has already come to a consensus about this and similar issues, such as ancestor worship. Some churches have a formal ceremony in which the family altar is taken down and burned. You need to find out why the surrounding culture may feel threatened by someone's becoming a Christian and help the new believer find ways to show friends and family that he has not rejected them. Traditional Chinese religion teaches that those who pass away are still dependent on their descendants to provide for them in the afterlife by burning money or objects; thus, parents would fear that a descendant who becomes a Christian will not make those offerings. A crisis for many believers on Taiwan occurs at a funeral, because the well-being of the deceased is thought to depend on family members' participation in the ceremonies. Several of my friends faced this dilemma, because they felt conscience-bound not to take part. After much prayer, they asked permission of the family to be allowed to stand there and pray, rather than do the ceremonies, and in many cases the families assented. The problems in cross-cultural work seem overwhelming, but God is able to overcome them.

Endnotes

[1] Examples of grids for analyzing a culture are at http://foundbytes.com/knowing-culture/.

[2] The onion diagram is copyright © 2011 Eugene W. Bunkowske, PhD. To see it and more about using it, please go to http://foundbytes.com/onion/.

[3] Detailed examples are given in chapter 2, "Characteristics of Worldviews," in Paul G. Hiebert's *Transforming Worldviews* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2008), 31ff.

[4] Ninian Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World's Beliefs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.)

[5] Bringing God's Word to the Greeks required the use of the pagan word, *"theos,"* to the Latins the pagan word "*Deus*," to the Germans the pagan word "*Gott*," and to the English the pagan word "God." It was God's self-revelation in Scripture that filled these pagan terms with their biblical meaning. Since the Chinese have many deities, I usually introduced our Lord as "the God who made everything." That does not mean that I thought they believed that there was a God who made everything, but rather it served as a way to denote the God I was talking

about. The origin of the term contextualization and its numerous definitions are provided in chapter 12 of Michael Pocock, et. al., *The Changing Face of World Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005).

[6] These places are Acts 2:22–38; 3:13–21; 4:10–12; 5:29–32; 10:34–44 and Paul's message in Acts 13:23–39. I do not find all four in Paul's speech in Athens. The four topics are also found in Romans 3:22–25; Ephesians 2:1–13; and Titus 3:3–7. And there are also many verses that simply give more detail about one of the four topics. These four constitute most of what scholars call the "kerygma," which means "that which is announced."

[7] Each chapter of J. A. O. Preus's *Just Words* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000) presents a real-life example of someone's experiencing the need for salvation, along with a matching word of Gospel for that need.

[8] Page 130 of Richard R. Caemmerer's *Preaching for the Church* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959) consists of a comprehensive list of the descriptions and benefits of Christ's work.

[9] The entire January 2015 issue of *Mission Frontiers* (Pasadena: U. S. Center for World Mission) is devoted to understanding honor/shame cultures.

[10] Suggestions for discussing objections and excuses are at http://foundbytes.com/meeting-objections/.

[11] Suggestions for helping a new Christian are at http://foundbytes.com/overall/.

Mission in Crisis

Kurtis Smith

Abstract: In recognition of the tenth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, this article addresses the missiological aspects of critical incidents (large and small disasters) and presents best practices for these fertile mission fields that are often "ripe for harvest." Small crises can change individual lives. Massive disasters can transform entire institutional systems, economics, language, and even the nature of mission work. Through trauma and shared travail, people learn new patterns for life. This article proposes that (a) Christians in mission can respond to crises and help turn such events into "transformissional" moments, (b) the *missio Dei* might be helpfully defined as "a heavenly disaster response to the crisis of a broken world," and that (c) the church's practices in mission and ministry reflect the emergency of God's passionate restoration of paradise in Christ's gutsy response.

Introduction

A "disaster industry" thrives in the wake of 9/11, tsunamis in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, hurricanes like Katrina, the earthquakes in Haiti and Nepal, and various other natural or human-caused incidents, such as the refugee crisis from war in the Middle East, school shootings, and data hacking. Disaster experts say that "the U.S. has made crucial progress in disaster readiness."[1]

Former Executive Director for the State of Minnesota's Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board, Pam Biladeau, holds a Master's Degree in Homeland Defense and Security from the Naval Postgraduate School and certifications as an Emergency Manager, Firefighter, and Emergency Medical Technician. Biladeau is also an active Lutheran follower of Jesus. She, too, believes the United States has made progress in disaster readiness. "We have greatly developed our preparedness and response systems as well as volunteer management—since Hurricane Katrina."[2]

In addition, Biladeau references Psalm 127 in the context of disaster response, "Our preparedness and response structure, through the National Incident Management System, is much stronger and more developed than ever before, but I

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believe all the relief efforts in the world languish and become stagnant without Jesus. Scripture tells us that unless the Lord builds the house, it is useless for the builders to work on it."[3]

Certainly, we have learned much about disasters in the past ten years. While acknowledging the value of updated disaster preparedness, crisis management, and crisis communication plans, this article will focus on mission matters. If Christians are to respond well to Biladeau's call for crisis response in the name of Jesus, missiologists must provide helpful language, insights, and strategies for responding to such a mission field. There are also benefits to thinking about mission in light of disaster response as a whole.

The Disaster Field as Mission Field—Mission Metaphors Explored

After Hurricane Katrina, I had the privilege of working professionally with thousands of Christian volunteers over the course of the next five years. Many people from the region, like me, recognized the incredible outpouring of Christian love along the Gulf Coast. One conversation I vaguely recall talked about how followers of Jesus were motivated. The conversation concluded, "Christian compassion comes from our guts." I'm not entirely sure who made the comment; it wasn't me, but the phrase certainly struck me.

When we study the New Testament Greek word frequently translated as "compassion," σπλαγχνιζομαι, we learn about an emotional reaction from our guts or bowels.[4] However, the English word "compassion" seems to fall a bit short to illustrate the depth of Jesus' response from His guts in such passages as Matthew 9:36–38, Matthew 15:30–32, Mark 1:40–42, or Mark 15:32. Followers of Jesus, filled with His Spirit, do reflect His response to people in need—from their guts. Christian volunteers do bring more than natural help. Followers of Jesus carry into disaster scenarios the supernatural Lord of the wind and the waves. They represent a God who brings to storms of life a peace that passes all understanding. They offer means of grace, mutual consolation, and hope.

In what might be characterized as a somewhat ironic evangelistic move, a Somali Muslim friend of mine once gave me the following bumper sticker: "Those who are sure of their outcome are the most generous." Followers of Jesus know that this world is not their home, and they are sure of their future. Because of that fact, they are often willing to sacrifice their belongings, their bodies—in fact, their entire lives—for the sake of others and not themselves or their own salvation.

Effective disaster response involves entire dedication, the whole person serving, and the whole Body of Christ. Despite my personal experience working in disaster scenarios, I must admit that I am not a naturally-gifted caregiver. I struggle to serve and comfort others when and where others might do it with ease. Other Christians

are especially gifted at ministering to those in crisis. The key is for all of us to work together as the Body of Christ, volunteering (or might I suggest, dedicating) our personal gifts when applicable, so that Jesus is recognized as the ultimate hero.

It is easy to sing disaster volunteer praises when looking back at the "Cajun Armada" and the literally millions of volunteers that came to help after Hurricane Katrina, but there are downsides to be addressed. Sin always enters in, and the habit of thinking as the "First World Church" that will save others according to what feels good for us easily takes over.

Jesus offered both mercy and message to hurting people. But questions arise in the modern world. How are we supposed to respond to those in need? How might we prevent paternalistic disaster responses? Is direct charity an appropriate response in the case of emergencies, or as Christians must we always lean toward development-minded practices? Are charity and development mutually exclusive? How have social gospel and prosperity gospel theologies impacted our various Lutheran styles of crisis response in mission?

Pause for a moment and consider which actions you would choose and the reasons for them. In responding to Hurricane Katrina, would you have handed out crosses at the celebration/dedication of restored homes, or would you hold back on the gift in order not to offend a potential nonbeliever? Would you have accepted government funds for your projects' tasks or declined so that you might freely share God's Word with a victim? How much time, energy, and money would you spend on the reconstruction of houses and communities as opposed to verbal proclamation of the Gospel?

During the Hurricane Katrina response, those of us in Christian disaster response leadership engaged in significant debate about the relationship between mercy and message. There is not enough space to explore and answer all of these complex issues in one journal article. Suffice it to say, I have learned that sometimes instead of paying a person's light bill it is more spiritually transformative to go and sit with him in the dark.

Transformation occurs at the intersection between the passions of the world and the Passion of Christ. How does it occur? During disasters, individual ultimate allegiances and corporate idols are chaotically shaken to their roots. Victims cry out as their hopes and dreams are devastated. It is at such "disastrous locations" that the passions of people can be transformed by the Passion of Christ. God sends missionaries to meet people at these crossroads. The Word of Christ can bring hope and comfort through the Holy Spirit. Missionaries in disaster zones may become midwives for passion-filled transformation. Crises are "transformissional."[5]

How might we prepare for such transformissional moments and learn to be effective in gutsy disaster response?

Mission Education—Best Practices for Mission in Crises

Gutsy responses to crises can both help and hinder service. Some Christians are ready to charge in to help. Such quick responses can often mean the difference between life and death. However, strong mission education and good training for disaster preparedness can bring a helpful response and prevent second disasters. What best practices must missionaries to disaster fields learn, and how might we express them?

After Hurricane Katrina, one of my roles was to direct (Re)Institute, a restoration education and evangelism training center that worked in partnership with LCMS World Relief and LCMS World Mission to train people in mission-minded disaster response around the nation. After four years of Katrina relief and response work, there was a lot to tell about best practices for God's mission in a disaster zone, and we endeavored to share the experience and knowledge with others.

(Re)Institute's mission was "to prepare and involve people for disaster outreach." Always bathed in prayer, our model for disaster outreach took the form of a four-week model: two weeks of preparation before entering the disaster zone, one week of guidance in the disaster zone, and one week of reflection after the time of volunteer service. We hoped to help transform critical incidents into critical events for Jesus.

Figure 1. (RE)Institute Model by Kurtis Smith © 2008.

Our (RE)Institute model worked well for its time. I continue to use it when consulting with churches about disaster preparedness today. Now, there are many other resources and training opportunities from the Federal Government, specialized non-profits, and other Lutheran agencies working in disasters such as Orphan Grain Train, Laborers for Christ, Lutheran Church Charities, Lutheran World Relief, Extra Mile Ministries, Camp Restore, etc. FEMA works with local communities and emergency response teams to offer Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has developed its own process and program: Lutheran Emergency Response Teams (LERT). Much of what we taught in those days around the country through (RE)Institute, in partnership with LCMS departments, can now be found in the current LERT training manual—a strong resource for anyone interested in this topic.

Whatever model or tools are used to train Christians for disaster response, *a first practice or habit for Christians to learn is to recognize the disaster fields all around them.* We must pray to see the world as God sees it and hear the world as God hears it. As we do, we recognize that the need for Christ's compassion is both far away and close by. Hurting people are everywhere, and most people—both Christians and people not yet in love with Jesus—are survivors of one disaster or another. Maybe not everyone has survived a super typhoon or gone through anything as dramatic as an earthquake, but a hurting person has usually experienced some form of crisis in his or her life. If some have not experienced a large disaster, they may have gone through a quite personal crisis such as a house fire, a rape, or a suicide in their family. The disaster industry calls all crises, big or small, "critical incidents."[6] Critical incidents can lead to critical, life-changing events by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me be clear: Recognizing that disaster fields are ripe for harvest does not mean that Christians should become "evangelistic ambulance chasers." No one should ever capitalize on someone else's suffering. Instead, it simply means that people are readily looking for hope-filled answers to their problems and followers of Jesus have the most loving, hope-filled answer on earth. Christians can offer a real way, truth, and life for today's problems. We have eternal answers for temporal issues. People are literally crying out to be saved—one rarely has to convince victims of their need for a savior in these scenarios. Therefore, we should pray to the Lord of the Harvest because the fields are ripe with suffering people, but caring, well-trained laborers are few. And, when hurting people are crying out for hope, we need to be ready to give a reason for the hope within us, and do it with gentleness and respect (1 Pt 3:15).

A second practice and habit is to act with prudence. We must think clearly when disaster strikes. When people heard about Hurricane Katrina and the flood in New Orleans, many volunteers dropped everything and came to help. Of course, some of these didn't stop to check where they might stay, or what they were going to eat. In

fact, some didn't even realize that gasoline was not going to be available for them to use for a return trip. Other people meant well, so they sent clothes to the disaster zone. Little did they realize that there weren't many people living in the disaster zone who needed clothing because most of them had evacuated and became displaced. It was the displaced people who needed clothing, and most of them were scattered throughout the country. For example, when we evacuated, our family had only packed a few summer clothes and our swimming suits that we thought we'd need for a weekend at a hotel. Weeks after the storm, and back home to my clothes, I spent a whole day working to empty a church parking lot of clothing that had been dumped there for victims. None of the clothing was needed. It was in the way of our recovery. Some of the clothing was even for winter weather, useless in the Louisiana heat!

If you plan to volunteer, take time to learn and gather information about the disaster zone. It will help you be more productive when arriving on scene. In catastrophic scenarios, early volunteers must be self-sustaining and self-supporting, as there might not be electricity, water, food, bedding, or phones (even mobile phones might not work) to communicate. Know the climate and weather forecast for the time and place you are planning to serve. Know the language, history, and geography as well as cultural details. Knowing these facts may make the difference between opening doors of hope for survivors and creating another disaster. If nothing else, gathering information about their community shows survivors that you truly care about them. (It is interesting to note how much disaster volunteer preparations parallel that of missionary training!)

Volunteers especially need to take into account the actual situation of people suffering a disaster, testing their assumptions against what they see and hear. For me, a favorite Eastern parable makes the case. Dave Gibbons wrote about the parable in his 2009 book, *The Monkey and the Fish.* I've heard the story told by various others in years past. It goes something like this:

> A monkey had survived a mighty storm and sat up in a tree while eating a banana. He swapped disaster stories with birds as they rested above the rushing river below, flooded after the deluge. As the monkey looked down he noticed fish struggling in the swirling waters; they were jumping but didn't seem to be getting anywhere fast. So, the monkey decided to help. He hung down by his tail and snatched one of the struggling fish out of the water and threw it up on shore. The monkey smiled as he thought of the great service he'd done and proclaimed to those who might listen, "Look how I've made that fish happy—see him flopping about!" Eventually the monkey grew very proud of his volunteer service, as he observed the fish becoming more and more peace-filled. Little did the monkey realize that he'd killed the fish.

Matthew 7:12 is true: "Do unto those as you would have them do unto you." But as disaster volunteers and missionaries we must also consider 1 Corinthians 9:22–23, "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel that I may share in its blessings."

Consider this true story. Disaster mission volunteers were proud of their efforts restoring a house destroyed by Katrina; why, volunteers had even put up drywall to separate the bathroom from the master bedroom. Then the owner, who five years earlier had worked so hard to build the house in the first place, returned. "I waited all my life for a bathroom of my own. But you have decided what was better for me and my family. I know that this is a small thing and I should be grateful, but no one asked me what I wanted. . . . I wanted my own bathroom." Christians in mission in and after a crisis must listen first and understand the real needs and desires of victims before taking action.

Prudent listening cannot only clarify needs and prevent further disasters, it can be a balm for the pain experienced during critical incidents.

A third practice and habit is to share our disaster experiences and thereby learn to empathize.

Sharing stories of hurt can help survivors and volunteers relate to one another, empathizing as fellow travelers in the human journey. Often it is through sharing stories of suffering when God's presence becomes real, and His story becomes our story. If we listen closely to God, Jesus relates to us among the debris of our lives: through His own story of suffering.

In another example, after the tsunami in Banda Aceh, Indonesian teachers and others recounted their loss of family members, students, and school buildings. One man told of fleeing with his family on his motorcycle, only never to see them again. He swam alone desperately, then was thrown up on the side of a hill. But his story did not end there. The man turned to the listening group, which included my father, and said, "You don't know how great it is to tell my story. I've never shared this story with anyone else. Telling it now, removes the pain."

This is an example of the importance of allowing others to tell their stories. One cannot effectively relate to survivors unless one is willing to note their presence and share in their pain—attempt to relate. It's OK to ask, "How did this disaster affect you and your loved ones?" Not everyone will want to share, but if a survivor desires to talk, take the time to listen.

Sharing disaster tales may open the door for hope in Jesus to be shared, by the disaster response missionaries or by those who have, in Christian faith, suffered.

On the occasion of LCMS World Mission's 100th Anniversary celebration, it was my role to help tell the story of the growth of God's mission during the

humanitarian crisis of Liberia's civil war. I listened to many stories of survivors and recorded them on video. Through a translator, one of the women I interviewed told of how her country was gone, her own home was destroyed, her husband and sons were all killed by rebels, and how we stood at that moment over the bones of her community. I was in awe of this woman and hurt for her. She, however, smiled all the way through our interview.

At first I thought my questions weren't getting through to the woman. Was she in denial? Was I not listening? Was I not relating?

Eventually, I asked through my interpreter, "Why are you smiling?"

She answered in the only English word she used during our interview. . . "Jesus!" This widow had lost everything and yet through all her pain, she could still smile because of the Christ.

In listening to the woman and hurting with her, Jesus' love for each of us became clear to me, and we related to one another as fellow travelers in the struggles of life. As the woman witnessed what God had done for her, Jesus became clear to me among the debris. Together, we shared hope in Christ. Our interdependence—the way God created us to be—was restored. It was a transformative moment for us both.

Recognition of crisis, prudent listening, and empathetic sharing, these are important steps in the practice of mission in crisis. Then there is much work to be done. It has been said that "one of the church's greatest evangelistic opportunities is to systematically, competently, efficaciously and compassionately distribute aid, solace and hope to masses of people who are paralyzed by shock, trapped under rubble, hemorrhaging profusely or overcome with grief. This level of preparation [and effort] requires an investment of time, energy, resources, and selfless risk…"[7]

Faith-based volunteers active in disasters can learn a lot about this work from others, such as first responders or agencies like the Red Cross or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The government now has a wealth of training materials and resources from which to learn and be a part of that unity. It is worth becoming "NIMS compliant" (National Incident Management System certified) if you or your missionary team desire to regularly serve when disaster strikes. At a minimum, such training will familiarize you with the terms and acronyms used by government workers in disaster scenarios and help you find such places as the EOC (Emergency Operation Center) where volunteers can sign in to help.

Finally, rest is also an important practice and habit in mission in crisis. Wildland fire fighters are required to work no more than three weeks on the line and then must take time off in order to rest. If they don't rest, they become a danger to themselves and the rest of their team.[8] "Studies show that working 12 hours or more

per day is associated with a 37% increased risk of injury."[9] The same goes for faith-based disaster volunteers. Learn from my mistake. In responding to people after Hurricane Katrina, my wife had to pack us off for a family vacation because I was suffering from classic compassion fatigue.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is one form of rest for first responders to disasters. Just as missionaries returning to their home country and youth groups returning from gatherings need debriefing, those who have shared heart, hands, and whole being in crisis response need safe places to share their experience.

Reestablishing relationships at home after serving "away" in a disaster zone is another part of mission in crisis, and it may be hard. The experience may have evoked personal issues—loss or abuse, for example—or evidence of issues for others, such as pornography or drug addiction. Some caregivers feel as though their time away has earned them a certificate to criticize their church. Others may have to suffer criticism of their work or time away. Keeping a relationship with Jesus in this time is a necessity and a challenge for responder and people "at home."

Chaos Isn't All Bad: Interpreting the Learning

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, for a homeschooling exercise, my wife had our kids write out a list of all the consequences of the disaster. They wrote down such things as losing favorite toys, losing friends, losing their swing set, losing their church building, etc. Then they realized that there were some positive things. Our eldest daughter Sophia had several opportunities to share publically about her experience. She readily proclaimed, "We started out mentioning negative things and then realized that there were actually more positive than negative items. The best thing was that out of the storm people came to share Jesus with other people. Some people are now Christian because of the storm. . . . It's just like the Bible says 'all things work for the good of those who love God!'" (Rom 8:28).

Every global crisis and individual disaster deserves God's compassion and may be an occasion for speaking God's Good News. Are we confronted with victims of sexual abuse and family violence? Might there be war refugees in our midst? We can listen, serve them with dignity, and when the time is right share the Gospel.

There is much to learn professionally from crisis response agencies, local and international. Strengthening the relationship between mission and crisis transforms critical incidents into critical events for Jesus. The events and the people who experience crises are not our resource for social, political, or emotional gain, and certainly not for nurturing a sense of our righteousness because we are so good. Our righteousness is complete in Christ. However, our humble service may be the occasion for others to enjoy His righteousness, His love. As well, might the mission of God be the restoration of the world the way it was created to be in the first place?

In Conclusion

Ultimately, all mission fields are disaster fields; otherwise, there would be no mission. There is brokenness everywhere, and no mission field is without it. The old saying is true: "The only difference between the rich and poor in a flood is the size of their debris piles along the curb." Sin, evil, death, and destruction are around every corner. We all experience suffering; and, at some points of desperation, we might even ask, "Is God to blame?"

We can read the title of this article in one of two ways. On the one hand, we might take the title as a negative statement that God's mission is in trouble. We can focus on our pain. We can question our practices. We can wish that our churches would participate in God's mission with the gutsy and urgent responses of disaster volunteers. We might even suggest that all theology be practiced in light of the emergency that our communities are headed to hell—and on this point I might agree.

On the other hand, we might take an alternative view for mission in crisis: God's mission is active in moments of crisis.

"Look Mommy, a broken house!" exclaimed our two-year-old son when we first drove our family back through the wreckage of our hurricane-ravaged city, Slidell, LA. Tears covered our faces, for we didn't know how to respond. After some silence, our son proclaimed in faith, "Don't worry, Daddy will fix it!"

Of course, it was my assumption that my son was talking about me. I was Super Dad! Throw on a cape and I could cure the world! Little did my son know about my finite abilities; I was not capable of rebuilding a house. Before the storm, I had trouble fixing a shower curtain. I was a church worker who, like many others, was trained in book smarts—with very few practical skills. Yet, I was his father, and dads can do anything in their sons' eyes.

Then again, maybe my son wasn't talking about me. Later, my wife and I realized that our son had made a profound statement if taken in the context of our faith. As children of God, we don't have to worry—our Heavenly Father will fix it!

In his innocent statement, my son captured a truth for all ages. God, our heavenly Father, fixes our brokenness. He does it by sending His one and only Son, Jesus, down into the debris of our broken world. God changes a catastrophe into a *eucatastrophe*, a term coined by J. R. R. Tolkien: a sudden and favorable resolution of events in a story; a happy ending.[10]

While we were yet broken, Jesus became the ultimate volunteer and relocated from heaven to live among us: experiencing our pain, crying with us, loving us, bringing water, sharing meals, and restoring our spiritual, physical, and communal needs. He didn't come to hand out credit cards or argue with the government; rather, Jesus came without gloves or steel-toed boots and took puncture wounds in His hands and feet in order to give us ultimate relief for eternity. Among the debris, Jesus

brought hope. He even lost His life in the process so that our lives might be restored. There is no need to worry: Daddy fixed it.

In fact, God sent His Son, the heavenly carpenter with special skills, to craft our dead "wooden" souls into beautiful living works of art. Jesus did that by transforming the dead wood of His cross into a life-giving hope. He now sends out His apprentices with their own gifts and learned skills—carrying their own dead-wood crosses to transform the world. With the words of their Craft Master echoing in their ears, their movements—patterned after Jesus by discipleship—apostolic carpenters artfully bring others hope for life.

God served in mission in crisis. God knows that we live in a world of suffering. In fact, He is actively suffering with us. He sits with His arm around us as tears fall from our eyes when we look at a charred picture after a house fire. He works with us as we fill sand bags to prepare a city for oncoming waters. He is buried with us when the building walls collapse on every side. Jesus is Among the Debris.

Neither Jesus, victims, volunteers, missionaries, nor this article end in debris. Jesus rose from the catastrophic debris of death, and through Him so shall we. As missionaries in disaster zones, we share God's hope-filled work and story with others while rejoicing in peace that passes all understanding!

Endnotes

[1] Emergency Management Commentary, "Katrina and the Next Crisis," Chicago Tribune, August, 27, 2015.
[2] Personal communication September 2015.
[3] Ibid.
[4] http://biblehub.com/greek/4697.htm.
[5] "Transformissional" is a term coined by Steve Ogne and Tim Roehl and can be explored more in their 2008 text, *Transformissional Coaching: Empowering Leaders in a Changing Ministry World* (Nashville, TN, B&H Books).
[6] At the time, the use of the term, "critical incident" was a helpful parallel to the current LCMS Ablaze Movement's term for evangelistic moments, "critical events." During (RE)Institute presentations, I would encourage disaster volunteers to think about how they might turn critical incidents into critical events for God's mission.
[7] Mark Neuenschwander and Betsy Neuenschwander, *Crisis Evangelism* (Ventura, California, Regal, 1999).
[8] U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Wildland Firefighter Health and Safety Report" http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/htmlpubs/htm02512815/page02.htm.
[9] Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "Wildland Fire Fighting Safety and Health," http://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2012/07/13/wildlandfire/.
[10] In Tolkien's definition, as outlined in his 1947 essay *On Fairy-Stories*, "eucatastrophe" is a fundamental part of his conception of mythopoeia. Though Tolkien writes about myth, the term is also connected to the Gospels. Tolkien calls the Incarnation the "eucatastrophe of human history" and the Resurrection the "eucatastrophe of the Incarnation."

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The LISA Curriculum: Theological Education in the Service of God's Mission

Gerhard C. Michael, Jr.

Abstract: The article presents an overview of the curriculum which the Luther Institute—Southeast Asia has developed in response to the request of churches there. Presented first are the principles which have guided its development as a theological education program in the service of God's mission. After the curriculum overview, challenges ahead are suggested. As a "work in progress," the LISA Board invites your response and constructive suggestions so that it might continue to revise and improve its curriculum for a strengthened program of missionary service as it moves into the future

The curriculum of the Luther Institute—Southeast Asia (LISA) has evolved over a period of time. The original architects of the LISA program were the Rev. Dr. Leonard Harms, mission executive of the Lutheran Church—Canada (LCC); the Rev. Dr. Jeff Ehlers, former missionary of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Thailand and now president of the Garuna Foundation, a nonprofit organization committed to Lutheran missionary service in Southeast Asia; and the Rev. Ted NaThalang, Asian representative of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) and former LCMS missionary to Thailand. The three were responding to the request of the congregations that had been established in Thailand through the mission work of the LCMS and the LCC beginning in the mid-1970s. The request was for theological education to raise up future leaders for the churches there. The three devised a curriculum that covered biblical basics, Lutheran doctrine, and a variety of practical ministry courses. Courses were taught in week-long seminars in Thailand and Cambodia, for the most part by pastors and professors from the seminaries of the LCC, but also some pastors of the LCMS. Courses were offered as instructors were available to teach them, a total of seventeen courses over the span of three and a half years (2006–2009).

In 2010, the author of this article was asked to assume the role of Executive Director of LISA. At the beginning of his service, the LISA Board was enlarged to include the Rev. Vanarith Chhim, the newly elected president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cambodia; the Rev. Carl Hanson, the LCMS missionary charged with responsibility for theological education in Asia; the Rev. Dr. Jacob Preus,

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former academic vice president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and president of Concordia University, Irvine, California; and the author, a former missionary to Japan, parish pastor, district president and member of the Distance Education Leading To Ordination (DELTO) and Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program committees. The original LISA Board of three continued to serve. During the next five years through the collaboration of the board, professors and pastors who were recruited to prepare and teach courses, and the interaction with national pastors and teachers, the curriculum was revised to take the form we present to you in this article. As mentioned at the outset, we share it with you, our readers, for your consideration and possible use, and for your feedback and constructive criticism so that it may be further molded for the sake of the Lord's mission.

Principles Informing the Development of the Curriculum

A. The curriculum should be missionary in orientation. What this means is that what we have received is to be passed on. Paul, the great missionary teacher, expressed it well: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received" (1 Cor 15:3). The Son of God Himself made clear this dynamic orientation: no one would know the Father if He did not make Him known. (See Matthew 11:25–27.) In John 14:1–14, Jesus let Philip know that He had shown him the Father and implied that the relay of this truth would be accomplished by His disciples, for they would do greater works than the Son did. His ministry was for the salvation of the world, but His service itself was restricted to one area of the world. Through His disciples all the nations were to know.

B. Christ is the center of the revelation (Lk 24:25, 26, 44–48). This principle highlights not only the Old Testament's pointing to Him as its fulfillment, but also that this message of repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached "to all nations." It moves forward from its center to the ends of the earth.

C. The curriculum should be solidly grounded in the Scriptures and conform to the understanding of those Scriptures as reflected in the Lutheran Confessions. We want to carry out the LISA ministry in the spirit of our Lutheran forebears, who were convinced that "especially the youth who are being trained for service in the church and for the holy ministry may be instructed faithfully and diligently, so that among our descendants the pure teaching and confession of the faith may be *kept and spread* through the help and assistance of the Holy Spirit until the glorious return of our only redeemer and savior Jesus Christ" (emphasis added).[1] If that is what we want for our descendants, is not that what we should desire for all people?

This commitment will be demonstrated in a "spiral approach" to the curriculum, whereby basic teachings and concepts are introduced early in the curriculum, but then repeated again and again, ever seeking to deepen and enrich the students' understanding. As an illustration, the Law-Gospel dialectic appears in the two initial courses and then again in the courses on biblical interpretation, worship, preaching, etc.

D. The program should be open to all who are qualified for its rigors, enjoy the endorsement of their churches, and sincerely wish to study with us, thus placing themselves under the Word and wisdom of God. The founders of LISA believe that the treasure of the Gospel is such that it should be safeguarded from distortion but never buried. Rather it is to be invested in the lives of all who are open to it and desire to be formed by it. The LISA Board sees this approach as a matter of responsible stewardship (cf. Mt 25:14–30.)

E. The curriculum should be contextually and culturally relevant. A series of Ministerial Formation Outcomes was developed by national church leaders and missionaries to guide this process in the areas of (a) desired personal characteristics, (b) biblical knowledge, and (c) ministerial skills. To foster a responsible indigenization, national teachers have been utilized for instruction, where qualified ones are available, so that courses can be taught in the students' "heart languages" and misunderstandings minimized. National teachers receive training through regular teachers' meetings. (In effect, this process also illustrates the missionary orientation of "passing on what one has received," mentioned in the first principle.)

F. The courses are designed with a modular approach. In this way they can be offered in week-long seminars, biweekly all-day classes, or classes held once a week. Typically, a course has 24 hours of contact time, or eight modules. Normally, five courses are taught each year; students can thus maintain their jobs, care for their churches, and be involved with their families.

G. It is understood that courses are subject to revision, that weaknesses may be corrected, misunderstandings clarified, and improvements made so that the courses are the most helpful possible. "Working documents" is a common phrase in LISA discussions. At the end of the second cycle of classes, it has become evident that there is need for greater attention given to helping students realize how their theology is to be put into practice. Evangelical theology needs to be practiced evangelically. At this point a mentoring program for teachers and other church leaders is being developed to meet this shortfall. Envisioned is an intentional mentoring process whereby national teachers are equipped to mentor their students with what might be called "supervised in-service learning."

The Curriculum Described

A. The courses in Year One can be described as laying the foundation. The first course is *See through the Scriptures*, authored by Dr. Harry Wendt of Crossways International. It is meant to give students an overview of salvation history and acquaint students with key scriptural themes, such as sin and grace. Its transcultural illustrations aid in assisting its students to grasp its content. The second course, *Luther's Small Catechism*, is designed to help the students realize that the Christian faith is a religion of revelation. They are called to learn its message that they might come to know God and begin living the Christ-like life. The missionary

orientation of the curriculum shows itself right at the outset, for students are expected to pass on to their families and friends, their neighbors and congregations, what they are learning. This is to take place throughout the first year of the program, even as the students move on to the third and fourth courses in the curriculum: surveys of the Old and New Testaments, providing background material such as a good study Bible might provide. The design is to stimulate and encourage the students actually to read the Scriptures with understanding. After being introduced to this literature inductively, the fifth course, *Reading the Bible with Understanding*, is intended to help the students realize that there are basic principles which can and should be followed in biblical studies. Utilized for this course is the book by Lane Burgland with the same title.

B. The courses for Year Two are designed to help students grow in the ministerial leadership roles many are already playing in their congregations. The course on Christian worship (#201) emphasizes that God alone is to be worshiped. Worship should lead us to hear the voice of God and then respond to it with prayer and praise, confession and participation. Since worship has a corporate, communal character, it does well to have order to it, enabling worshipers to participate, celebrating the life of Christ through Scriptures, sermon and song, and learning how it leads to living life as worship. Christian worship has a sacramental character to it, as Baptism is remembered and the Lord's Supper celebrated. Students are taught how to plan for the congregation's worship, that it may lead those who worship to dedicate their lives as an offering to God.

The second course in Year Two is *Homiletics*. As one might expect, the students are helped to move from textual study to proclamation, with the end product of their labors being messages that are Christ-centered and biblically-grounded, leading their hearers to realize their sinfulness and then to receive God's grace in Jesus Christ. The goal is trust in God and life as His people.

The third course, *Christian Education*, is designed to help those who teach to involve their students in the process of learning. The hope is that this will enable them better to assimilate what they are being taught into their way of thinking and relating. This interactive approach to the teaching-learning process can be culturally challenging, but the LISA team believes it reflects Jesus' way of instructing His disciples.

The fourth course is an exegetical one on the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Through this course, we seek to help our students not only gain skill in interpreting the Scriptures by focusing on one book of the Bible, but also grow in their understanding and appreciation of who Jesus is—the Christ, the Messiah—and what it means to follow Him, to be His disciple. In this way, the course is an exegetical approach to teaching Christology and discipleship.

The final course in the second year is *Christian Stewardship*. As the courses on Christian education and discipleship focus on Christian living, so is this course intended to help students grow in living the Christian life by seeing it from the

perspective of stewardship. By seeing God as their Lord and Owner, who has purchased and redeemed them by the high cost of Jesus' life and death, they are urged to see stewardship as a tremendous privilege. They have incredible dignity, for they are trustees, or managers, for God. They are helped to see that stewardship embraces not just time and money, but also their relationships with people and creation, the care and investment of the Gospel. The course addresses, too, leadership of the Christian congregation as a matter of stewardship. The gifts God has entrusted to its members are to be employed in a manner that enables each member to take his or her place in the congregation's life. In this way, the congregation is built up and God is glorified in the world, as the world sees how the congregation works together in love.

C. The courses in Year Three are designed to help students grow in sharing their faith. The first course, *Equipping the whole Priesthood for its Ministry*, can be put into practice in the congregation throughout this year. Students are helped to see the missionary dimension of this important doctrinal concept. God chose Israel to be His kingdom of priests, because the whole earth was His. He owned it all. His design was to use Israel as His servant to inform the world of His lordship through their witness and service. Unfortunately, Israel failed in that mission, but fortunately Jesus was the perfect priest, who brought in the kingdom of God and now entrusts that worldwide mission to the church. Through its witness and service, the church represents God to the world and, through its prayers, it represents the world to God. The course explores how the pastor can equip the congregation for its vital mediatorial, missionary role between God and the world and empower it to carry it out in all aspects of its vocation.

The second course, *Survey of Church History*, is meant to help our students understand that as the church grew it encountered opportunities and challenges: to connect with the people of the new cultures to which the Gospel had led it. Its challenge was to relate meaningfully, but without compromising Christian teaching through cultural accommodation. As Paul had to counter the Greeks' negative view of the body with the positive understanding that the Creator gave to it and with which Jesus endowed it in His care of the body and His resurrection from the tomb, even so every missionary faces the challenge of communicating scriptural truth in culturally meaningful ways without surrendering Gospel truth to the recipient culture. Through this study of church history, students are sensitized to the challenges in their own cultures today.

The third course, *Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, is meant to help students see how our Lutheran ancestors responded to their context and challenges and left us a treasure that is more than a model. The focus is especially on the three ecumenical creeds, the Augsburg Confession, and the Large Catechism, which have all been translated into the languages of the cultures where LISA is engaged. By reading these documents in translation, students are helped to see the dynamic nature

of the Lutheran Christian faith and provided motivation to think through how they can stand in that same tradition of faithfully passing on what they have received.

The fourth course, *The Mission of God and our Involvement in It*, is designed to help church leaders realize that all the members of the Christian church are to serve as witnesses and servants of God in the world. We on the LISA Board, however, are sensing that some of the emphases of this course are anticipated in the *Priesthood of All Believers* course and that other of its emphases can probably be more helpfully addressed in a new course yet to be developed: *Encountering the Religions and Churches of Southeast Asia*. The new course will help our national pastors and teachers work through some of the issues they face as they bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to their lands.

The fifth course in Year Three is an exegetical course designed to help students gain interpretative skill in reading a New Testament letter, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. The study of this letter will lead the students to experience the profound way in which the Apostle Paul, the great missionary to the Gentiles, articulated Christian doctrine in the service of God's mission. It will also serve as a good review of basic Christian doctrine, with which the students have become acquainted in their study of both Luther's Small Catechism (#102) and the Augsburg Confession and Large Catechism (#303), and as an anticipation of their further study of Christian doctrine in the fourth year courses, #402 and #404. In this way, students are experiencing the spiral nature of the curriculum design and are hopefully growing in their appreciation of sound biblical teaching.

D. The courses in Year Four, as just suggested, are designed to solidify our students in their understanding of Christian doctrine and, just as significantly, to help them grow in their pastoral practice.

The initial course highlights the missionary dimension of pastoral theology. It is an extension of Jesus' ministry in the world, a "go and find" ministry in contrast to a "sit and wait" ministry, which emanates from the cross of Jesus Christ. It has a threefold thrust: find My lost ones, feed My lambs, protect My sheep. It is powered by the forgiveness of sins and thus is marked by spiritual authority, which is different from the world's authority. Forgiveness also shapes and forms the pastor to be an agent of the Lord, as he serves God's people.

The second and fourth courses, a deeper look at Christian doctrine, utilize Robert Kolb's book, *The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition*, to help students grow in their knowledge and appreciation of evangelical teaching. The first course covers the material of the first half of the book, through the work of Christ and the teaching of justification by grace through faith; the second course covers the material beginning with the work of the Holy Spirit and continuing through the end of all things.

The third course, *Christian Care-giving*, examines the benefit of a healthy Christian community in caring for those in need and distress. God created the world so that His loving presence (*agape*) would be with His people. Because of sin,

everyone must handle situations in a self-protective manner (*incurvatus in se*). This sinful "selfness" is the cause of mental, emotional, and relationship dysfunction. God's love in Christ gives new hope. As He lives within the hearts of believers, a *new self* can handle situations much differently, bringing the healing power of God's love into daily life. This course provides practical strategies and application to the power of the new self in Christian care-giving.

The final course is meant to be a capstone for the LISA curriculum, drawing on the Lutheran "distinctives" to help our students grow in practicing an evangelical ministry. In addition to the traditional emphases of "Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone, Christ alone," and concepts such as "at the same time saint and sinner" (*simul justus et peccator*), this course highlights especially the theology of the cross and the freedom of the Christian. The course is meant to help our students realize how down-to-earth Lutheran theology is, how it calls a thing what it is, and finds in what God has done for us in Jesus Christ the wisdom and strength to serve with love, carrying out with dignity and hope His ministry as a liberated child of God.

In looking back over the past five years and the development of the above curriculum, I believe that much of the credit for the benefits it has provided to its students and the churches they are serving rests in the professors and pastors who revised existing courses, developed new ones, and served sacrificially and willingly, utilizing their talents for the good of the Lord's mission. There is no way they can be thanked adequately.

Challenges Ahead

A. Taking the long view is critical. Identified as a challenge by the LISA Board is the necessity of providing "service learning," "on-the-job training," "a supervised internship or vicarage," especially when there is not in any of the cultures in which we are working a cadre of well-trained, experienced Lutheran pastors who can immediately fill the role of mentor, coach, or supervising pastor. A two-year plan is being developed to provide mentoring for our national teachers and leaders so that they in turn might fill the role of mentors to the LISA students. Wrapped around the theme of "the mind of Christ," these twice yearly seminars and visitations to these teacher-leaders are designed to help the pastors grow as persons, leaders, shepherds, and peers. It is the conviction of the LISA Board that this program of intentional mentoring will also foster the further indigenization of the LISA curriculum and its effectiveness for the Lord's mission.

B. An additional goal articulated by the national church bodies is to have the program accredited so that its graduates can receive recognition for the knowledge and skills they have gained. At this point, exploratory talks are being held with Concordia Theological Seminary in Hong Kong to see if some collaborative approach to meet this goal can be found.

In submitting this overview of the LISA curriculum[2], the author, together with LISA's new Executive Director, the Rev. Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus, III, wish to share

with you the product of our efforts over the last ten years so that you may consider whether they might have value for your missionary context, and secondly, to solicit your constructive suggestions for the improvement of this program of theological education. Our ultimate goal is that our program of theological education will serve the mission of God to reach all people with the good news of what His Son has accomplished for the salvation of the world.

Endnotes

[1] R. Kolb, T. J. Wengert, & C. P. Arand, "Introduction to the Book of Concord" in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 14.

[2] View the curriculum at https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B8wR_Yvswp-UZjZwYU5YUDl5LTA&usp=drive_web. At this time, this link allows those who visit it to view the materials, but not to print or download.

Education and Mission: *Just. Do it.*

Jeanette Dart

Abstract: Although similar to the well-known Nike slogan, *Just. Do it.* is an abbreviation for *Justified. Do it.* As in, "now that you are justified, do the life of sanctification." Ideas from early childhood education, foreign language learning, and coaching identify action and obedience as helpful for education in our faith, for living our faith, and for our mission to share Christ with our world.

Thoreau wrote, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." Some lead lives of open desperation: broken marriages, addictions, abuse, pornography, depression, loneliness, theft, murder, and more manifest brokenness. Something doesn't work in this world, this society of ours. For Christians, it is relatively simple to put the name *sin* to this problem. The Bible says that this world *is* broken.

The Bible also speaks of a cure which is more than just repair for brokenness. Jesus Christ, God born as a human baby, lived a sinless life in this broken world and died a cruel death. He took our punishment, dying separated from God. Then He rose from death, came back to life and promised that death is no longer the end. For all who believe in Him, there is eternal life with Him in the new heaven and new earth, and there is *new life now.* Of course the full cure won't be known until Jesus returns, but there is much for us to enjoy and live in now. Many Bible stories demonstrate that Christians lived noticeably differently from other people.[1] The cure, the *new life now*, was apparent.

This *new life now* unfortunately often gets missed by Christians, both lifelong and new converts. Christian lives may look very similar to non-Christian lives, including desperation, impatience, defensiveness, infidelity, and more. The love, joy, peace, and other fruits of the Spirit may not be obvious. Of course Christians can know that they are forgiven for all sins, but it is still a loss when we live with less than all that God is giving to us now.

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God's Gifts Now

God's gifts now are many. As Luther wrote, He gives us ourselves, body and soul, and daily gifts of "clothing and shoes, meat and drink," and more (Luther's Small Catechism: The Meaning of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed). God's gifts now include the means by which the Holy Spirit works and sustains faith. He gives justification by grace through that faith, and sanctification by grace within that faith. Lutherans tend to do a good job of remembering justification and that the Holy Spirit works faith and salvation, but we could often benefit from taking another look at the new life of sanctification that the Holy Spirit longs to work in us.[2] Christ's command to His disciples encompasses both parts: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Mt 28:19–20 NIV). If in our teaching we skip the words, "to obey," we miss out on some of the present reality of our cure, our new life, in Christ. Including "to obey" in Christian education adds immeasurably to the Christian life and mission.

What we teach in Christian education

In Christian education we teach something new. This may seem unimportant, but too often we miss out on the vitality of Christian life because we don't recognize that it is new and different. Being a Christian is meant to change us, not just be an add-on in our lives as they were before. We may bring some helpful habits to this new life, but even those habits need to be shifted to the new foundation and freedom in Christ. Learning a new language is hard enough, but learning to obey everything Jesus commanded us is learning a new language, a new culture, and a new way of life. As St. Paul wrote, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom 12:2). What we are teaching and learning is different from the status quo, and that is the way it is meant to be. One cannot be transformed if one stays the same.

We teach to believe in Jesus, which begins this transformation. This is the primary thing of obeying everything that Christ commanded. Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (Jn 6:29). Believing is too hard for us to do alone; we cannot by our own reason or strength come to Christ or believe in Him (Luther's Small Catechism: The Meaning of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed). The Holy Spirit gives us this obedience by teaching us the good news and working faith that Jesus' death atones for us and we are justified before God. This is the *Justified* part of *Just. Do it.*

We also teach to obey the other parts of the "everything" that Jesus commanded His disciples. This is the *new life now*, which the Holy Spirit gives. This is the *Do it*. part of *Just. Do it.* "Do not be anxious"(Mt 6:31, 34). "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Mt 6:33). "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to

them" (Mt 7:12). A particularly challenging one is, "Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well" (Mt 5:38). "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44). Jesus said that we are not to judge (Mt 7:1), that lusting in one's thoughts is committing adultery in one's heart, and compares insulting one's brother to murder (Mt 5:21–23). Giving is to be done secretly (Mt 6:3–4). Many other instructions are included in the rest of the New Testament,[3] but for now we can conclude with "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). Learning to do these things—to love, to obey—can be hard. The next section describes tools that we can use which can help with that learning.

Just. Do it. Tools for teaching: Doing, Trial and Error, Repetition, Obedience, and Community

As almost any child knows, learning involves doing. Children instinctively reach out to touch and examine, and even to taste, new things. They explore. Marie Montessori, a well-known educator, taught that this instinct in children can be used to aid their learning. She wrote, "Never give to the mind more than you give to the hand."[4] Montessori classrooms are prepared so that children can tactilely explore the world around them, learning everything from geography and language to higher mathematical concepts using their hands. "The hand and the brain act in unison making a mental connection between an abstract idea and its concrete representation."[5] Someone who does a thing, say weaving, knows what it is in a more intimate and real way than someone who has only read a description. Taking this thought farther, C. S. Lewis commented, through Screwtape's words, that humans "constantly forget . . . that whatever their bodies do affects their souls."[6] Touching and doing, these things expand learning.

Through doing, a student also has the benefit of learning by trial and error. A baby learning spoken language babbles and makes sounds, trying them out and learning to match the sounds made by other people. A small child working to build with blocks discovers how to make them balance, precisely because of the times the small tower will topple over. An older child in a Montessori classroom discovers how the algebraic formula works with special blocks, because errors are self-evident when the cube is not formed properly. Even in relationships we learn what works and what doesn't work by trial and error. As we learn in faith, a benefit is that we can live assured that our mistakes are forgiven. We are given freedom in our justification to go and try to live as God's people, making mistakes as we go.

Repetition of action is useful for learning our new ways of speaking and acting. Repetition can take a person from the awkwardness of a first attempt all the way to comfort and competence. Think of the young child who is learning to climb into a

chair, climbing on and climbing off and climbing on and climbing off. I will not write all the repetitions, but many parents have endured repetitions beyond their ability to count. The one-time action, repeated, is transformed into a skill. Knowledge connected with repeated action can be learned more deeply.

Learning is helped if the repetition is made meaningful. When I taught Spanish and German, it was challenging to make the spoken repetitions meaningful so that my students' brains (unlike the brains of the parents in the previous example) didn't shut off. We solved the problem by switching partners when we practiced speaking. A student could say, "Hello," ask how the other person was, and exchange names meaningfully when they spoke with five different people, instead of just repeating with the same person. I was amazed at how my students' competence increased with this change.

Practicing by doing and repeating can feel awkward; and even if we know what to do, it is often hard to make ourselves do. Obedience, doing when we don't feel like doing, is needed. We need to "be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (Jas 1:22).

Even with that encouragement, it might be easy to dismiss obedience as an antiquated idea, not appropriate for modern life. But the sports that many people play give the lie to that mental evasion. Almost everyone in the United States has some contact with sports and an awareness of coaches. Coaches expect players to do what they are told, to obey.

Coaches help coachable players improve in a sport through the obedience of the players. The coach says to run two warm-up laps. They run two warm-up laps. The coach says, "Put your arms this way, stand here, put your weight on your toes, tackle that way," and they do it. Or they try to do it, and through trial and error and repetition, they work at the new skill or strength. The players obey their coaches. And the coach helps to refine what they do, praising and correcting as needed.

Of course no one learns these skills perfectly, but players aim at improvement. No good coach would accept from a player, "Coach, I'm never going to get my batting swing perfect, so I'm not going to follow your instructions or work to improve it." Any player who said that could plan to sit on the bench. It is expected that players will continue to work to refine their skills.

Coaches know that players form habits. A coachable player forms the habit of attempting to do what the coach says. This habit of obedience forms by hearing information from the coach and doing one's best to put that into action. Knowledge connects to action. A player who regularly does not put the instructions into action, forms a habit of disobedience by disconnecting what the coach says with what the player does. The danger is, as C. S. Lewis wrote, that "The more often [a person] feels without acting, the less he will be able ever to act, and, in the long run, the less he will be able to feel."[7] One could say that the same principle applies to knowing.

Information that is known without being acted upon will eventually be eroded. Therefore, in faith, as in sports, learning needs to connect instruction to action.

A community provides a location for the learning, for caring for one another and being cared for. Hopefully we have at least a few Christians around us with whom we can discuss our attempts at obeying. Within this community we can find, as Montessori schools offer children, a place to practice our new skills, to make mistakes, and to try again. Hopefully we can also find encouragement with one another and motivation to keep going. Many an athlete has played harder and even played injured for the sake of the team. We can do the same for one another on our "faith" team.

Putting these tools to use: *Just. Do it.*

First, let us be honest with ourselves about where we are. If we individually examine our faith life as if from a sport's paradigm, some things may show up. Most people would not be embarrassed to play catch or kick a soccer ball with their kids, practicing those skills in their yard. It's not kept private. Sometimes as Christians we may keep our faith "skills" private or fail to practice them at all. When a kid first starts to throw a ball, we hopefully encourage her: "Try it again. You can do it." Do we cheer learning and living faith stuff in the same way?

Here are two examples. Moving beyond just teaching good manners, we can coach our children to practice a spirit of thankfulness. "Come on, Junior, you can do it, find something to be thankful for! Now, ten more! Yeah, Junior!" Or we think of a situation where we have been wronged, and we try to move from thinking about getting back at the other person to struggling with ourselves to do good to them. Author George MacDonald described a character who "white with passion, cast[s] himself on his face on the shore and cling[s] with his hands to the earth as if in a paroxysm of bodily suffering, then after a few moments rise[s] and do[es] a service to the man who had wronged him."[8] That is a battle for self-control. We can become aware of our current thoughts and actions and then, likely thinking outside the box, try new things. Of course, we will never get these instructions from the Bible completely correct, but we can continue to practice our faith skills just like athletes practice their sport skills.

Ideas for working with young children

For raising young children in the faith, speak to them about faith stuff and teach them to do. Especially at young ages when children's brains are fusing some synapses and eliminating other unused ones,[9] including faith in the conversation is so helpful for their long-term learning. From birth through about age 3, children's minds absorb language and so much more from their surroundings like sponges.[10] Therefore, try to bring God into your conversations.[11] Use memorized prayers with

them so that they get to practice saying the words. Later, talk with them about what the words mean. Model free prayer for them, and as they grow encourage them to pray in their own words. Model apologizing for your children. Have family memory work. If you attend a church that uses a liturgy, memorizing parts of the liturgy at home can help a child be able to participate on Sundays. Memorize Bible passages that offer comfort, that remind us of God's love and faithfulness, and that direct our actions. At appropriate times, bring those verses back to mind. When children feel lonely, we can offer a hug, listen, and somewhere in the conversation remind them that Jesus is with them always (Mt 28:20). When two kids are having a fight, we can remind them to "be quick to listen and slow to speak and slow to become angry" (Jas 1:19). If you feel daring, role-playing different situations can be a wonderful and humorous teaching tool.

Ideas for working with ourselves and adult converts

Many of the same ideas can work for us adults and new converts. We adults may feel self-conscious about making changes. It is important to be gentle with ourselves when we try new things. Once again *Justified* is where we start. God is gentle with us, forgiving our sins. We can confess privately to God in prayer; we can hear God's forgiveness out loud if we choose to confess sins that particularly bother us to a trustworthy pastor or Christian.[12] We discover we are forgiven, *Justified*, free to *do* in our daily lives. We can start with baby steps: memorize a Bible passage, say something about Jesus or faith, talk to Jesus about a struggle, or start a thank-you journal.[13] Beyond baby steps like these, our own unique circumstances will shape our living out our faith in daily life.

As adults we are often slower to learn new habits and slower to memorize than young children. That we are slower to learn suggests we would benefit from even more repetitions. After all, with children we are just trying to establish habits; but we adults, new converts or not, likely also have habits to *un*do. We do not know when old habits, culture, or ways of thinking may try to reassert themselves. It is especially important to be aware of friends and situations that contradict our Christian way of life. Just as a recovering addict needs to be aware around the old friends in the old life styles, so do we. Besides practicing this Christian way of life, it is important that we learn to translate what we are doing for those who do not know our Christian language. Be aware that, as with most change, we may also be surprised by resistance within ourselves. We need to believe that the change is possible, and work to obey.

Ideas for congregations

Pastors can take a few moments in prayers and sermons to name specific sins and that they are forgiven. Attaching forgiveness to specific, not generalized, sins

increases our awareness of its value. Pastors can take a few moments before a general confession to mention a few sins for people to think about. It is perhaps not helpful to put specific sins into a confession read aloud by the congregation, because we do not all sin in the same way. Congregations can offer Bible studies that teach about our actions. They could also offer Scripture memory work for everyone and spelling bee-like get-togethers. Congregations can take time to celebrate together in community.

These educational tools in Christian life and mission

A richer Christian life flows from this active kind of learning. In the midst of the normal ups and down of life, we can enjoy growing in the fruits of the Spirit. How wonderful it would be to live with more love, more joy, more peace, and more patience for one another! Imagine growing so that kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control characterize us! Or imagine actually discovering that we aren't as worried about the future because God has helped us to grow in trusting His care and providing. We don't know the limits of the good that God intends toward us and in us. We can keep growing into it and obeying more and more.

Obedience is of great value. When we learn without doing, our brains are being trained to disbelieve the reality of our cure in Christ. When we learn with doing, our bodies reinforce what our minds have heard: that God is faithful and we belong to Christ. The benefits to us of obedience are significant. C. S. Lewis wrote from the perspective of Screwtape, a demon, "Our cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending, to do [God's] will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys."[14] Holding to doing as Jesus commanded even when difficulties come is hard.

It is in those hard times both that we grow more and that other people notice. It is noticeable when we can hold to honesty, to generosity, to kindness, and even to joy in difficulty. A man tells his neighbor that he cracked the neighbor's window. That neighbor may be upset, but he also knows that he lives next to an honest man. This is Christian living that is at the same moment mission work. A woman suffering and slowly dying in a care center radiates Christ's peace and joy to the staff and fellow patients. This is Christian living and mission work. A congregation surrounds that same woman with love, noticeable for the many visits and ongoing care. This is Christian living and mission work. Any of those situations may open a door for further conversation about Jesus. Through the Word and Means of Grace, God gives forgiveness and strength for living and obeying that flows out from us in noticeable ways.

Christians living their lives growing in obedience and the fruits of the Spirit stand out in a winsome way. Much as a first-time grandmother radiates joy and can't

wait to show newborn's pictures to anyone she meets, so we, too, can overflow with joy. Speaking about Christ can also flow from our joy and peace. When we are growing in knowing God's Word and growing in obeying what we are taught, our lives keep changing. The richness added to our Christian lives and how we live and speak shares Christ with the world.

In conclusion, we Lutherans live in this amazing freedom of salvation by grace alone—*Justified*, and we easily lose sight of the gift of education in our Christian walk—*Do it*. Reducing Christian education to teaching knowledge leaves out much that is life changing and allows part of "teaching them *to obey* everything I have commanded you" slip through our fingers. The educational tools of doing, allowing oneself to make mistakes and try again, repeating to practice skills, and striving to obey within community all enable us to incorporate the learning.

Learning our faith in this active way can allow our lives to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The fruits of the Spirit can fill our lives with richness and banish much of the quiet desperation. Learning to live with the fruits of the Spirit is how education in faith ties to mission work. For living with joy and peace and patience and more in the midst of circumstances just like our neighbors gives a living and active witness to the difference Christ makes.[15] Our lives are our mission work. Can there be a greater witness?

Endnotes

[1] Acts 16–31(Unless otherwise noted, all Bible verses are quoted from the ESV.) and Acts 4:34 are two examples.

[2] R. Kolb, T. J. Wengert, and C. P. Arand, "The Augsburg Confession" in *The Book of Concord: the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 40 (AC VI).

[3] Other instructions from the New Testament: husbands love your wives, wives respect your husbands, work for your overseers as if you were working for Christ (from Ephesians 5–6), "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph 4:31–32). "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you; sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. . . . But now you must put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another" (Col 3:5, 8–9).

[4] Paula Polk Lillard and Lynn Lillard Jessen, *Montessori from the Start: The Child at Home from Birth to Age Three* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 48.

[5] Paula Polk Lillard, *Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood* (New York: Schocken Books, 1996), 36.

[6] C. S. Lewis, *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* (Including *The Screwtape letters*) (New York: Harper Collins, 2001),195.

[7] Ibid., 223.

[8] George MacDonald, *The Marquis' Secret* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1982), 143.

[9] Rima Shore, *Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development* (New York: Families and Work Institute, 1997), 17.
[10] Lillard, *Montessori Today*, 26.
[11] I remember the first time it hit me that I was responsible for sharing Christ with my son. After that I made myself add little faith comments, like mentioning that God made the rain. I am happy to report that after several years of this I am more comfortable talking about my faith with my children.
[12] Martin Luther, *Large Catechism* (Exhortation to Confession).
[13] *One Thousand Gifts* by Ann Voskamp, is a wonderful book about thankfulness.
[14] Lewis, *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics*, 208.
[15] Years ago I heard the observation from a friend, "When God allows a non- Christian to suffer something, He allows a Christian to suffer the same thing so that the difference Christ makes will be revealed in him."

"Oh, Worship the King" Understanding Culture and Semiotics in Christian Worship

Greg Klotz

Abstract: God has hard-wired us with unique qualities and behaviors that find their ultimate fulfillment only when He is at the center of worship. Worship is a ritualistic performed expression that serves to foreshadow our ultimate communion with God. It is a structured encounter centered on a dialogue between God and man. Three analytical frameworks from anthropology help to focus on the uniqueness of the human in ritual. Applying these to the worship setting provides valuable insights to church workers for discerning the choice of semiotically significant socio-cultural media and aesthetics that contextualize God's message effectively—and avoiding possible syncretistic pitfalls in the worship design—allowing church members to affectively express their identity as God's people.

The goal of all worship is to receive what God has to offer through the preaching and teaching of His Word and the administration of the Sacraments. In the Lutheran circles, we often emphasize that the German word *Gottesdienst* means both "God's service to us" as well as "our service to God."[1] The idea of service as a work of the people comes from Romans 12:1 (*τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν*) "the work[2] or service of the people" in offering praise.[3]

This reciprocity in worship is grounded in communication. Communication is innate to human beings. People need to communicate with one another and with God. Social groups form and create identity through communication. All interaction in and with the real world involves communication. It is of fundamental interest to us to understand the dynamics of communication in order to understand human

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behavior and the need for ritual.

Human beings communicate through signs[4] that have an agreed upon meaning within a social group. Any sign that has a meaning has a semiotic significance[5] for the individual and other members of the social group who have shared similar experiences that could add to the meaning of that sign. Basically, a sign can be anything perceivable through the five senses. Communication takes place between two people when there is a shared significance between signs in a social setting.[6] When a person visits another culture, often times that person does not understand the signs; they hold no semiotic significance for that individual. That individual is not part of the social group. Signs can be compounded, joined together, or juxtaposed to carry multiple meanings (polysemous[7]) across various cultural domains or venues. Signs are communicated through cultural media[8] and are governed by cultural aesthetics.[9] Let me illustrate how signs work with an example from a cultural media form: music.

"Oh Worship the King, All glorious above." The hymn holds no inherent meaning or value; that is, the hymn has no meaning apart from how you have experienced it. As a sign, it signifies a meaning referring to the time you first sang it. As your experience with this hymn continues, there is a diachronic accumulated meaning of other experiences that further enrich the meaning of the hymn for you. Your experience with the hymn has a shared significance with the members of your social group at the time it is sung and accumulates semiotic significance over time.

Because of your and others' experiences with this hymn, you may use it as a sign to discuss its meaning by comparing your experiences.[10] The hymn now has semiotic significance for your social group. There is no need to think about communicating and using signs; we innately need to communicate.

Ritual[11] is another innate behavioral characteristic of all human beings. We are all created by God not merely to interact with ritual and others in that world, but also with the innate desire to know God and communicate with Him. It is this desire to know and communicate with Him that gives organization and meaning to the individual's world.

Through ritual, human beings can communicate and experience God (the otherworldly). In ritual, people transcend the mundane. In the ritual process, the social group makes use of everyday objects, altering their sign values and distinguishing their semiotic ritual value from normal value.[12] Ritual is performed as a celebration of the communal identity and the reification of its values.

In 1908, anthropologist Arnald Van Gennep presented a three-step structure to ritual in his book, *Les Rites de Passage*. Van Gennep observed how ritual, as a social performance, changed the social identity of the person who underwent initiation rites from boyhood to adult. His studies showed that initiation rites share a three-stage structure: (1) separation, (2) liminality, and (3) reintegration.[13]

In the first stage, the individual is separated from the normal social group for a specific purpose. The individual is separated perhaps by special dress or markings. In

the second stage of the rite, the individual enters a liminal stage in which he is neither a child nor an adult. Whereas society is governed by norms, the liminal is a stage of anti-structure in contrast to normal social structure. The final stage involves the reintegration of the individual into the social group with a new social status. Van Gennep further observed how common utilitarian objects used in the community were given specific nuance and meaning during the ceremony that aided in the final changed status of the individual.

Later, Victor Turner became fascinated with the second stage of Van Gennep's theory. In the liminal stage,[14] Turner observed that common objects of semiotic significance, which were separated in the first stage, were redefined and repurposed. He also discovered that the actual transforming experience of individuals occurred in this stage in the ritual performance, not in the final stage. Redefining and repurposing objects from the normal social order caused alternative semiotic significance, allowing the social group to transcend normal space and time momentarily. This performance affirmed the individual's identity as part of the community.

In addition, Turner observed that the polysemy, i.e., multiple meanings of the objects, adds to the liminal experience.[15] Objects, individually and in combination, share a semiotic significance in the present, synchronically with other objects in the ritual, but also a diachronic accumulation of semiotic significance collected in subsequent ritual performances. Turner observes that these polysemes are not limited merely to objects but include movement, sound, smell, speech, and all cultural aesthetics used in this liminal stage.

Important for Turner, the polysemous nature of the cultural media ushers the individual into *communitas*: a moment in the liminal stage when the individual experiences a oneness with the group and the historical community. At this point, the individual no longer is aware of time or spatial dimensions and loses a sense of self as an individual and perceives self as a member of a larger whole. Feelings of atemporality and non-spatiality also mark the liminal stage.[16]

Turner concludes that the individual and community social group experience *communitas* through familiarity with and knowledge of the structure of the ritual and the altered cultural media. Ritual structure is normally fixed, allowing individuals to develop a muscle memory that backgrounds mental awareness of structure and frees up the individual and social group to foreground the experience as a whole and achieve *communitas*, transcendence of the normal world into the otherworldly.

Later on, Turner developed a theory of performance. All performances or performance-like events are structured in three stages. Revisiting the three stages of ritual, we can now label their structure in terms of a performance: In the first stage, those involved in the performance put on costumes, apply makeup, ready the stage, etc. The liminal stage begins when the curtain opens. The curtain is a codified referent[17] that signifies the altered use of objects and alerts the audience to the otherworldly experience. Getting "caught up" in the performance, either as actor or

audience, is *communitas* – the oneness of the group. The final stage is the lowering of the curtain wherein people and objects return to their normal state in the social structure.

Folklorist John McDowell offers insight into understanding human nature in communication by analyzing distinctive performative speech discourses in ritual. McDowell has observed that ritual discourse uses a variety of cultural media and cultural aesthetics with distinctive stylized patterns. McDowell observes that stylized discourse is essential in leading participants into *communitas*. His observations lead him to describe ritual discourse as a *commemorative discourse*.[18] The term *commemorative* refers to rituals in which people *remember together*.

In ritual, two discursive patterns emerge: *informative* and *commemorative*.[19] The informative pattern is characterized by rapid speech, commemorative by metered, slower, rhythmic speech. Vital to commemorative discourse is what McDowell calls *words of the ancestors*, or the core narrative, which are the immanently true core values believed and followed by the community. These words are the ancient words and formulas that remain foundational and unchanged. Informational speech discourse applies the core values of the ancestral words to the present-day context. The prosodic interplay between commemorative and informational discourse is significant,[20] as the interplay between these speech prosodies produces what McDowell calls a "speech narcosis"[21] producing the feeling of transcendence and otherworldliness.

Robert Plant Armstrong offers yet another valuable tool in understanding what is innately human in the use of aesthetics as communicative sign values within culture. Armstrong observes that in any given culture, certain cultural media distinguish themselves from utilitarian media, for example, a wine glass vis-à-vis a beautiful communion chalice, not merely because of the formal structure of the object, but the qualities (aesthetics) that carry specific value in the culture. The use of color, texture, height, design, proportions, sound, and smell, etc., are intentional choices used by the artist to *present*, not *represent*, the core values and allegiances of the social group. These cultural media present the core metaphor of that culture and are an independent paradigm of communication.[22] The panoply of aesthetic paradigms, across the cultural media, all share equal communicative potential.[23] The mere presence of the object affects, without the need for words. His term for this characteristic in communicative cultural media is *affecting presence* because it has an affective semiotic significance shared by the social group. Speaking as a theologian/anthropologist, I find Armstrong's insight into aesthetics to be very incarnational; the core values of the social group exist in, with and under multiple cultural media and aesthetic forms.[24]

Because Christian worship is ritual, these three theoretical approaches teach us about our innate behavior as human beings in the worship setting. All worship structures are human and, as such, use and alter signs affectively and effectively the same way all over the world. Let us examine a common form of liturgical structure

with the aforementioned theories.

The charts on the next page show the flow of movement and media during a common form of liturgical worship. We use common cultural media in the worship service: music, speech, candles, etc. We also use cultural aesthetics: stylized and performed speech, specific tonalities in music. What we do with these signs together and separately is a part of their altered semiotic significance.

From Victor Turner and performance theory we can identify the three stages of ritual organization. First, the celebrant sets himself aside with a robe, a cross, and a Bible. The altar may be prepared for Holy Communion. Pre-service candles are lit. An organ plays in the background as people file into the church. All of these are signs that signify the introductory stage of the ritual.

The second stage begins with the Invocation. These words are a codified referent to opening the ritual. With this referent, everyone knows that songs are now hymns, not entertainment; the pastor's words are God's Word; his absolution is God's absolution.

As the second stage progresses, what McDowell refers to as the words of the ancestors,[25] or the core narrative (Scripture), is present through a diversity of media. We sing God's Word, we recite God's Word in creedal form; we confess God's Word in public confession and absolution; we read directly from the words of Scripture; we eat and drink God's Word in the form of the Sacrament; and God's Word is preached, an act that applies God's Word to present-day situations and that reifies or makes apparent the identity and core values of the congregation for the present day.

The progression of the service allows for an intensification of sign values' becoming polysemous: the candles are referents not only to light, but also our prayers ascending; the cup is not merely a container, it is a chalice and the wine is the blood of Christ, etc. Sign values in this secondary stage may be polyvalent serving as individual or corporal referents and carry weighted meaning. For example, a hymn sung within the congregation carries meaning as sainted "grandma's favorite" may also carry creedal meaning when sung by the congregation.

In worship, the Sacrament is actually a ritual within a ritual. The singing of the Sanctus marks the first stage: bread and wine are set apart for a specific purpose. The words of Institution are used to initiate the liminal stage. These words are codified referents to the otherworldly: the cup is a chalice, not an ordinary cup; the bread is the body of Christ, and the wine is Christ's blood. After the celebration, the elements and objects reintegrate into normal structure and sign value. They are bread and wine, and the chalice is a cup.

Although the feeling of oneness happens at any point in the ritual, the Words of Institution, the density of cultural media, polysemous and polyvalent signs,[26] and the build-up of sensory stimulation all contribute to and produce a communal oneness or *communitas* in which the feeling of transcendence and otherworldliness most likely will occur. Individuals may feel at one with the group and the absence of singularity

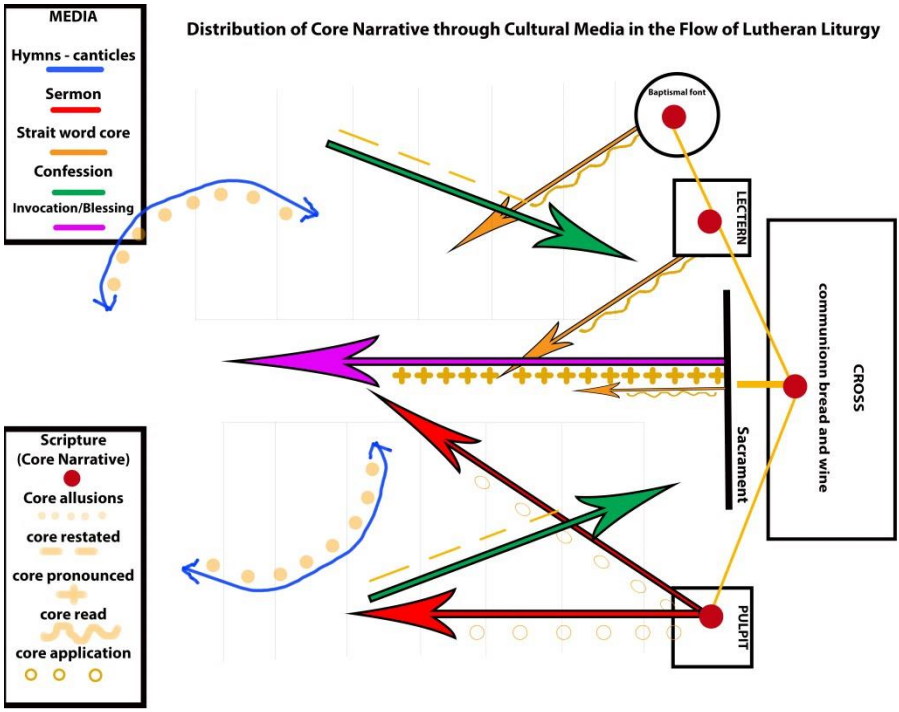

Figure 1.

PROSODIC SHIFTS AND SENSORIAL DENSITY DURING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE LUTHERAN LITURGY

Discourse/sense																	
Commemorative	*[1]		*[2]	*		***		* * * *			**	*	***	*		*	
Informative		*	*		*		*	* * * *	**	*					*		*

Moving																	
Tasting																	
Touching																	
Seeing[3]																	
Talking/singing										[4]							
Hearing																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

1. Invocation	2. Hymn	3. Confession	4. Absolution	5. Hymn	6. Lessons
7. Creed	8. Sermon	9. Hymn (offering)	10. General prayers	11. Words of Institution	12. Agnus Dei
13. Sacrament	14. Nunc Dimittis	15. Prayer	16. Benediction	17. Hymn	

[1] The number of * indicates a level of use. For instance, one star is one utterance. There are three asterisks for the three readings from the lectionary.
[2] * in alternating sequence between informative and commemorative discourse indicates which discourse initiates that part of the liturgy.
[3] This is intentional seeing, watching the pastor during the sermon; watching the movement to the altar for the Sacrament.
[4] Gray indicates that at times there is a litany involving participation by the congregation in the prayers of the church.

Table 1.

when singing the Agnus Dei together. Atemporality and non-spatiality occur as the moment is shared with the group and at the same time referencing the historical context of all who have previously partaken of this meal: "the communion of saints." The accumulated density of sensorial stimulation over the course of the rite—singing, speaking, now smelling, tasting, moving, hearing the directives "take and eat"—moves the worship toward *communitas* and transcendence. The transcendence in this performance is a foreshadowing of the celebration of "the feast that is to come."

The worship service then concludes with the singing of the last hymn and the Benediction, which signals a return to the normal world.

After the service, the pastor, standing to greet the congregants, may wonder if his sermon was doctrinally sound and if everyone heard and received the message. Nevertheless, upon exiting the sanctuary, congregants may state, "Beautiful service," "I love that hymn we sang," or "I really feel energized or uplifted." Whereas the pastor is trained theologically to spiritually attend to the congregation, performing the ritual, remembering together, and playing[27] with and restructuring the cultural media in the ritual are the acts that reify or make clear the identity of the individual and the group. The ritual is not solely an issue of informative or instructional communication, but a performance of identity and core values. The cultural / aesthetic labels, e.g., describing the service as *beautiful*, actually mean that the person has been confirmed in his/her identity as a Christian.

Whereas all human beings organize and experience ritual in the three stages, they do not share the same affective experiences and may use dissimilar cultural media and aesthetics in communication and creating social identity. Take, for example, African American cultural aesthetics.[28]

African American's have a different social identity, marked by cultural aesthetics, from other social groups. The ritual structure will progress through the three-stage process, but with specific cultural aesthetics laden with semiotic significance for the social group. Music employs call and response, a type of antiphonal individual with group response. Competitiveness is a cultural value and may surface in forms of singing or other worship areas. They include corporal body movements and clapping: body moves on beats 1 and 3 and clapping is on 2 and 4. Sermons, as well as singing, are stylized to begin quietly and gain momentum in the middle and raise the roof at the end. Singing is from the chest and, like the sermon, starts out slow and grows. Vocal gruffness, timbre, accentuation are among desirable cultural aesthetics for communicating in this cultural medium. The use of rhyme and assonance is stylized in groups of three. Call-and-response occurs during the preached message, and music may be interjected as well.

If the structure and the affect of ritual is a human phenomenon, where is God in all of this? God is exactly where He promises to be, namely, in His Word and Sacraments. In worship, He comes to us in His Word, and we perform His word back to Him, much as a confessional response.[29] His Word is performed using cultural

media in accordance with those cultural aesthetics that are accepted in the social group to communicate that word effectively and affectively.

In many churches and denominations today, there is an ongoing controversy regarding contemporary and traditional[30] worship. Currently in our culture, much effort goes into designing worship. Many congregations have worship leaders. Many congregations do not follow a liturgy. Both worship structures contain the characteristic three stages of ritual. However, in their polemic against each other, both groups may ground the source of transcendence in the liminal stage in the cultural media and aesthetics instead of in God's Word (the core narrative). This ultimately leads to syncretism or contextualization.

As can be surmised from our analysis of the liturgy, traditional form allows a familiarity with the structure, contributing to the experience of *communitas, transcendence* and *oneness*, both synchronic and diachronic. Traditional worship has maintained the centrality of the core narrative. It allows for a diversity of cultural media and aesthetics in expressing and communicating that core narrative. The intensification and density of the signs largely assure that the liminal *communitas* experience will be grounded in God's word.

What if, however, the experience of *communitas* is not grounded in God's Word? If *communitas* is not grounded in God's Word, the experience of transcendence or the otherworldly will be grounded in the cultural media or cultural aesthetics. It must be emphasized that the source causing the experience of *communitas* constitutes the difference between religious syncretism and contextualization.

If God's Word is not the core narrative that defines the identity of the congregation leading to experiencing *communitas* in worship, the result is replacing God with media and aesthetics as the cause. In that case, the cultural medium or aesthetic has actually affectively named as its core value something other than the means by which God reveals His presence, i.e., His Word and Sacraments. Ultimately, the individuals or community have made or created God in *their* image. They have effectively made Him a part of their community based on *their* standards and experiences, not on Scripture.

For example, if someone believes that only through frenetic worship, singing, dancing, vibrating, applauding, that the presence of God is felt, a cultural medium and aesthetic has replaced the core narrative. In this example, transcendence is based on the individual medium or aesthetic and not on God's Word. This is syncretism.[31]

Let us look at an example of possible syncretism in worship. Here, instead of an analysis of the accepted three-stage structure of ritual, the use of cultural media and aesthetics, together with the signs that lead individuals to the transcendent feeling of *communitas*, needs to be analyzed.

There are those who say that only traditional worship forms should be used to worship God. The possible obsession with form and the use of only traditional cultural media in worship not only centers worship on a specific form and cultural

media, but it also grounds the identity of the individual and the group in those specific media. For example, claiming that the organ is the only correct instrument to use in worship or that preaching from the right side of the altar is the only correct way to preach claims God to be present or worshiped in a specific way that is not a part of the core narrative. As a result, the danger is an ethno-specific or denominational God, in which the liturgy is the core narrative and not God.

On the other hand, most contemporary worship reflects the apparent need to use the latest Christian songs found on the radio. This approach does not guarantee a better communication of the core narrative and can be equally syncretistic and run the risk of secularizing God as an item of commodification. Musicians may select songs based on their popularity within the music group leading worship. Many times the words or lyrics of the song are overlooked for doctrinal soundness in favor of the song's emotive aesthetics. The need for something new and different is fueled by cultural consumerism and the contemporary Christian music market. It is grounded in popularity and aesthetics. Transcendence and the feeling of oneness are based on the aesthetics of popularity and not necessarily the core narrative.

I offer the following illustration to show that the polarized polemic misidentifies the real issue. The issue is the identity of the individual as Christian in the social group, which ultimately is reified or made apparent through a shared semiotic knowledge of the signs and the use of cultural media and aesthetics to communicate God's Word. It has nothing to do with an objective correct form.

What happens when someone who has grown up with traditional worship attends contemporary worship? The individual most likely feels lost, not because of the lack of theological truth, but because of the unfamiliarity with the cultural media and aesthetics used to communicate. There is a semiotic breakdown in the significance of objects, and there is no affective meaning that links the person with the community. Over time, diachronically, the individual has developed competency in understanding the semiotic significance of cultural media in traditional worship and a projection screen, for example, has no semiotic significance in that setting.

The same dynamic holds true for new Christians who have no prior experience in worship. They will be equally lost in a liturgical or a contemporary worship service. An identity has not been built up for the new believer, based on God's Word preached and confessed, which orients the person as to how the objects in worship are to be viewed and used. A person's identity as a Christian will develop over time as he becomes adept in the meaning of the signs, cultural media, and aesthetics used in worship. New Christians will adopt ritual expression over time, and their identity will develop within cultural media of that specific community of believers.

Being aware of human behavior and the innate need for ritual expression and structure should aid worship leaders in assuring that the cultural media and aesthetics give God's Word an affecting presence. Worship leaders need to discern what media and aesthetics need be studied within each congregation to assure that *communitas* is experienced through God's Word and not grounded only in a media aesthetic. In so

doing, God's Word becomes contextualized[32] in the social group and not syncretized.

Contextualization of God's Word in worship occurs in all cultures. Worship allows people to celebrate God's Word as it speaks to them through diverse cultural media and aesthetics in the ritual ceremony. Through worship, God's people also respond through specific cultural media and aesthetics, welcoming God to be part of their community. Through worship we are in communion with God through His Word, and God is with us and among us (Emmanuel). He is clothed with cultural media and aesthetics that are semiotically significant and thus "is clothed" as a contextualized part of the community. He is welcomed as American, Indian, African, and Latin American, sharing with them in their culture, media, and aesthetics.

In light of the polemic between traditional and contemporary worship, church workers should not force any specific form on the congregation, nor should a worship form be forcibly changed. These are not issues of modernity or popularity but identity. Neither should a particular form of worship be used as an evangelistic gimmick to gain greater membership. Worship is about the identity of the community and the cultural media and aesthetics used reify or make apparent this identity. Using ritual as a gimmick defeats its purpose and decenters the focus from God's Word. If there is change, it should come from within the congregation, for the congregation. Only they can change the semiotics and cultural forms that identify them.

For church workers working cross-culturally, the research is even more vital. Since church worker may not share the same culture, it will be necessary to study and know the secular diversity of media and aesthetics and their semiotic significance before developing a worship ritual with them. Involving people from within a culture who know the signs, as well as what are acceptable media and aesthetics[33] to communicate affectively and effectively the core narrative, is absolutely necessary, since the worker will be unfamiliar with the complete semiotic significance across these expressive domains.

The cross-cultural worker, however, must be aware that not all cultural aesthetics may lead to contextualization. Two examples can illustrate my point. In India, breaking a coconut over a stone is an expression of repentance. This symbolizes the breaking of the heart. Should this act be used in Christian worship? Will this cultural medium and aesthetic, together with its semiotic significance, mean the same thing?

This act probably should not be used in Christian worship for a number of reasons. Although it signifies repentance, it is part of a Hindu ceremony offering to Krishna. "The heart is the coconut and it is converted by the fibre (sic) of desires. The water that flows out is the *samskara* or the 'earned merit.' The fibers on the surface are the desires. We must strip the heart of all desires and offer the core without the fibre (sic). It then becomes an offering to God."[34] The semiotic significance of the event is compromised; the action and the medium (the coconut)

are cross-culturally polysemous. Any time one cultural medium or object that has religious significance is celebrated in a ritual that has distinct and separate semiotic significance it will lead to syncretism and the assimilation of one of the deities into the semiotic significance of the other religious system. This is most notably achieved in *Santeria* in Latin America.

In one of my classes, a student from the Cameroons shared with me a phrase which his people used for God. He cupped his right hand and, while slapping it on the palm of his left hand, bowed his head and said, "Lion." He also said that one of the priestly garments of Christ was a lion- or leopard-colored print cloth. Could this be contextualization or syncretism? Most likely it does achieve contextualization and clothe Christ with appropriate cultural media and aesthetics that carry semiotic significance. It makes Christ "one of them," and He is welcomed as a recognizable part of the community. Why? Most likely because, first, there is no religious significance to a lion, and the semiotic reference is one of power. Second, the cloth is used by royalty in the social group and thus speaks of Christ's kingly attributes. Third, he was a Baptist pastor and a mature Christian who obviously negotiated the semiotic significance as not syncretistic with regional religious beliefs.

In conclusion, anthropology offers insight into the unique behavioral and innate qualities of human beings in ritual worship. The need for ritual is innate in all human beings, and the use of the same ritual structure is found in all organized human ritual. Ritual structures are common to all human beings, and all people experience moments of transcendence in performing such rituals. God has endowed all human beings with a diversity of cultural beauty and communication so that through His Word in ritual expression He may come to His creation in an affective way, add people to His kingdom, and provide safe haven for the growth and sustainability of faith of the individual and the community of the faithful. Through ritual expression, God also provides a way for His creation to make Him a part of their lives, celebrate their life in Him, and clothe Him with the beauty of their culture. The church worker can avail him/herself of these theories in developing contextual worship services that are faithful to the Word of God.

Endnotes

[1] Sally Morgenthaler, *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1999), 47

[2] Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1988), 30–31.

[3] Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. IV (Grand Rapids, Michigan; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 216. Kittel shows both *λατρείαν* (service) is etymologically related to *laos* people and the work that they do. In the LXX it refers to the work of the priests; by the New Testament Epistles, *leitourgia* is used more as a specific form of service.

[4] A sign is any real world object or phenomena that has acquired an established meaning to an individual or to a social group.

[5] Peter L. Burger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), 35–36.
[6] Ibid., 38.
[7] Polysemes are signs that have multiple meanings within a diversity of semantic domains.
[8] Cultural media is any cultural way (media) used to communicate, which hold a semiotic significance in the social group. This includes music, speech, dance, art, etc. Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 23.
[9] Cultural aesthetics are aesthetic qualities that function as signs within a social group and are attached to cultural media, both of which nuance the semiotic significance of the sign. For example: what is considered ugly, beautiful, with special attention given to what is and is not acceptable to use with specific cultural media. Robert Plant Armstrong, *The Affecting Presence: An Essay in Humanistic Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 47.
[10] Burger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 68.
[11] Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 157–158.
[12] Burger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 35.
[13] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1982), 24–30.
[14] Ibid., 27.
[15] Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 25.
[16] Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 84. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995), 96ff. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 50ff.
[17] A codified referent is a sign that serves to mark changes in the performance such as a curtain in the theater. These referents are an accepted marker by the community and alerts them to the change that is about to take place. An example is the beginning of many Christian worship services with a special hymn/song or with the statement, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."
[18] John H. McDowell, "Folklore as Commemorative Discourse," *The Journal of American Folklore* vol. 105. No. 418 (Autumn, 1992), p. 417.
[19] Ibid., 404, 412–413.
[20] Ibid., 419.
[21] Regarding speech narcosis, McDowell explains, "Underlying these impressions of autonomy and transcendence is a physiological effect I would label speech narcosis. As we have seen, the dramatic levels of speech efficacy associated with commemorative discourse originate in a confluence of two significant factors: on the acoustic plane, a movement toward regular speech prosodies; on the semantic plane, a movement toward the evocation of immanent truth. We are dealing here with a two-punch combination that first creates an affective receptivity by preparing the central nervous system of the recipient, and then drives home a transcendental revelation by invoking a privileged vision of ultimate reality. Speech narcosis, the mood-altering capacity of speech, derives from rhythmic enhancement in the acoustic medium working upon the central and peripheral nervous systems in complex ways that scientists are now beginning to understand." (ibid., 4418)
[22] Paradigm of communication would be an independent (self-standing) system of communicative cultural media without the need for verbal explanation.
[23] Robert Plant Armstrong, *The Affecting Presence*, 25, 75.

[24] I purposely choose the Lutheran theological phrase *in, with and under* used to explain that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are not merely symbolic *representations* of Christ's presence, but rather that He is *present* "in" the elements through His word, "with" the elements, and "under" the form of the elements as a description of Armstrong's distinction between *represent* and affecting *presence* and it's incarnational significance. Neither I nor Armstrong are alluding to the fact that he is referring to a sacramental presence in cultural media and their aesthetics.
[25] John H. McDowell, "Folklore as Commemorative Discourse," 417.
[26] Polyvalent (polyvalence) signs are those that have different meanings for different people.
[27] Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 27.
[28] In speaking about African American cultural media and aesthetics, I am not attempting to limit this diverse cultural group to one stereotypical cultural description. I am emphasizing the cultural media and aesthetics that were, and still are grounded, in the diversity of African culture.
[29] The Greek word, ὁμολογέω, means to confess. Literally, it means to "to say the same thing." In confession, we repeat back to God, what He has told us. Doing so means that we are in agreement with who He is and what He says we are. Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. V (Grand Rapids, Michigan; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 200.
[30] By "liturgical" I mean a specific form or structure of worship that has been used for centuries in different denominations. In the rest of the paper, I use term "traditional" to refer to the use of a specific liturgy. I use "contemporary" to refer to another worship format. Generically, all ritual is liturgical in that liturgical speaks of a fixed structure. Ritual is a fixed structure in its three stages.
[31] Syncretism occurs when God is named or made part of the community by conforming Him to cultural or religious values expressed through the use of signs in cultural media and aesthetics apart from His Word. (my definition)
[32] Different from syncretism, contextualization occurs when the cultural media and aesthetics are used in such a way that the core narrative is communicated more effectively in the culture of the people. As in a confession, the cultural media and aesthetics repeat back to God exactly what God has revealed in His Word.
[33] Armstrong, *The Affecting Presence*, 29.
[34] Charlene Leslie-Chaden, *A Compendium of the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba* (Vishruti Prints, 2004), 386.

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Location, Location, Location

Jeremy Pekari

Abstract: Education in the Lutheran church primarily takes place in a classroom. Unfortunately, learning doesn't always transfer from there into the everyday life of disciples on the mission field. Educators must move beyond the classroom walls to design intentional learning experiences that more closely relate to the real life contexts in which the content will be used. This article uses prayer as an example of an important aspect of the life of a disciple that is limited by teaching *about* in a classroom, but can be enhanced through intentionally designed experiences across the life of a congregation. Readers are introduced to a simple three-part design structure to enable them to develop learning experiences in a variety of learning arenas.

Learning to cook? You can read lots of cookbooks, but eventually you need to get into the kitchen and crack some eggs. Learning to play basketball? You can read playbooks and even watch others play, but eventually you need to get into the gym and shoot some free throws. Learning to paint? You can read art history texts, and visit museums to see the masterpieces of great artists, but eventually you'll need to get into the studio and get some burnt sienna on your brush to see what happens on the canvas.

How does learning happen?

Learning happens in a variety of ways. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes all come into play when we're talking about learning in depth. It's one thing to read about a topic, but it's another thing to do it yourself, and it's another thing to have the confidence that you can. This principle is true in secular arenas like physical education and the arts. It's also very true in Lutheran education. There is a lot of action learning that takes place as the Church makes disciples. It's one thing to learn *about* Jesus. It's another thing to follow Him. Learning to be a disciple living out the Great Commission? You can read lots of books on it, but eventually you need to go to worship, spend time in fellowship with the Body of Christ, serve others, and share Jesus with those who need His grace.

In his introduction to *Theology is for Proclamation*, Gerhard Forde writes about

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the difference between First and Second Order discourse by describing two people talking of love.[1] Imagine a wife asking her husband, "Do you love me?" He responds, "What is love?" He then proceeds to talk *about* love. She will ask again "Do you love me?" until he actually demonstrates his love. It's one thing to talk about love, but it's another thing entirely to love. Classroom environments provide an opportunity to talk about Jesus, but following Jesus entails more than a discussion about facts.

John Westerhoff began focusing on the importance of breaking through the classroom walls for more authentic education back in the 1970's. Here he writes of the dangers of merely talking about Christianity in the classroom:

> You can teach about religion, but you cannot teach people faith. Thus, this paradigm places Christian education in the strange position of making secondary matters primary. . . . It appears that as Christian faith has diminished, the schooling-instructional paradigm has encouraged us to busy ourselves with teaching *about* Christian religion. . . . The schooling-instructional paradigm easily leads us into thinking that we have done our jobs if we teach children *about* Christianity.[2]

It is dangerous to believe that education has occurred when one merely teaches about being a disciple. We must not feel comfortable with a classroom approach that neglects to bring learning into the everyday life of God's people. Disciples are formed in many other areas of life beyond the classroom.

Learning to pray

Consider prayer as an example. It's one thing to read books and learn about prayer. It's another thing entirely to pray. Christian education seeks to shape well-rounded disciples who not only know the facts of Christianity, but also have the skills and attitudes that correspond.

Where did you learn to pray? Think through your prayer life. When did you start praying, and why? Who was involved in teaching you to pray? Where were you when you learned to pray? When did you start praying on your own?

I'm sure that a classroom was involved somewhere in my prayer training. I spent a couple of years in Lutheran schools, confirmation classes, Sunday School, and VBS. I learned about prayer in all of those, but the practice of prayer didn't come only in the classroom for me. I learned to pray in the sanctuary, at the kitchen table, in my bedroom, and in God's creation.

Whether it is prayer, or the Lord's Supper, Holy Absolution, or the Creed, we do our people a disservice by learning about the Christian life only in the classroom. We have the capacity to educate powerfully when we add other educational arenas to the mix in which students can not only learn about, but actually engage in living out the

Christian life. Learning is deeper and longer lasting when the content matches the correct context.

Where do we learn to pray?

While most intentional education takes place in the classrooms of the LCMS, it is vital that we begin to consider a variety of other locations in which learning can take place. Authentic education takes place as close to the real life contexts in which learning is used. For prayer, think about the variety of places where prayer happens, and then intentionally create educational experiences there. A few examples might be the home, the sanctuary, in the midst of God's creation, and on the mission field.

The Lord's Prayer fits naturally into the home. Fathers and mothers teaching children the faith do well to expose kids to prayer from the youngest age. Both scripted and unscripted prayers can be taught intentionally in the home. The cycle of the day, or the cycle of life can offer opportunities to expand upon the Lord's Prayer and its petitions. Be intentional about teaching prayer in the home.

The sanctuary is also a natural place to learn to pray. Corporate prayer is essential to the worship life of the congregation. Learning to pray, praise, and give thanks with the Body of Christ offers the Christian an opportunity to suffer with those who suffer and rejoice with those who rejoice. The language of prayer learned in the context of public worship among the entire Body of Christ produces pray-ers who have a fuller, broader, and deeper prayer vocabulary. Learning prayer in this context expands one beyond personal needs to include the entire life of Church and world in prayer. Be intentional about forming pray-ers in the sanctuary.

God's creation is another location where one can learn the wonder of prayer beyond the walls of a classroom. Where else can one really learn to pray a psalm of praise than standing under the heavens that declare God's handiwork? I remember learning to praise God for His creation from my older brother as we drove along a gravel road in the Iowa cornfields at sunrise. The sky was vivid with reds, oranges, purples, and pinks as the sun peaked from behind an old farmstead. He said, "Grab the Bible and read Psalm 19." "The heavens declare the glory of God . . ." And, we hallowed His name from the bucket seats of an old maroon station wagon. You can't fabricate experiences like that inside a schoolroom looking at photographs. Be intentional about designing opportunities to teach prayer in the wild.

The mission field is also a place where learning takes place. Prayer can be learned in the homes of neighbors as you pray for them. New missionaries learn the importance of prayer and desire to make it a part of their lives. It can be talked about in the classroom, but the vitality of a life of prayer becomes real on the mission field. Prayer might even be welcomed by people from other cultures looking for spiritual support.

Learning to pray intentionally

If prayer belongs in the home, sanctuary, creation, and on the mission field, then how does one intentionally lead learning experiences in these environments? Understanding By Design (UBD) can help. Understanding By Design is an educational design process developed by Wiggins and McTighe to encourage more authentic education in schools.[3] It is also readily transferable to designing educational experiences across the life of the Church. Here I will share a stripped down version of UBD that can be used by Lutherans who are looking to intentionally shape disciples beyond the classroom.

Prayer provides a good example for us to consider as we look to design educational experiences beyond the walls of the classroom, though any of the Six Chief Parts could work. In fact, the entire life of a disciple on God's mission provides experiences that are ripe for teaching beyond the classroom. UBD begins at the end with developing a clear picture of what it means to understand your topic. What does it mean to understand prayer? Many of us have had the experience of teaching a seven-week confirmation session on the Lord's Prayer only to sit down at a meal with our confirmands and see that they've torn into their pizza and chips without even a thought of thanking God for the provisions set before them. They've memorized the Lord's Prayer, petition by petition with Luther's explanations, yet they don't know when to pray. Or, maybe worse, they've memorized and know when to use prayer, but don't have the desire to pray. Understanding involves more than the ability to recite. One who understands prayer can recite facts, but also knows the skill of praying at the right time and place and also has the desire or attitude that seeks God in prayer. To understand prayer is to have knowledge, skill, and desire.

It's one thing to memorize the Lord's Prayer and be able to recite the explanations to each petition. It's even better to have the skill to know the right situation for the right petition. It's best to know the words, be able to apply the words by expressing them in appropriate situations, *and* have the desire to use God's gift of prayer. All three together show a depth of understanding that we're aiming at as Lutheran educators.

Assessing learning to pray

Once we have an idea of what it means to understand prayer, we'll take a step back and look at step two of UBD—assessment. How will we know if our disciples have learned or not? What is the evidence that we're looking for to see if a person is a praying disciple who knows the Lord's Prayer, can use the Lord's Prayer, and wants to seek God in prayer?

Many Lutheran readers will appropriately have their Law/Gospel antennae raised at this point. Yes, assessment is in the realm of the Law, and yes it's all right

and even important for us to do it. Most pastors are already doing educational assessments without necessarily realizing it. A visitor asks to come to the Lord's Table on Sunday morning and you talk through their beliefs concerning what will be taking place. That's an example of educational assessment. Do they know what they need to know? Can they examine themselves properly? Do they desire an amended life? Or, consider for whom you will or will not perform a marriage. Do they know what marriage is for? Are they capable of living out their God-given roles as husband and wife? Do they intend to commit to one another for life? These are educational assessments that pastors do regularly.

Doing educational assessments within the context of disciple-making provides the teacher and the student with the tools to know how they are progressing. Assessments give evidence of growth. Before the teaching even happens, teachers should take the time to determine what progress they are looking for as they lead their students to follow Jesus. In prayer one might hope to see if the student can recite the Lord's Prayer and its meanings in an age-appropriate manner. One might look to see if a disciple is comfortable praying in front of others and leading others in prayer. One might see how well the disciple writes his or her own prayers for specific situations. Be intentional about looking for important evidence for growth.

Assessing matters of faith is always tricky business. How does one assess how much a person desires to pray? Classroom assessments like quizzes and essays might not accurately account for the depth of a disciple's prayer life. Lutheran educators might not be able to grade praying like a math teacher can grade multiplication, but finding a way to assess prayer use and desire can be a big help to the growing disciple. Allowing the disciple to be a part of his or her own assessment can also be helpful. Self-assessment is important for growth because it allows the student to continue to grow apart from the direct instruction of the teacher. A violin teacher teaches self-assessment from the beginning of lessons as he helps a child develop a keen ear for tuning. Young kids playing the violin learn to adjust tuning pegs and finger placements for best performance without needing the instructor to continually be present to tune and adjust for them. Self-assessment in matters of faith allow the disciple to pay attention to his or her own attitude, skills, and knowledge and make adjustments throughout life without having to return to the teacher at every moment.

Planning learning experiences

We first developed a clear sense of what understanding prayer looks like. Second, we identified clear evidence for assessing growth. We can now turn to the last piece of educational design: planning learning experiences. How will we teach so that the students can learn? It includes such matters as choosing curricular resources, planning learning experiences, and helping students transfer learning to real life situations.

Now is the time to go to the Concordia Publishing House (CPH) website to see what resources are available. If I'm teaching on prayer, I already know what I want the student to know, do, and want. I know what evidence of growth I'll be looking for. Now, I'm looking to see what resources will help them move from where they are today to where we want them to be in the future. Many of us do this planning backwards. We start by looking for the right book, and hope we'll teach something valuable. The problem is that we don't really know what we're aiming at if we don't begin with the results in mind. UBD structures our planning in the correct order for maximum impact.

Where and when?

In this third step, it will be important to consider the role of the classroom and other venues for education. Is the classroom the best place to teach prayer? If it is, use it. If it's not, then find the right location to teach. Get into the sanctuary and into the woods, and let your students praise God with their brothers and sisters in the midst of God's wonderful creation. Learning that takes place close to the context where knowledge will be used is always more effective than learning that takes place in one arena (the classroom) and needs to be transferred to another (the sanctuary).

Making disciples will happen best when education takes place in a variety of locations. The classroom will be a piece of the entire educational experience, but it cannot be the only place, and it cannot be the central focus of teaching things like prayer or other active elements of the Christian life. Authentic education happens when learning takes place in ways that understanding is transferred easily into real life experiences. The closer to these experiences that education can happen, the better the understanding. Christian educators and missionaries can design educational experiences in a variety of contexts that will allow the faith to be shared in powerful ways.

Scripture: the ultimate resource

Consider the Early Church in Acts 2. Where did they learn? Five areas are described by Luke:

> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching **(Instruction)** and the fellowship **(Fellowship)**, to the breaking of bread and the prayers **(Worship)**. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need **(Service)**. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number

> day by day those who were being saved **(Evangelism)**. (Acts 2:42–47; bold emphasis added)

These five areas are all educational! One learns to follow Jesus and lead others to follow Him in these areas of the life of the Church. Instruction is one important piece, but it cannot support the educational work of the entire Church. You can discuss evangelism in a classroom, but you can't really learn how to do it unless you're in the public square engaged with people who do not yet know Jesus. You can have fellowship in a college classroom, but the quality and type of fellowship is nothing compared to the fellowship experienced late night among friends in the dorms. You can talk about and plan for service learning in a classroom, but one actually needs to get out the basin and the towel to wash someone's feet in love and service.

The five educational areas shown in Acts 2 can provide a valuable schematic for educational designers in the Church. Pastors, missionaries, DCEs, teachers, and anyone interested in creating experiences that intentionally shape people as disciples will do well to attend to those areas beyond the classroom.

Prayer is a great example of a piece of the life of a disciple that can be learned in a classroom but would be most effectively taught in a variety of educational arenas. Many other aspects of the Christian faith belong in places beyond the classroom. Be intentional about using the entire life of the Church and designing learning experiences beyond the walls of the classroom. Missionaries know that Jesus ties education and mission intimately together in the Great Commission. Like two sides of a coin, or two wings on an airplane, one cannot function without the other. Missionaries might be able to use classroom instruction effectively in their ministry, but most likely learning experiences will be designed in other arenas of life. The home, the workplace, the sanctuary, and the public square become some of the locations in which disciples are formed.

Learning to be a disciple who makes disciples? You can read about Jesus and discuss faith in a classroom, but one of these days you've got to leave the classroom behind and invite others to join you as you follow Him.

Endnotes

[1] Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology Is For Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 3.
[2] John H. Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith? Revised Edition* (Toronto, Canada: Morehouse Publishing, 2000), 18.
[3] Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding By Design, 2nd Expanded Edition* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005).

Mission-driven Strategic Planning in Lutheran Education

Tom Ries

Abstract: Mission-driven strategic planning originated in the military, migrated to for-profit businesses, and has been used increasingly in non-profit organizations for over three decades. In his doctoral research, the author studied planning at 38 Lutheran colleges and universities in the United States and found that all have conducted some kind of centrally-coordinated strategic planning process within the past ten years, and that they will continue to conduct this kind of planning in the future. This article discusses the purpose and function of strategic planning in a Lutheran education context, and specifically the role of planning in developing and allocating financial resources to support mission.

The catch-phrase, "No margin, no mission," is attributed to Sister Irene Kraus, who served for many years as Chief Executive Officer of the largest non-profit health care system in America.[1] The phrase has migrated into every part of the non-profit world, including church-related schools, colleges, universities, and seminaries. The notion implies that without adequate, reliable financial resources even the most admirable mission will not be achieved.

Most readers of *Missio Apostolica* would likely agree that education in the Lutheran tradition is an admirable mission. Its roots extend to Luther himself. However, the funding of Lutheran education at all levels is a ubiquitous concern, both in the United States and internationally. Lutheran congregations with affiliated parochial schools struggle with setting tuition and fees at rates that are competitive with other private schools and reasonable when compared to the tax-supported public education offered in their respective areas, yet generate adequate financial resources to fund operations. Lutheran high schools, generally affiliated with some kind of association of congregations, face the same challenges. Lutheran colleges, universities, and seminaries strategize setting tuition levels accompanied by certain discounting tactics, taking into account various sources of public and private financial aid. The practice of discounting, that is, setting a high tuition rate and reducing it based on a student's or family's ability to pay or on other factors, has

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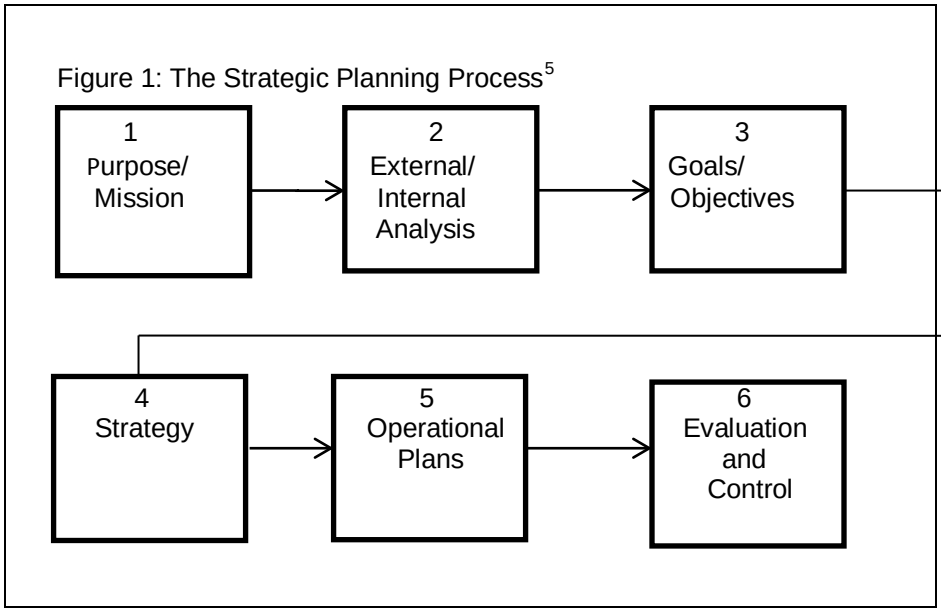
even begun to find its way into Lutheran elementary and secondary schools.

Funding education is generally achieved through three revenue streams. The primary source of revenue is tuition and fees directly related to the teaching and learning process. Auxiliary enterprise revenue is the second source and can include payments for room and board at residential schools, sales through bookstores and other retail operations, ticket sales for athletic contests and performing arts events, charges for parking, and rental of facilities. The third source of revenue is money raised through gifts from donors, grants from foundations and other agencies, cash generated through other fund-raising activities, and spending from both temporarily and permanently restricted endowments.

Strategic planning has often been touted as a means to achieve, among other things, positive financial outcomes for educational institutions.[2] The author studied the correlation between strategic planning and financial conditions at Lutheran colleges and universities and found statistically significant correlations between some aspects of strategic planning and financial outcomes. A specific question guided the research: To what extent does strategic planning correlate with financial performance at U. S. Lutheran colleges and universities, allowing for the effects of certain institutional-level control variables?[3] The lessons learned may have implications for Lutheran education at all levels.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is not first and foremost about money. Rather, it may be defined as "a systematic process of envisioning a desired future and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them."[44] While there are many nuanced approaches to the strategic planning process, most follow similar patterns. Figure 1 offers a representative framework for the strategic planning process. The process begins with a clear statement of mission or purpose and continues with some evaluation of the external and internal environment, the setting of clear goals and measurable objectives directed at the mission, and the adoption of tactical or operational plans leading to the achievement of goals. Every strategic plan includes an evaluation component, along with the capacity to adjust and adapt as circumstances change.



Tromp and Ruben add that special attention should be paid to defining precisely the beneficiaries of the school's mission and determining which collaborators assist the school in achieving the mission. Tromp and Ruben add that four important dynamics shape how planning is carried out on the local level: Leadership, Communication, Assessment, and Culture.[6] The style and approach to leadership within the school has an impact on how the planning process is conducted. Similarly, the culture of each school, if not unique, is certainly distinctive and should be taken into account when considering a local approach to planning. Leadership style and organizational culture are linked to the style of communication and methods of assessment that are used in the planning process.

Planners generally make a distinction between goals, which are intentionally visionary and qualitative, and objectives, which are more specific and quantifiably measurable. Goals inspire, while objectives assess whether goals are being achieved. Goals are sometimes characterized as big, reaching-out, audacious, and dynamic (BROAD) and objectives as specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound (SMART).

Planning is, of course, not primarily directed at financial outcomes. The intent of planning is to achieve the mission successfully. But because mission cannot be achieved without some degree of financial support, one important aspect of planning is financial.

Planning at Lutheran Colleges and Universities

The data set for the Ries study[7] was the forty colleges and universities in the United States that identify as Lutheran. Thirty-eight of the forty participated in the study. A key part of the research was a survey of four administrators at the institutions: President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Academic Officer (CAO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and Chief Advancement Officer (CAdvO). Survey data were collected from a total of 98 administrators.

Descriptive research revealed that a centrally-coordinated, institution-wide strategic planning process had been conducted at all 38 institutions since 2003, and 91 of 98 respondents reported that their institution would definitely continue to perform institution-wide strategic planning in the future. Some form of internal and external environmental scan was part of the planning process at all 38 institutions, and Budget/Finances was the topic most often cited as extremely important in the planning process.

Correlation analysis revealed statistically significant relationships between some aspects of strategic planning and financial performance as measured by the U. S. Department of Education's Financial Responsibility Composite Scores.[8] More specifically, the results revealed statistically significant relationships between financial performance and a number of financial best practices.

The dependent variable for the research was financial performance, defined as each Lutheran institution's five-year average (2007–2011) Department of Education (DOE) Financial Responsibility Composite Score. DOE scores are publicly available for every private institution of higher education that distributes Title IV funding to students; they may be found at https://studentaid.ed.gov/about/data-center/school/composite-scores.

The independent variable was performance on strategic planning, measured through a survey of the four administrators at each Lutheran institution. Data was obtained on six topical areas related to strategic planning: (1) Topics discussed in the strategic planning process, (2) activities used in the strategic planning process, (3) involvement of key stakeholders in the strategic planning process, (4) attitudes of key stakeholders toward strategic planning, (5) the extent to which strategic planning is linked to the budgeting process and is evaluated using financial metrics, and (6) the extent to which goals were achieved, attributes of the institution were affected, and financial-related adjustments made as a result of the strategic planning process.

As noted above, all 98 administrators reported that some form of institution-wide strategic planning had been conducted at their institutions from 2003–2013, and 91 of 98 administrators reported that some form of institution-wide strategic planning would be conducted at their institutions in the future. Among the specific aspects of strategic planning were the following:

- The most common topic discussed in strategic planning was Budget/Finances, followed by Admissions/Enrollment Management.
- The most common planning activities used were the Identification of Internal and External Factors Affecting the Institution.
- The President was rated as the individual from within the institution having the highest level of involvement in the strategic planning process, followed by the Chief Academic Officer. Both were rated, on average, as being "extremely involved."
- The Governing Board was rated as the group from within the institution having the highest level of involvement in the strategic planning process, followed by the Faculty.
- Alumni was the group from outside the institution having the highest perceived level of involvement in the strategic planning process, albeit as a group only perceived to be "somewhat involved."
- The President was rated as the individual from within the institution placing the greatest importance on strategic planning, followed by Chief Academic Officer.
- The Governing Board was perceived to be the group from within the institution placing the greatest importance on strategic planning.
- Advisory Councils, not Alumni, were rated the groups from outside the institution placing the greatest importance on strategic planning.
- Thirty-one of the 38 institutions reported that their strategic planning process is linked to the budgeting process, and 30 reported that financial metrics are used to evaluate at least some or most of the outcomes of the strategic planning process at their institutions.
- Respondents reported that, on average, Reputational Goals, Fundraising Goals, and Academic Program Goals were achieved "as expected."
- Respondents reported that the attributes of their institution most "affected" by the strategic planning process were Key Leaders Were More Engaged and Financial Stability Improved.
- Fourteen of the 38 institutions reported the impression that their average DOE Scores "improved" or "definitely improved" as a result of strategic planning.
- Of the financial-related adjustments made as a result of the strategic planning process, the most common response was Focused Strategy on Main Income Flows, followed by Made Changes to the Budgeting Process.

The explanatory research identified a statistically significant relationship between eleven independent variables and DOE scores. One of these, Discussed Administrative Restructuring as part of the strategic planning process, was negatively correlated with DOE scores, meaning that those institutions involved in administrative restructuring, five-year mean DOE scores tended to be among the lowest in the population.

Three of the ten independent variables with statistically significant positive correlations with DOE scores may be termed "strategic planning inputs." The institutions that (1) Identified Collaborations with Other Colleges and Universities, (2) Identified Collaborations with Other Organizations, not colleges and universities, and (3) Involved the Governing Board in the Strategic Planning Process exhibited statistically significant higher DOE scores.

Seven of the ten independent variables with statistically significant positive correlations with DOE scores were termed "financial-related adjustments," either made as a result of the strategic planning process or were already in place. The so-called "financial best practices" were (1) Focused Strategy on Main Income Flows, (2) Reduced Long-term Debt and Debt Ratio, (3) Made Changes to the Budgeting Process, (4) Established a Financial Monitoring System, (5) Installed Budget Controls, (6) Conducted Financial Strategy Meetings, and (7) Set a Bad Debt Goal and Worked Toward It.

A multiple-regression analysis was conducted using three selected independent variables and three control variables to determine which, if any, were statistically significant predictors of DOE Scores. The research identified one independent variable, Governing Board Was Involved in the Strategic Planning Process, as a statistically significant predictor. The research identified one control variable, Size of Enrollment, as a statistically significant variable. Institutions with larger enrollments tend to exhibit stronger financial performance.

Some form of strategic planning is conducted at all Lutheran colleges and universities, and the implication is that strategic planning may be desirable at all Lutheran schools. Planning processes display many similarities, but they should be carefully constructed to reflect local conditions of leadership, culture, methods and styles of communication, and appropriate levels of assessment. Schools that intentionally identify partners for collaboration seem to perform better financially than their peers. Schools that involve the governing board and key stakeholders in the planning process also perform better financially than their peers. Schools that take seriously certain financial management processes, such as focusing strategies on the main areas of cash flow and managing debt, also perform better. Of course, as might be instinctively expected, larger enrollments tend to correlate positively with financial condition.

A Case Study in Planning: Concordia University St. Paul

In 2011, the author was elected as president of Concordia University St. Paul (CSP). Within six months, the institution embarked on a strategic planning process. The process itself took thirteen months to complete so that the beginning of the strategic plan's five-year horizon coincided with the beginning of the third year of the new presidency.

The planning process included a review of the institutional mission, identification of beneficiaries and collaborators, an environmental scan, the setting of four institutional goals, the setting of objectives to measure progress toward the four goals, the selection of a prioritized set of tactical plans designed to help the institution achieve its goals and objectives, and a continuous as well as an annual evaluation of the progress on the plan.

The time horizon for the strategic plan is academic years 2013–14 through 2017–18.[89] The short-hand version of the institutional mission is *to prepare students.* Four goals directed at that mission are (1) to grow the enrollment, (2) to increase persistence to graduation, (3) to improve transitions to jobs or graduate school, and (4) to grow the net assets of the institution. Specific numerical targets are established for each of the four goals. The objectives had to meet the SMART-test of being specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound. For example, under the goal to grow the enrollment, the objective is to grow the enrollment to 5,000 students by 2018, more specifically 1,500 students in the traditional undergraduate programs, 1,000 in the non-traditional undergraduate programs, and 2,500 in the graduate programs.

At CSP, it was important to reiterate that the university's mission is *to prepare students*. At an educational institution, many mission-related activities can be perceived to be core to the mission, but in reality are cash- and energy-draining activities that ultimately deter the school from achieving its mission. This was the case at CSP. Activities like this needed to be evaluated as to whether they are in fact core to the mission. By reiterating that the mission of the university is to prepare students, the strategic plan serves as a continual reminder to all key stakeholders that student interests and student success are paramount to the mission.

A number of tactical plans were adopted. For example, the planning process led to the adoption of a new pricing strategy. Traditional undergraduate tuition was reset to $10,000 less that it had been at its peak, and tuition for most non-traditional undergraduate and graduate programs was frozen for the first two years of the planning horizon. Another key tactic was to bring two new academic programs, or revitalized existing programs, to the marketplace each year.

The planning process has within it the capacity to adapt to change as conditions change or unforeseen situations arise. For example, in the initial version of the five-year plan, no mention was made of international students as a tactic to grow

enrollment. Subsequently, the university was contacted by the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission and asked to consider a cohort of Saudi students, seeking to further their education in the United States. After consideration of this opportunity, the university invested in personnel and other measures to establish an Office for International Student Services. The most recently revised version of the strategic plan, now in its third year, includes direct mention of serving international students. Because of the university's increased capacity to serve internationals, students from 17 countries are enrolled for the 2015–16 academic year.

The strategic planning process at Concordia University St. Paul has helped give all key stakeholders—especially regents, faculty, and staff—a clear picture of where the university is going, how it expects to get there, and how it will measure and evaluate results.

Conclusion

As recently as 2009, 43 U. S. colleges and universities identified themselves as Lutheran. One, Waldorf College in Iowa, discontinued operating as a Lutheran institution in 2009 and became a for-profit college. A second, Dana College in Nebraska, discontinued operations altogether in 2010. A third, Concordia University Ann Arbor, ceased operating as an independent institution in 2014 and was acquired by a sister school, Concordia University Wisconsin. In the more distant but still recent past, there were 48 Lutheran colleges and universities in the United States. But between 1986 and 1995, four colleges closed their doors and another merged with a sister institution. Financial viability, or lack of same, was at the root of all these transitions.

Strategic planning in education is designed to help schools achieve their missions. For planning to be effective, each school must be clear about its mission, strategic in how it hopes to achieve its mission, and willing to rigorously evaluate its progress. This rigor includes an informed view of the financial underpinnings of the school and the capacity to develop adequate funding to achieve mission. *No margin, no mission* is still in effect.

Endnotes

[1] "Sister Irene Kraus Remembered for Vision, Leadership," *Florida Times Union*, accessed December 14, 2013, http://jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/082598/met_2a1Siste.html#.Ve3PD2qFOM8.

[2] Kent John Chabotar notes that the primary focus of planning is purpose and vision: "Defining an institution's fundamental purpose, vision and core values, its environment and markets, and then deciding what long-term strategies and tactics are needed to fulfill a vision for the near and distant future are the hallmarks of strategic planning. The essence of strategic planning lies in raising money through earning, borrowing, or investing funds and then allocating the resulting income among virtually unlimited competing and pressing needs."

Kent John Chabotar, *Strategic Finance: Planning and Budgeting for Boards, Chief Executives, and Finance Officers* (Washington DC: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 2006), vii.
John Bryson notes the importance of linking budgets to strategic plans: "Budget allocations have crucial, if not overriding, significance for the implementation of strategies and plans. Budgets often represent the most important and consequential policy statements that governments or nonprofit organizations make. Not all strategies and plans have budgetary significance, but enough of them do that public and non-profit leaders should consider involving themselves deeply in the process of budget making." John Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Non-profit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*, revised edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 170.
[3] Thomas Ries, "Correlations between Strategic Planning and Financial Performance: A Focus on Lutheran Colleges and Universities" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2014), 4.
[4] "Strategic Planning," BusinessDictionary.com, accessed September 6, 2015, http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/strategic-planning.html.
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[6] S. A. Tromp and B. D. Ruben, *Strategic Planning in Higher Education: A Guide for Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: National Association of College and University Business Officers, 2010).
[7] Ries, "Correlations between Strategic Planning."
[8] "Financial Standards," *Federal Student Aid Handbook*, 2012–13, accessed January 15, 2014, http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/0910FSAHbkVol2Ch11Financial.pdf.
[9] Concordia University St. Paul Strategic Plan, 2014–18, http://www.ave.csp.edu/s/286/index.aspx?sid=286&gid=1&pgid=883.

A Global Perspective on Education in Mission

Shirley Miske

Abstract: The article provides a global overview of education in mission, and it proposes frameworks for dialogue on education in mission in the twenty-first century grounded in the field of Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE). The author calls for a global mapping of Lutheran education in mission and explores its potential uses. She also offers a theoretical framework of critical components or "commonplaces" of educational thinking to stimulate global, intercultural dialogue on education, especially schooling, in mission.

Education in *Mission*

> Schools had not yet been built in Ah Cher's village in northern Thailand in 1995, but bulldozers had plowed dirt roads to the edge of the community of thatched houses. With the roads came a few government services and more than a few charlatans who would pay fathers to send their daughters to the city for "work." At the suggestion of an Akha community development worker, Ah Cher's father sent his daughter to a hostel in Chiang Mai instead. There, he was told, she would learn to read and write, and could then get a job to send money home.
>
> Christian women from Ah Cher's Akha tribe and from other tribal groups ran the hostel. Over time, Ah Cher not only learned to read in evening school, she also learned about Jesus and she was baptized. When interviewed by an evaluation researcher about her life and education at the hostel, Ah Cher remarked, "The difference between being here and my life before is like the heaven [sky] and the earth!"[1]

Ah Cher's exclamation captures the sheer joy of one who has come to know Christ, who is learning to read, and who has the opportunity to study in school—something she could only have dreamed of while living in the village in 1995. Ah Cher's whole life had been transformed, and it now opened up before her like the bright blue sky over the northern Thailand rice paddy.

Education for Ah Cher was made available through a Thai government school

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that offered education to older children and young adults for several hours every evening. There she learned to read in a second language (Thai), the language of the country where she lived and one day would acquire citizenship papers. Ah Cher's own understanding of being in mission grew through Bible study and devotions at the hostel and after church on Sunday. By attending Akha church in Chiang Mai with other girls and with Akha families, she learned hymns, heard the Scriptures, and even began learning to read in Akha, her first language.

The mission under discussion is the Lord's. We are baptized into His mission. Through Baptism we are incorporated into the death of Jesus and become participants in His risen life, and thus we share His ongoing mission in the world.[2] Christ's Spirit creates opportunities for His people to do His mission; and, in faithfulness to the risen Christ, we become the place where the Spirit speaks and acts.

Education in Mission

During the last 150 years, greater proportions of children and youth from each successive generation have attended school longer and have reached more sophisticated levels of schooling from primary (elementary) school through higher education. For example, at the turn of the nineteenth century, less than one percent of the world's youth of university age were enrolled in higher education. As of 2005, 20 percent of the eligible age cohort was attending, and the percentages are increasing.[3] Baker argues that this "education revolution" has become a major transforming cultural phenomenon of contemporary society, not unlike large-scale capitalism or widespread representative democracy."[4] As the world increasingly becomes a "schooled society,"[5] mission in education increasingly will take place in or in relation to schools and universities. This trend is worth exploring in greater breadth as well as in greater detail. The field of Comparative International Education (CIE), in which Baker's scholarship is positioned, is an appropriate discipline in which to ground this exploration. An overview of the discipline will be discussed after framing the outline of this article, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows the structures of education in concentric circles as they are treated in this article, ranging from the broadest, most general structures in the outer ring to the most specific "commonplaces" of educational thinking in the center circle.

In the outer circle is education writ large, where all forms of education and all schooling lie. Education is usually defined in terms of formal education, i.e., school and university systems, seminaries and some theological education; informal education, which is relatively unstructured and spontaneous; and nonformal education, which, like the three-hour evening classes that Ah Cher attended, has some structure. Some combination of these three areas, along with ongoing research

and scholarship, constitutes lifelong learning—an area that receives increasing emphasis as the literate population increases with each new generation.

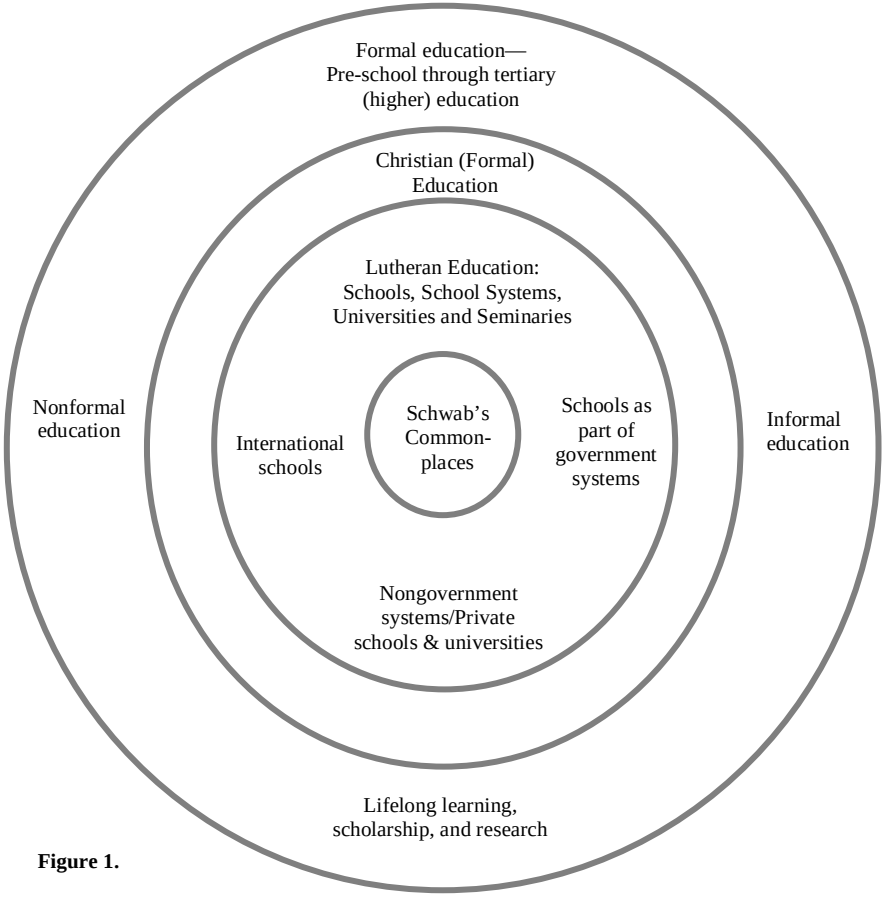

Figure 1.

Christian formal education comprises the next ring of the circle diagram in Figure 1. Lutheran formal education, a subset of Christian formal education, is located in the third ring of the diagram. The text in this circle indicates that formal Lutheran education, i.e., pre-school through higher education, including seminary, is configured differently in different countries, according to a nation's educational structure and its education laws. In many countries, Lutheran schools and universities are part of the nongovernmental, nonpublic or private system of education. In other countries, all schools, including Lutheran schools, are part of a

government's education system and receive government funding; and schools affiliated with particular religious bodies are allowed certain latitude for curriculum, e.g., for moral or religious education, or other areas. International schools differ from national system schools; typically, they use a "nonnational" curriculum from another country, and they are part of the nongovernment sector.

Finally, the center circle in Figure 1 draws attention to the dynamic intellectual work of schools and universities built on Joseph Schwab's framework of "commonplaces" for curriculum development. Schwab's framework (further described below in "A Framework for Dialogue") is included here to foster dialogue on education in mission in any formal or nonformal educational context.

While God's people live out their lives in His mission in the various areas of education, this article, grounded in Comparative International Education, focuses on a global perspective of Lutheran formal education that spans pre-school through higher education.

The Field of Comparative and International (Development) Education

Comparative International Education (CIE) began to emerge in the nineteenth century at the same time as other social sciences, e.g., psychology and sociology, were also developing.[6] The field informally dates back to the earliest travelers who visited other countries, observed their schools, and passed judgment on the "better" or the "best" systems.[7] For example, already in *The Republic*, Plato drew on the ideas of education and society he admired in Sparta, and he concluded that Sparta had "greater discipline and order than his native Athens."[8] Around the turn of the nineteenth century, other comparative studies analyzed education "from the past and the present in order to determine which was superior."[9]

CIE also compares education reforms that take place at similar time periods in different parts of the world. For example, in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther set about reforming education in the university and in the church,[10] as well as promoting education for all children—girls and boys alike—at the primary school level. In this way, all would be prepared for their vocation, and at least some boys could continue their studies to be pastors.[11] Also in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Jesuit scholars who had traveled to China were taking careful notes on the Chinese system of education. They were impressed with the meritocratic system, which was the path to the civil service for any boy who was prepared to take the examination of Confucius' Five Great Books. The Jesuits wrote up their observations and carried them back to France.[12] They influenced the development of the highly selective examination system in France's Grandes Écoles, which assured employment in the nation's civil service. As part of France's colonizing expansion, a similar examination system was then established in countries of West Africa and other

former French colonies, and it still influences the lives of citizens in those countries today.

Marc Antoine Jullien is often regarded as a founder of the field of comparative education, based on the plan for comparative education that he published in 1817, after traveling widely across the European continent and corresponding with progressive educators. Jullien's plan called for the establishment of a Normal Institute of Education for Europe, which would educate teachers in the best-known methods of teaching. At the proposed institute, education would be developed into a "positive science," based on principles derived from a comparison of the facts and observations from different countries, arranged in analytical charts for comparison."[13]

In the early twentieth century, comparative education was introduced as a course of study in the university.[14] After World War II, and with the establishment of numerous international agencies, e.g., UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNICEF, comparative education developed rapidly as a field of research and practice. Later in the twentieth century, CIE theoretical perspectives moved beyond temporal and cross-national comparisons to explore education in the context of theories of globalization, international development, and other social science theories.[15] As academics, practitioners, and university programs focus increasingly on education in international development contexts, the work and scholarship are referred to as Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE).

Using the CIDE approach as a lens through which to view mission in education can bring into sharper focus key educational insights in global perspective, thus increasing the ways in which we are mindful of the myriad of ways in which the Holy Spirit is at work in and through education in mission.

Call for a Global Mapping of Lutheran Education

A comprehensive overview of Lutheran Christian education in global perspective would be a valuable contribution to our twenty-first-century understanding of education in mission. It would fill a gap that currently exists in the literature. It would provide a basis for global dialogue on education in mission broadly and for exploration of Lutheran education reform and improvement for the schooled society, as well as for individuals in the twenty-first century.

The 1989 publication, *Lutheran Churches in the World: a Handbook*,[16] mapped geographically by region the presence of Lutheran churches and Lutherans in countries around the world. It was done according to organized Lutheran bodies, and, where the numbers were small, even by individuals. Some entries mention the presence of Lutheran schools from primary grades through higher education, including seminaries. Regrettably, the book did not spark the production of a parallel publication on Lutheran education, Lutheran school systems, or Lutheran higher

education and seminaries. Some books and print materials are available on Lutheran education in certain countries,[17] and information on Lutheran education systems and schools is now available electronically on websites of the national school systems, universities, and church bodies,[18] e.g., Australia, Brazil, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (USA); however, the information is not presented systematically. Publications from select countries also provide the historical context for the origins of individual Lutheran schools or school systems. Once again, however, the information is not available in a format that would allow it to be viewed and analyzed comparatively. The next necessary step will be to compile this information and to make it widely available in the languages of the school systems and national church bodies.

Besides filling a gap in the literature, a systematic global mapping of Lutheran education would both forge a dialogue and raise questions at different levels of complexity that would serve education and mission policymakers, individual educators,[19] and students. Selecting the questions to ask is central to this task. A proposed global mapping of Lutheran education in mission is shown in Table 1 through the example of Lutheran-affiliated schools and school systems.[20] The discussion that follows illustrates the value and uses of such a mapping.

Table 1.

Query by Country (Language of Instruction)	**Australia**[i] (English)	**Brazil**[ii] (Portuguese)	**Hong Kong, SAR of China**[iii] (Chinese/English)	**USA**[iv] (English)
Descriptive Questions				
1. Are there Lutheran (-affiliated) schools?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. No. of schools (2014)	**85 Lutheran schools** 40 primary schools 7 secondary schools 38 combined primary/secondary schools 56 kindergartens and early childhood centers	**17 Lutheran schools**	**42 Lutheran schools** 6 primary schools 6 secondary schools 6 evening schools 10 nurseries 12 kindergartens	**959 Lutheran schools** 871 elementary schools 88 high schools 1,376 early childhood centers
3. No. of states or provinces with Lutheran schools	6 out of 6 states 1 territory	6 out of 26 states	(does not apply)	49 out of 50 states
4. No. of students (2014), teachers and administrators (F/M)	39,764 -[v]	140,000 -	-	230,000+ -

[i] *Our history*, accessed September 2015, http://www.lutheran.edu.au/about-lea/our-history.
[ii] *Rede de escolas da ulbra*, accessed September 2015, http://www.ulbra.br/educacao-basica.
[iii] Dr. Richard E. Carter, e-mail message to author, October 10, 2015.
[iv] *U.S.A. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Educating Our Children*, accessed September 2015, www.lcms.org/unitedstates.
[v] "-" indicates data not readily available to author at the time of writing. Readers are most welcome to submit information that would fill in the gaps!

Table 1 continued.

Query by Country (Language of Instruction)	**Australia** (English)	**Brazil** (Portuguese)	**Hong Kong, SAR of China** (Chinese/English)	**USA** (English)
5. Increase/decrease in student population since 1990? (%?) (F/M)	Increase	-	-	Decrease
6. % of Lutheran students in Lutheran schools (F/M)	25% Lutheran	-	-	- (17% have no church affiliation)
Context Questions				
7. First Lutheran school(s) established when, by whom, and why? (Update to present)	1839	1911	-	1752
8. Are Lutheran schools in government (public) or non-government sector?	Non-government	Non-government	Government	Non-public; most affiliated with congregation(s)
9. Source(s) of school finance by percentage	-	-	-	Financed by church members, student fees, gifts
10. Country rank on Human Development Index (HDI) and other salient country information	.933[vi]	.744	.719 (China)	.914
Program Questions				
11. What are the system's/school's statements of mission and/or philosophy?				
12. Formal curriculum of Christian Education exists? Adopted system-wide, by school or by class? System-wide standards and indicators exist?	-	-	-	-
13. Exchange programs exist for schools (e.g., online), students, and/or (intern) teachers?	-	-	-	-
14. Extent to which Inclusive/Special Education is available to all students	-	1 Special School	2 Special Schools	-

[vi] Table 1: Human Development Index and its components, accessed September 2015, http://hdr.undp.org/en/data.

Questions 1 to 6 in Table 1 request descriptive information, beginning with, "Does a country have a Lutheran school system?" If the answer is "No, a Lutheran school or education system does not exist in a particular country," a logical follow-

up question would be, "Would it meet a need and is it feasible to establish one or more Lutheran schools?" If the answer is "yes," the next questions would ask for more information: How many schools are there at the various levels? How many students and teachers? Where are the schools located geographically within the country?

Answers to this first set of questions would provide an overview of which of the nearly two hundred countries of the world have Lutheran schools or a system of Lutheran education. The questions and their answers would also indicate the levels of schooling the system spans, e.g., through secondary school and higher education, or pre-schools or primary schools only; the number of schools and how they are distributed geographically; the number of students and teachers at present; and whether these numbers represent an increase or decrease over the last two decades or more.

The partial answers provided in Table 1 for Australia and the U.S. show that question 5 (the increase or decrease of the schools' population) could immediately raise another question that could provide valuable information to decision-makers in Australia, the U.S., and beyond: "Why has the student population of Lutheran schools in Australia increased, and the Lutheran school student population in the U.S. decreased?" Attempting to answer this more complex question points to the value of the second set of questions in Table 1 on context. What are the particular contextual factors in Australia that have influenced this increase, and how are they different from the contextual factors of Lutheran schools in the U.S.? For example, is the organization of Lutheran education in the U.S., which is highly decentralized and funded by congregations, very different from Lutheran schools in Australia?

Other comparisons across this first set of questions could reveal other useful information for making policy and program decisions about the roles of education in mission. At the very least, the added information would provide current data for understanding the breadth of a shared heritage internationally and for celebrating how Luther's vision of education for all children came to include Lutheran schools internationally, and even Lutheran education systems. Finally, through this mapping, one could also come to see where in the world one is located in education in mission in relation to God's people in other countries around the globe.

The second set of questions in this proposed mapping—the contexts in which Lutheran school systems operate—is central to understanding the structures, constraints or challenges, and opportunities for education in mission. Questions 7 to 10 in Table 1 ask about the historical context, from the first Lutheran school established to the present; and, further, whether Lutheran schools are part of the government, i.e., public, or a nongovernment sector of schooling. Understanding how Lutheran school systems are financed, in terms of the various funding sources on which they draw, e.g., funding from government, a national school foundation, individual Lutheran churches or congregations, student tuition and fees, individual or

foundation donors, provides information both on resource distribution and on where human and material resources are needed. Additionally, it is essential that Lutheran schools/systems in different countries are understood in terms of the diverse socio-cultural, economic, political, and religious contexts in which they operate. The Human Development Index (HDI) is suggested as one source of data for this kind of comparison. The HDI is "a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living."[21] It ranks the information related to people and their capabilities as the ultimate indicator of human development, rather than comparing contexts on the basis of economic growth alone.[22]

A third set of questions for the global mapping would explore education programming, such as curriculum in the context of mission, vision statements, and exchange programs between and among Lutheran schools and school systems. Given the wide variation of national contexts and the innumerable variety of regional and educational contexts within each country, including schools' relationships to governments and laws of a country, the content of Lutheran school/system vision and mission statements in various countries could be expected to vary widely, while, at the same time, communicate a common commitment to Christ's mission and to educating the whole person, the whole child.

With regard to curriculum, when considering the set of macro questions in Table 1, a broad system-level question such as this might be raised: "Has the school system developed a set of standards for Christian education, with related indicators for determining whether students are learning what is expected at their particular level of development, i.e., learning outcomes?" Another question could examine the assumptions, content, and major themes designed for the religion curriculum of a particular country or regional context. To illustrate, from a comparative perspective, the "Christian Studies" curriculum used in Australia is designed for a largely non-Lutheran student population (25%) in nongovernment schools. In contrast, "Teaching the Christian Faith" could be expected to be the religion curriculum in Lutheran schools in the U.S., where schools are closely linked with local congregations and where "making disciples" is an expected part of the school's mission. But what of the U.S. Lutheran schools, perhaps urban, with even fewer than 25% Lutheran students? "Christian Studies" as taught in Australia's Lutheran schools could offer important insights to Lutheran schools in these settings in the U.S.

In countries where all schools, including Lutheran schools, are required to follow the national curriculum, some discretion may be allowed for a "morals" or "religious studies" class, as was noted above. Questions to be raised might include "What are the opportunities for exploring mission in this kind of class?" For countries and schools where the explicit teaching of the Christian faith is not

allowed, questions might address the opportunities for being in "mission" in such settings.

To promote global dialogue on education in mission face-to-face, another question asks whether the school/system has exchange programs for students, for intern or student teachers, or for practicing teachers or administrators. With regard to partnerships and/or exchanges, if a student, school, or class were looking for a "sister school" or a "partner class" elsewhere in the world to communicate with electronically on a sustained basis, this comparative mapping would quickly provide the desired information. Many such relationships and exchanges already exist, but a systematic mapping is not yet available. For the high school or university student aspiring to study or to work internationally, or for the primary or secondary school teacher or the professor seeking professional development by teaching in another setting, the possibilities (assuming the availability of this information on the internet) would be immediately apparent.

Meeting the needs of all children, and of the "whole child," as Lutheran school systems aspire to do, raises the last important question in this mapping about Inclusive Education and Special Education. How are special needs children served by a school system? Are there schools for children who are deaf, as in Brazil and Hong Kong, and for children who have other special physical or cognitive needs? Do the Lutheran schools/systems have school plans for dealing with children's learning needs, e.g., cognitive and social-emotional, that can be shared with educators in other countries?

The proposed global mapping activity just presented, which is illustrative and by no means complete, progresses from descriptive, macro-level questions, such as the number of countries with Lutheran education systems or factors related to the percentage of population increase or decrease, to questions requiring comparisons of greater depth and complexity, such as the content of mission statements in particular contexts and how they communicate the Church's mission in a particular context. From the macro-level, the questions of program begin to move onto the campus and into the school and the classroom, focusing on the "whole person" work that goes on in schools: intellectual, emotional/psychological, spiritual, community-building/service, and other areas. While the mapping stimulates dialogue and invites macro-level questions, the questions related to work "inside schools and inside classes" warrants a new framework for examining existing practice and for promoting lively discussion on the future of education in mission.

A Framework for Dialogue: The "Commonplaces" of Education

Malawi in Central Africa is a resource-poor country; it is one of the ten poorest countries in the world.

In Malawi, nearly all children are enrolled in primary school Grade 1, but over half of the students drop out before finishing Grade 8, and only 35% of girls and 41% of boys continue to Grade 9, i.e., lower secondary or Form 1.[23] For girls, there is pressure to marry soon after puberty. (One in two girls is married before age 18). In years of drought or floods, both of which occurred in 2015, extreme hunger can push children out of school, as can increases in school fees and poor educational quality.

Improving educational quality in any country requires that interrelated aspects of education be addressed at the same time. Joseph J. Schwab's four "commonplaces" of educational thinking provide a basic framework to ensure that the key components of teaching and learning are addressed systematically when planning, implementing, or evaluating an education program.

Drawing on a lifetime of study, research, university curriculum development, and award-winning teaching in the Humanities and Sciences at the University of Chicago, in 1969 Joseph Schwab developed a framework of four areas or "commonplaces" of educational thinking: subject matter, students (learners and learning), teachers (and teaching), and the context or socio-cultural milieu. Schwab argued that each commonplace was "equally indispensable" in curriculum development in higher education. Together with the facilitation of a curriculum expert who would ask hard questions, informed expert voices in these four areas would help weave together a viable curriculum.[24] This framework is viable for pre-school, primary school, and secondary school, as well as for higher education—and not only for curriculum development.

In an education partnership project for one hundred schools in the tea-growing region of southern Malawi, the project team[25] used this mnemonic for Schwab's commonplaces as a discussion guide for planning the work: "Someone Teaches Something to Someone Somewhere." The goal of the project is to increase the number of girls and boys who complete primary school and who are successful learners in lower secondary school. Since English is the national language and the language of instruction in secondary school in Malawi, the partners agreed that increasing students' success in school would need to include professional development for teachers ("Someone") in the teaching of English ("Teaches Something") to upper primary and lower secondary students ("to Someone"). The socio-cultural context ("Somewhere") included the need to identify the challenging English language topics for these students, whose first language was Chichewa, a Bantu language. As each team member contributed ideas to the project design, the mnemonic device was a reminder of the equal importance of all four commonplaces and of the teachers' pedagogy. It also ensured that the education project components were designed to work together and, thus, to have greater potential impact on students' learning, on teachers, and on thoughtful teaching of the curriculum in a resource poor environment.

In the years since Schwab challenged the field of education with his provocative statements about the equally indispensable perspectives necessary to curriculum development, there has been an explosion of education research internationally. In the late 1980s, U.S. scholars further explored Schwab's framework of commonplaces in seminal research on teachers and teaching, as well as on teacher education.[26] They reasoned that since teachers also take into account their own practical knowledge of the commonplaces when they are teaching, this practical knowledge, or the "wisdom of practice,"[27] should be documented and shared widely, particularly with novice teachers. With regard to learners and learning, wide-ranging studies on brain research, teacher-student interactions, student assessment, and research from related disciplines, such as developmental psychology, offer valuable new information. For example, in "Confirmation—A Developmental Understanding," David Rueter reviews the human development theories of Piaget, Fowler, and others. Rueter states that the course of study for Lutheran youth in Confirmation (the "Something") is "well established and truly foundational." He then makes the case for exploring the theories of human development in order to understand how the content of the Christian faith "can best be taught to Confirmation-age youth, so that they can discover their identity in Christ."[28]

For Christians and in Christian communities, the commonplaces are a vivid reminder of where the Spirit is at work in education in *mission*: in and through teachers ("Someone"—called teachers, lay people, clergy, and all who live out their vocations in education); in and through the teaching and learning process, which communicates the Word of God and knowledge about the Triune God's activity in the world ("Teaches Something") to learners of whatever age, whether in formal, nonformal, or informal education ("to Someone"), in particular contexts all around the world ("Somewhere"). The "wisdom of practice" for those who participate in the Lord's mission is this: The Spirit of Christ will continue to work in the common places and in the particular places, bringing all people to Himself.

Conclusion

Readers of *Missio Apostolica* pray, think, learn, teach, preach, and act locally, globally, and everywhere possible in between. They share the Good News of Jesus Christ and live out lives of service to God and to one another through formal, nonformal, and informal education. They do this in classrooms or under trees, in daycare centers and retirement homes, from lecterns or pulpits, in coffee shops and tea houses, and in a myriad of other settings. For the readership of *Missio Apostolica*, the focus of this issue, Education in Mission, requires no explanation. At the same time, these readers seek eagerly and continually to understand education in mission more deeply and more broadly from a Christian, Lutheran, and global perspective.

In order to broaden and deepen an understanding of opportunities for education in mission in the schooled society of the twenty-first century, this article first called for a global mapping of Lutheran education systems by proposing progressively more complex questions to be asked from a comparative international perspective. Themes from CIDE research and scholarship offered insights into ways in which to explore issues related to education in mission. Finally, Schwab's four commonplaces—"someone teaches something to someone somewhere"—were presented as a framework for planning education projects, for reflecting on teachers' knowledge, and for examining education research. The author hopes that this article and the other articles in this special issue will spark new and fruitful discussions on education in mission in the twenty-first century, locally, nationally, and globally.

Endnotes

[1] Adapted from Shirley J. Miske, "The Sky and the Earth: Program Evaluation of the New Life Center." (An unpublished report, Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, Thailand 2001).
[2] Lesslie Newbiggin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), 119.
[3] Evan Schofer and John W. Meyer. 2005. "The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century." American Sociological Review 70 (4): 898–920. As cited by David Baker in "Minds, Politics, and Gods in the Schooled Society: Consequences of the Education Revolution," *Comparative Education Review*, 58, no.1 (February 2014), 7–8.
[4] Baker, *Comparative Education Review*, 6.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ruth Hayhoe and Karen Mundy, "Introduction to Comparative and International Education: Why Study Comparative Education?" in *Comparative and International Education: Issues for Teachers*, eds. Karen Mundy, Kathy Bickmore, Ruth Hayhoe, Meggan Madden, Katherine Madjidi (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2008).
[7] William W. Brickman, "A Historical Introduction to Comparative Education," *Comparative Education Review*, 3, no. 3, (February 1960): 6–13.
[8] Hayhoe and Mundy, "Introduction to Comparative and International Education," 2.
[9] Brickman, "A Historical Introduction to Comparative Education," 7.
[10] Robert Rosin, "Luther on Education," *Lutheran Quarterly*, 21, no. 2 (Summer 2007).
[11] Martin Luther, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," in *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 55 vols, eds. J. Pelikan and H. Lehmann (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress, 1955ff.), 46:215–57; Marilyn Harran, *Learning for Life* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1997), 237; Rosin, "Luther on Education," 204; Shirley J. Miske, "A Lutheran Vocation in Education for All," *Lutheran Forum* 48, no. 4 (Winter 2014).
[12] Hayhoe and Mundy, "Introduction to Comparative and International Education," 3.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 5.
[15] For an easy reading of four of these development theories (though not applied specifically to education), see Roland Hoksbergen, *Serving God Globally: Finding Your Place in International Development* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker-Academic, 2012).
[16] E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook* (Minneapolis: Published in cooperation with Lutheran World Federation by Augsburg Fortress Press, 1989), https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/member-churches. This information is now updated electronically on the LWF website, for LWF member countries/organizations only.

[17] See, for example, Australia: *Our history*, accessed September 2015, http://www.lutheran.edu.au/about-lea/our-history.
[18] Brazil: *Rede de escolas da ulbra*, accessed September 2015, http://www.ulbra.br/educacao-basica; United States: *U.S.A. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, "Educating Our Children," accessed September 2015, www.lcms.org/schoolministry.
[19] Called "educationalists" in some Anglophone countries.
[20] Table 1 is configured for Lutheran schools, primary and secondary education only. A mapping of Lutheran higher education would ask similar questions appropriate to colleges, universities, and seminaries.
[21] *United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Reports: Human Development Index (HDI)*, accessed September 2015, http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2012.
[24] Joseph J. Schwab, *Science, Curriculum, and Liberal Education*, eds. I. Westbury and N. J. Wilkof (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); J. Schwab, *The Practical: A Language for Curriculum* (Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1970).
[25] Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation for Malawi (CRECCOM), Zomba, Malawi, implements the project in partnership with Miske Witt & Associates Inc. and the University of Wisconsin—Madison School of Education, with funding from the Echidna Giving and Dubai Cares foundations.
[26] G. Williamson McDiarmid and Deborah Loewenberg Ball, "The Teacher Education and Learning to Teach Study: An Occasion for Developing a Conception of Teacher Knowledge," (East Lansing: Educational Resources Information Center [U.S.], 1989), accessed October 2015, http://education.msu.edu/NCRTL/PDFs/NCRTL/TechnicalSeries/TS891.pdf.
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A Backpacking Semester in the Shadow of Global Missionaries

Adam Lee

Statistics shape an artful attempt to introduce the story of Concordia University Irvine's Around-the-World Semester: two professors, twenty-eight students, twenty weeks, ten countries, five continents, three thousand pages of reading, one hundred pages of writing, and just one backpack. These make great stats for physically bringing admissions tours to an intrigued halt on campus or for impressing marketing consultants hired to identify university distinctives. These numbers also tell the story of God's transformative power in the lives of students willing to be physically, intellectually, and spiritually challenged for one semester of their college lives.

Since the program first embarked five falls ago, our three circumnavigations have involved seventy-five students with unique projects in twenty-four different countries. Each trip focuses on different nations, cities, texts, and different missionary groups and individuals. We are currently recruiting and accepting applications for our fourth trip, which will depart next August probably for Japan, China, India, Greece, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Morocco, Ghana, Ecuador, and Nicaragua.

In each of the ten countries, we spend two weeks to volunteer with missionaries, study language basics, read local texts, and compose travel writing about our time there. Reading includes contemporary novels, folk tales, and sacred texts; writing includes journalism, ethnography, and creative nonfiction. As an example, in Turkey we studied the Qur'an, read Nobel Prize-winning novelist Orhan Pamuk's novel *Snow*, and helped serve Syrian and Iraqi refugees from ISIS.

Adam Lee has been teaching university English, Literature, and Writing since 1994, two years after his first backpacking trip to Europe. In the following two decades he has traveled to every inhabited continent, crossed the borders of more than 110 countries, and taught local students or trained national teachers in South Korea, China, Mongolia, Japan, Hungary, Nepal, India, Kenya, Rwanda, and Brazil. During this decade he has been planning and leading all four of Concordia University Irvine's biannual Around-the-World Semester®. Between this program and other summer mission trips, he has written a Travel Writing textbook, taken about 200 university students through more than 50 countries to study literature and language, serve with various ministry organizations, and of course write travel stories about what they have seen and learned.

Throughout the trip, students witness and often get to practice ten quite different forms of missionary work: person-to-person evangelism, church planting, oral Bible teaching, music and street theatre outreach, orphan and widow care, medical missions, refugee relief work, VBS/EFL and campus ministry, human trafficking awareness, and community development. Students are exposed to ten different missionary personalities, leadership styles, examples of living in community, and visions of how God calls and works through His servants.

God started early in preparing me for this type of vocation. Summer vacation trips in my family didn't have any tension between recreation and education: to travel was to learn through visiting museums, exploring historic sites, and listening to our dad's church history stories. Through hearing many missionary tales as a child, collecting international stamps in my youth, and then reading world literature in college, I grew to imagine that my vocation might be travel itself. This program has been the greatest challenge of my 22-year career, but also the most rewarding, tapping into all of my life interests in missions, travel, writing, and literature.

Students apply for this program for a variety of reasons: a desire to do missions, a longing for adventure, an interest in résumé-defining experience, or perhaps even to find themselves. We select members based on our observations of their strengths; God selects them based on their weaknesses.

Being part of a 20-week long, 24-hour-a-day, 28-member learning community is an unprecedented opportunity for academic as well as spiritual growth and transformation. God often uses this community itself as a witness for Him as people observe the students travel, study, and serve together as a "family." The rigorous curriculum and intense faculty-guided experiential learning seeps from the primary texts we read into classroom discussions and then out into the streets, cafes, parks, and temples of each city we visit.

We have found that, and are still learning how, the academic demands of our trip reduce the temptations for students to arrive with a superior or colonial mindset. Both our missionary guides and those we serve are resources for, as well as authorities on, what needs to be studied and learned. The nature of this program forces us into the posture of learners. Hosting a team of engaged listeners, missionaries and teachers have found that the simple act of re-telling stories of how God called them, how Christ has worked through their ministry, and how the Holy Spirit is leading them actually encourages them with reminders of God's faithfulness and provision. Missionaries themselves often become our service projects as we study under them.

This program could be dismissed as ten loosely connected short-term mission trips, carrying all the negative baggage associated with them. It could also be dismissed as a merely academic trip that therefore never truly engages in actual

missions. If not planned, recruited, and supervised conscientiously, it could easily devolve into a beach party semester abroad.

We've seen, however, that God creates something greater with the accumulated whole of the academics, service, and travel in the lives of our students. When God calls them to future missions, fears have now been removed. When God calls them to donate to missions, they now have ten missionaries to support whom they know firsthand. When God calls them to serve at home, they now have hearts to serve and share the hospitality that they received as travelers and strangers in foreign lands. When God calls them to become full-time missionaries, they now have ten role models to follow.

God has allowed us to see teens come to Christ in a Nepali village, scores of people saved on a mountain in Ethiopia, and one female student from a large Asian nation ask to be introduced to Jesus during a homestay. God has allowed us to be in the right place to witness His kingdom at work through the local congregations in many cultures, to worship Him in many languages, and to be welcomed by new Christian brothers and sisters all across the globe.

We're still learning the value of making study abroad programs more missional and, conversely, making our mission trips more academic. Christian universities could be designing and sending more such hybrid programs to teach students how to dream missionally with their futures and demonstrate how to live missionally with their vocations.

Education—An Invitation to Restricted Mission Fields

Karin L. Semler

The signs read, “Concordia International School Kabul, founded in 2021,” and “Welcome to Concordia International School Pyongyang, est. 2035.” Incredible! Improbable? Intentional?

In 2015, such schools are a fictional illustration. And yet, our Lord works in implausible ways.

The highly regarded reputation of Lutheran education has opened doors for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) to start schools in several countries that do not issue missionary visas to foreigners. Within the last two decades, the LCMS has founded an international school in the People’s Republic of China and a second international school in Vietnam. These two schools have been chartered to teach an American curriculum to students who hold foreign passports. In many cases, they are children of executives from multi-national companies who have been stationed in Asia.

Traditionally, Lutheran schools have been supported by the local congregation as a means of instructing and strengthening children in the Christian faith. As congregations were formed, often parochial schools were subsequently founded. In fact, the LCMS sponsors the largest number of Protestant schools in the United States. Education is one of the core ministries of the LCMS. Historically, foreign LCMS mission efforts included educational ministries, first in India, and following in Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, Japan, and elsewhere. Today, Lutheran education may precede modern mission work in countries with restricted missionary access.

Remarkably, Concordia International School Shanghai, established in 1998, enjoys more freedom of religious expression than publicly funded tertiary schools across the United States. Teachers who openly follow Jesus Christ as their Lord staff the school, which educates 1,200 children from roughly thirty nations. Head of School, Gregg Pinick, celebrates Concordia Shanghai, as it is known, as a “platform for ministry.”

Karin L. Semler has a background as a Director of Christian Education and earned the MS in Educational Psychology. She held several posts for LCMS World Mission, including Director of the Mission Information Unit. Karin has worked in Norway, Japan, Indonesia, and China. Since 2009, Karin has served at Concordia International School Shanghai. She also leads the Asia Lutheran Education Association as Executive Director. www.AsiaLutheranEducation.org

In the 1990s, the city of Shanghai planned to attract foreign companies to invest in business ventures. In addition to tax-free zones and city planning, the New Pudong District of Shanghai recognized that foreign companies would require international schools for their deployed staff. The educational quality of Hong Kong International School and Lutheran schools in the United States paved the way for the LCMS to start a new school, an openly Christian school in China.

The start of Concordia International School Shanghai included a community center, which was started with a grant from Wheat Ridge Ministries. Today, the Community Center Shanghai includes centers in three of Shanghai's districts, where the majority of expatriates live. Culture classes, relocation and adjustment tips, as well as counseling services, are offered to meet the needs of thousands of Shanghai's foreigners. Additionally, the district government where Concordia International School Shanghai is located built a Protestant church and a Catholic church to meet the needs of the families enrolled at Concordia. All of these—the original Community Center Shanghai, a Protestant church, and a Catholic church—are located within a one-city-block radius of Concordia Shanghai's campus.

For more than fifteen years, students at Concordia Shanghai have learned about Jesus Christ. And through interactions with the Concordia Shanghai community, a growing number of Chinese citizens have also recognized Christ's love. By working at Concordia Shanghai, a growing number of Chinese staff have learned about Jesus and now profess faith in Him. Concordia Shanghai's teachers and students regularly participate in service activities within Shanghai and in developing provinces. A leader in the local police department noted the school culture as one that "gives and does not take." The Christian witness of loving one's neighbor is tangible.

It is important to consider, "Why would a country that doesn't recognize Christian denominations authorize a Lutheran school to be established and operate?" The invitation to start these schools was not strong-armed or a result of bribery. The relationships of many Lutherans serving in Asia have borne fruit. The Christian witness of loving one's neighbor has not gone unnoticed. In fact, it is because of this witness that Lutheran schools have been allowed to start. Make no mistake, the local and national governments intentionally approved these Lutheran schools.[1]

Vietnam and the United States established diplomatic relations within just the last twenty years. The LCMS began working in 1995 with the Vietnamese government's National Institute of Nutrition to provide humanitarian assistance. The 2015–2016 school year marks the fifth year for Concordia International School Hanoi. Head of School, Steve Winkelman, observed, "For the LCMS to have registered and begun operating a school in Vietnam, is nothing short of a miracle, given the limited amount of time that the United States and Vietnam have cooperated."

The founding of Concordia Hanoi is also a testimony to the Christian witness

and relationships that have been built over the past two decades. The school's charter has been expanded to include student enrollment of up to 20% local Vietnamese passport holders. A permanent campus is currently under construction, which, when finished, will allow enrollment of 750 students from preschool through high school. Concordia International School Hanoi is not a clandestine project; rather, the school provides a holistic education through teachers who bear witness to the Light of the world.

Our Lord has softened the hearts of leaders in authority in China and Vietnam to trust and embrace LCMS administrators to open schools of high quality. Only twenty years ago, these Lutheran schools would have seemed impossible. God has worked through the course of history to open doors for Lutheran education. He continues to be actively at work through the faithful service of His children.

There is a Chinese proverb that reasons, "If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people." In terms of God's mission in restrictive countries, planning for eternity can grow out of the faith-filled, intentional start of Lutheran schools. "For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'" (Rom 10:13, ESV).

Endnotes

[1] The Lutheran Church–Hong Kong Synod, partner church of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, has received Chinese government approval for and opened international schools in Shenzhen and Foshan.

Rediscovering Disciple Making

Dale Critchley

In my freshman year of college, God pointed me toward the pastoral ministry. I argued with Him. My roommate and most of my friends weren't Christians. They knew what I believed, we respected one another, and we had lots of meaningful faith conversations as a result. Most of them had an aversion to all Christians except me. Were I to enter the pastoral ministry, I would spend most of my life surrounded by Christians and have little time for the lost. Why would God pull me out of the mission field for the rest of my life? But learning from Jonah, I knew that I could either enroll in seminary or avoid large bodies of water for the rest of my life. Four years later, I resided in St. Louis.

For the next fifteen years, I continued arguing my point with God. Understand that I loved the ministry. I loved preaching and teaching, especially teaching the catechism. But that I was doing it still made no sense. God had messed up.

Then the question arose: "How do you make disciples?" And after eleven years in the ministry, I realized that I knew how to baptize but not how to "teach them to obey everything I have commanded you." I knew how to teach everything Jesus commanded, but not how to follow. I knew how to make confirmands and church members, but not disciples who follow Jesus Christ.

But then I remembered my adolescent daughters, all of whom took their faith seriously and actively loved and sought the lost at every opportunity. I knew how to make disciples, but I did that by living with them and daily intentionally seeking the Kingdom of God and showing it to them. But I couldn't invite my entire congregation to live with me! How could I implement this model in a congregational setting?

After a year of study, prayer, and long conversations with several of experts, the answer formed before me, gradually growing clearer as the details came into focus: exponential mentoring. I realized that I was teaching instead of training, like trying to show someone how to play football with a textbook. But if I would train through

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Thankful to be husband of Teresa since 1994 and father of six daughters, Dale Critchley has served churches in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Ohio after receiving his Master of Divinity degree from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1998. Pastor Dale has served in leadership roles in the LCMS Iowa District East. As one of the first Lutheran pastors to make his sermons available to listeners worldwide via podcast, he has a global following. Committed to personal spiritual growth through multigenerational mentoring and relationship-based outreach, he developed DiscipleQuest to allow congregations anywhere to begin spiritual training in their context. He continues to seek innovative ways to bring the Gospel into the lives of others so that the love of Christ may fill them to overflowing into the lives of still others.

intentional structured mentoring, essentially taking on a few apprentices, I could train others how to train others. Then, as those apprentices became mentors who took on more apprentices, I could extend my reach beyond just those in my immediate sphere of influence. And if that training integrated outreach to the lost throughout the process, I could train an unlimited number of mature disciple-making disciples and potentially turn the shrinking tide in the Western church. So I collected the results of my research into DiscipleQuest (disciplequest.net), a collaborative model, making the process freely available for any church to use, as is, or to modify for their context. God knew what He was doing all along. Sneaky God.

Of course, I didn't invent a new idea. The *Didache* indicates mentoring as the primary catechesis method in the Early Church. They didn't cram catechumens into a classroom, and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. What would happen if the church rediscovered that? How would it change our congregations? What would happen if our members knew how to confidently share their faith and make disciples? How would that change the post-confirmation dropout rate if they transitioned directly into mentoring? How would widespread commitment to spiritual maturity change faithful attendance at worship, stewardship practice—indeed, every aspect of the life of the church? The answers become apparent almost immediately.

DiscipleQuest is a multigenerational, mentor-based spiritual growth tool. Participants are taught to teach, trained to train, and coached to coach. While the process can begin as early as sixth grade and has milestones, every participant continues as long as each draws breath. Using a plug-in structure for maximum flexibility and designed with multiple learning styles in mind, the spiritual maturity developed through DiscipleQuest resolves some of the biggest challenges facing churches today, such as the post-confirmation dropout rate, personal evangelism, worship attendance, the stewardship spectrum, biblical literacy, and more. For more information, check out http://disciplequest.net, watch the introductory videos there, and download the handbook. Then contact Pastor Dale Critchley (pastordale@lcmspastor.com) for help getting started. And because you're wondering, DiscipleQuest is and always will be free for anyone to use and adapt to your needs.

Setting a Vision for SEKOLAH PAPUA HARAPAN (Papua School of Hope)

Robert W. Smith

Why would a Christian teacher teach overseas? Where is the greatest possibility to make an impact sharing the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with students who have never heard of it or only have a limited understanding? Often, families in other countries enroll their children in Christian schools. They choose these schools because they generally offer the best education in the area, and the curriculum is delivered in English. God has unlocked the doors to a unique opportunity for Christian teachers and administrators in newly-founded Christian schools. The location is Papua, Indonesia, the eastern-most province of Indonesia in the western half of the island of New Guinea, formerly called Irian Jaya.

In the 1990s Dr. Darrell and Sue Van Luchene were asked to serve as educational missionaries in Indonesia. Dennis Denow followed them, and then my wife, Alice, and I were asked to join them. We were asked to serve the educational foundation Sekolah Pelita Harapan (School of Light and Hope) in Lippo Karawaci, Indonesia, near Jakarta, the national capital. Darrel, Sue, Alice, and I were asked to help evaluate and make suggestions to help set a vision for education in Papua. Our task was accomplished in the spring of 2002. We discovered a gigantic mission opportunity for Christians to witness through a Christian school system.

Papua, the most remote and resource-rich island in Indonesia, has remained largely undeveloped due to lack of infrastructure and extremely rigorous terrain. Villages are reached by footpaths. The only other way to access remote interior villages is by airplanes that land on dirt and grass airstrips carved out of the side of limestone mountain peaks. The population is between 2.5 to 3 million people, who speak a mixture of 275 languages. Villagers living in the mountainous interior region have very little, if any, opportunity to pursue education. Families in many interior villages are desperate to find opportunities for their children to have access to education. The existing government schools are poorly administered. Teachers do not show up on many days. While the outside world rushes in at an alarming pace, many interior people groups are marginalized and unequipped to step into leadership positions to guide their own village, people group, province, or nation.

In 2014 another opportunity came for us. Alice and I were invited to return to

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Robert W. Smith is retired and living in Frankenmuth, Michigan since 2006. He and his wife, Alice, have been LCMS missionaries in Hong Kong, Nigeria, South Korea, and Indonesia. They also have led mission trips to Russia, Hong Kong, Guatemala, and India. In 2014 they lived for six months in Papua, Indonesia.

Papua for six months to mentor teachers and administrators of both of the Papuan Schools of Christian Hope. Whenever and wherever possible we would also be given the opportunity to lift the arms of Wally Wiley.

Do you remember *"Where's Waldo?"* These books were created by English illustrator Martin Handford and originally called, *"Where's Wally?"* They consist of a series of detailed illustrations depicting dozens or more people involved in a variety of activities at a given location. Readers are challenged to locate a character named Wally (Waldo in the U.S.) hidden in the illustration.

We found a real-live Wally at the end of the world. His name is Wally Wiley. He lives in Papua, Indonesia.

Repeatedly, people ask, "Where's Wally?" He is the "go-to man" for many people of all backgrounds to get advice and help in the Province of Papua and beyond. The government of Papua has asked him to be a consultant in ways too numerous to mention. "Where's Wally?" "What would Wally say?" "What would Wally do?" When a problem arises, people say, "Let's call Wally." To Wally, interruptions are okay. Wally is the man who originally invited the four of us to Papua.

Wally moved to Papua in 1977 to work with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). He was not a pilot, but a carpenter. After many years of experience within this Christian mission organization, Wally became one of its leaders in Papua and eventually for all of Indonesia. He can be compared to James Hudson Taylor, a mid-1800s missionary to China whose huge vision for spreading Christianity in China became a reality. Wally fits this comparison for the Province of Papua.

Over the years Wally came to realize that Papua, Indonesia, was in desperate need of quality education and health clinics. He decided to do something about it. He formed a vision in 2003 with the help of others for Papua Harapan School System (Papua Schools of Hope). The two school systems have similar names (Sekolah Pelita Harapan and Sekolah Papua Harapan) but are administered under separate governing bodies. They do advise and assist one another.

Today Wally's vision is becoming a reality. One K to 8 school is now fully functioning in Sentani along the coastline near the capital city of Jarapura. It presently has an enrollment of 150 students. A new K to 12 campus to serve 750 students is in the planning stages in Sentani, along with a new health clinic, providing a great opportunity for God's kingdom!

A second school in the mountain village of Mamit operates a K to 3 school that also includes a health clinic. The future vision extends throughout the interior highlands of Papua to include at least 25–40 schools and clinics to be built in the next ten years. These schools will offer more than the basic 3 Rs. Character development is an essential part of the curriculum, as well as a focus on attitudes,

skills, and lifelong habits. These are built from a biblically based Christian worldview. Sekolah Papua Harapan (SPH) exists to empower the people of Papua, particularly those in the most remote contexts, to become leaders in their own communities, country, and across the globe.

Children from interior mountain highlands who are recognized to exhibit exceptional intelligence and ability are invited to come to the SPH located in Sentani. Their tuition costs are covered by donations from Christians across the globe. This school hopes to have at least one-third of its total school population to be from the highlands. The English language is being emphasized so that students can eventually attend universities outside Indonesia as a pathway to become national and world Christian leaders.

Most families in the interior are subsistence farmers living in grass-roof homes. Sending their children to the coast for schooling is a dramatic change for the family, requiring significant sacrifices. Although parents cannot afford tuition, they are asked to commit to visit the coast and invest in the life of the school. In addition, they contribute a small donation toward the transportation costs of their children to visit their village home during school breaks. The most significant sacrifice, however, is the separation that comes with sending their children away to school. Papua Harapan is committed to work with families and help them stay connected and to provide excellent care to students as they are away from their loved ones. Parenting classes are held in the villages and counseling is offered to assist with transitions.

The trip from the village to the coastal campus of SPH brings many new experiences for these children: riding in cars for the first time, living with electricity, tasting ice cubes, learning the concept of restaurants, seeing paved roads and two-story buildings, owning multiple changes of clothes, sleeping on mattresses, tasting a diversity of food options (instead of the staple sweet potatoes and sweet potato greens), and learning to swim.

When these children transition to life at SPH, they join other children who come from similar remote village contexts, as well as “day-school children” who live with their families in the coastal town of Sentani and commute to school each day.

Today, more than at any other time in history, it is critical to have a quality Christian education system in Papua! The reason is simple: Papuans are living in a time of great change. It has never been more essential for children to build a biblical worldview. Challenges are great for all of us, but especially these young people. They are moving at jet speed from primitive to modern influences, both good and bad.

Native Papuans call themselves Christian because of the strong influence of Christian missionaries in the area during the last one hundred years. However, their general knowledge, understanding, and practice needs support and encouragement.

The government of Indonesia has been transmigrating many educated Muslims to Papua. Wally Wiley estimates about one-half of the population is now Muslim. The Christian government is concerned that soon not enough Christian leaders will be available to meet the challenges Papua is about to face in next ten–twenty-five–fifty years. It is urgent that Christians cultivate strong leadership skills.

While in Papua, I was given the privilege to visit the mountain village of Mamit. My purpose was to encourage the young teachers, students, and parents by preaching and leading a prayer seminar. While I was there, the Lord surprised everyone—parents, teachers, and students—by providing an unannounced visit of the governor of Papua, Lucas Enembe. Since he had been educated in Australia, I was able to converse directly in English with him. We were together for a day and a half. In our conversations, his basic message was "Help." Papua needs people to help implement Christian education. Christians have an open door to send Christian educators to assist Wally Wiley to implement the vision of the Sekolah Papua Harapan system!

Sekolah Papua Harapan schools are authentic Christian schools, in which the curriculum is taught with a Christian worldview and the Gospel is freely shared with every student every day. Alice and I have taught around the world in a variety of countries, but at the schools of Hope in Papua we observed something new and special. Every morning each student was given a good morning welcome handshake and a verbal "God bless you!" by teachers as they arrived to the school campus. As a group the class would greet their teachers with a "God bless you!" Class sessions ended with students blessing the teacher. "Thank you, Mr. Bob. God bless you."

These genuine Christian greetings set the tone and create a blessed atmosphere of peace and security for the entire school day. What a wonderful testimony for God's kingdom!

Without an intentional approach, Christian education can be just a frosting or an expensive education that is barely distinguishable from its secular counterparts. A key understanding is how to provide a saving Christ-centered worldview throughout the curriculum at every grade level. Otherwise, the finest Christian young people are being taken captive with humanistic ideas during the very time when they have the greatest potential, highest energy, and most creativity to have an impact on the world.

Students often neither understand the relationships between the hundreds of Bible facts they have memorized, nor can they incorporate them into a clearly defined Christian worldview and actions. Bible stories remain unrelated and of little value to "real-life" issues. Sadly, some Christian school graduates cannot articulate or apply the biblical Christian worldview in their daily lives. Many waver in their faith when confronted with the carefully articulated arguments of other beliefs. "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according

to Christ" (Col. 2:8).[1] Students may accept only the criteria reflecting the secular lifestyle. Good Christian education must do better.

Sekolah Papua Harapan system has a holistic approach that prepares every course to be biblically and discipleship based. Through this discipleship-based education, Sekolah Papua Harapan exists to equip Papuan children to be national and international leaders with GODLY CHARACTER, CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES, SUPERIOR ACADEMIC SKILLS, and PRODUCTIVE LIFELONG HABITS (CASH).

Where is the battleground? The Mind

Ideas rule the world. Correct the ideas instead of the behavior. Our world is morally defective, ethically distorted, and spiritually devastated. Therefore we must teach our students how to THINK. Thinking is hard work. Few people think about foundational beliefs. Wisdom and truth are revelation and thought based.

In ancient Israel, the tribe of Issachar was noted with distinction because its "men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron 12:32).

People who are able to understand and articulate their beliefs inevitably become leaders. People who fail to understand the ideas of their times inevitably become followers, and not very good ones.

Temptations, pressures, and difficult circumstances arise during every school year. Despite these distractions, there will hopefully be continuous spiritual growth. This growth often seems shallow or based only on emotion. A number of young people love God with their hearts, but their minds are given over to hollow and deceptive philosophies. An educational system should not be inactive or silent. Christian education must act and speak up! Every class session has the opportunity to build an understanding of what is the truth.

Can Christian education make an impact in this world?

It is my perception that schools like SPH desire the Christian impact on students to be more than a mile wide and an inch deep. SPH strives to add depth to the witness that is presented, not a hit-or-miss or happy-clappy approach. Genuine revitalization implies a conscious decision to live in a more Christ-like forgiveness-driven relationship. SPH wants every student to come to the "House of Salvation" and through the work of the Holy Spirit embrace a serious personal relationship with Jesus. It's not niceness that Christian schools are after, it is love motivated by Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Love also is known by its right action, not only through the avoidance of evil. In the Christian classroom, the student has the opportunity to learn the truth and experience the truth.

Truth—So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (Jn 8:31–32).

Before an audience in Jakarta in 2005 Ravi Zacharias said this:

> The most powerful weapon in the world is not military, political position, personality, beauty, or talent. The most powerful weapon is The Truth. Jesus Christ claimed to be the truth. Is his exclusive claim defendable? He is unique, but he is uniquely true.[2]

What is truth? Every student deserves to have this question answered from a Christian worldview and know why Christians believe it. The truth is: He died! He rose! The disciples saw Him before and after!

SPH promotes a Christian worldview that teaches the truth and provides insight into God's intentions and God's plan for a full and meaningful life that brings glory to Him. Some students will reject the invitation, but at least the young person should understand what a Christian believes and the reason for this belief.

Three major challenges face all Christian schools:

1. To reach as many students as possible with the Christian worldview.
2. To reach them as deeply as possible.
3. To help students grow in their personal maturity and faith in Jesus Christ.

Consider this positive Christian teaching approach example from Sekolah Papua Harapan physical education classes: At the end of every class session, time is taken to ask the class three questions: How was your character today? (Positive or Negative) How was your attitude today? (Positive or Negative) What skill did you learn today? This happens every class period for eight-plus years. I'm sure this repetition can have an impact for a lifetime. Christian character and attitude can become prominent in importance for each student. It is not just head knowledge. It is applied knowledge. SPH wants to make a significant impact on students' ability to formulate a clearly defined biblical Christian worldview and live accordingly. At SPH this happens, during physical education classes and other classes throughout the day.

What are the needs of SPH and students in Christian schools around the world?

To believe that Life is Meaningful and has a Purpose

Students believe it is very important that life is meaningful and has a purpose. Yet, many students don't have a purpose and want help in finding the meaning in life for themselves. Effective Christian education can assist in helping the majority of students find that personal meaning in a relevant, fulfilling, and God-honoring way.

To have a Sense of Community and Deeper Relationship

Many factors conspire to cause separateness in our society. At a personal level, there is higher mobility, divorce and breakup of families within any student body. The world is becoming increasingly impersonal with growth of mega-cities, like Jakarta. One of the emotional consequences to this separateness is loneliness. A large percentage of students go through long periods of loneliness. Many students lack the skill of building lifetime relationships. Teachers need to deal with this severe loneliness by encouraging participation in large-group activities as well as small groups rooted in dialogue, special interest circles, prayer, and Bible studies.

To be Appreciated and Respected

These are certainly basic and fundamental needs. It is estimated that one-third to one-half of students lack a sense of self-worth or self-esteem. This is a direct consequence of not being loved or appreciated. It has been found in both sexes. Low self-esteem can bring with it a host of social problems, such as alcohol and drug abuse and eventually suicide tendencies. Significantly, students who have a close relationship with God feel much better about themselves. They find their identity in being an adopted child of God.

To be Listened to or Heard

Specifically, this means that every school needs intentionally to provide more opportunities to listen to students, both in one-on-one discussions, and as well as in class or group sessions. Students have many questions to ask but do not speak up. They need to be taught how to phrase smart questions.

To Have Help in Practical Ways to Develop a Mature Faith

Teachers tend to make too many assumptions about the depth of students' knowledge and faith concerning their religious beliefs. For example, Christians pray and believe in the power of prayer but do not give prayer life the attention it deserves. Many students are hard pressed to defend their faith, because they are uncertain about what they believe, let alone why they believe it. Teachers need to work toward closing the gap between beliefs and practice. There is a need to turn professed faith into lived-out faith. This is part of character building.

In positive terms, teachers hope students will profit from their classroom experiences. They hope students will experience freedom from fear or anxiety that will develop true poise to confront and cope with changes in today's world.

Conclusion

While visiting Mamit, I was asked to preach. My words were translated into Indonesian. At the end of the service, an older gentleman stood up and asked me a question: "Would you please come back next month?" My heart broke when I had to tell him I was returning to my home in the United States. This was the second time I had heard a plea for help in two days. I was reminded of Matthew 9:38 "Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod is well known throughout the world for excellent Christian teachers and education. It would be a great blessing to provide concrete HOPE to Sekolah Papua Harapan system with LCMS-trained teachers and administrators, along with doctors and nurses for school clinics. My wife and I can testify that mentoring young teachers is well worth the time, money, and effort.

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Endnotes

[1] All Bible quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, English Standard Version © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

[2] Ravi Zacharias, "The TRUTH is Invaluable" Speech given in Jakarta, Indonesia, August 5, 2005.

The Process of Creation and Development of the M.I.S.E. (Silesian) Evangelism Centre's Work

Daniel Chlebek

The M.I.S.E. Project originated in 2005 in response to God's call to establish groups of believers praying for one another, growing spiritually together, and sharing their faith with people around them in places without any Christian fellowships. The M.I.S.E. Project began activities in 2006 among young people as a mission project of the youth ministry department in the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession. It helped to make disciples of Jesus Christ of many young people in the congregations, based on 2 Tim 2:2: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others."

The first activity was the Prayer Conference that took place for the first time in January 2006. It was followed by other activities, such as prayer groups in university cities, establishment of mission teams (a key area of our work), integration and development of activities in sports, teaching English, etc. As the project grew, it became necessary to give it an independent status, and so the church-based organization called the M.I.S.E. Evangelism Centre (www.ecmise.cz) was established in 2011 under the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (www.sceav.cz) with the purpose of supporting mission and evangelism of the church and its congregations, as well as creating conditions for establishing new mission points and congregations of the church.

The M.I.S.E. Project/Evangelism Centre's Goals and the Ways of Reaching Them

The Project has been based on four pillars expressed in its name: mobilization to prayer (M), integration of personality (I), fellowship (in Czech "spolecenstvi") (S), and evangelism (E).

Mobilization—mobilization of the church members to more active prayer life, intercession and organizing prayer conferences, prayer meetings, prayer diaries, etc.

Integration of personality—leading to spiritual growth of Christians to mature personalities, resulting in a healthy and biblical lifestyle, mostly in the area of

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Daniel Chlebek was born in 1977 in Trinec, Czech Republic. After graduating from seminary, he was ordained in the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, where he worked as a youth pastor for ten years. He initiated and developed the M.I.S.E. Project/Evangelism Centre. He is married and has two sons.

evangelism and mission. We organized a summer mission training and other training combined with practice.

Fellowship—helping in the development of healthy Christian communities, i.e., communities serious about the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ and applying them in adequate ways, mostly in evangelism and mission. Mission-oriented worship services, seminars, workshops, and conferences are organized in individual congregations.

Evangelism—motivating congregations' members to evangelism activities through clubs, sports competitions and camps, teaching English, etc. The greatest emphasis was put on the development of mission teams, because they are highly effective both in sharing the Gospel and transforming the young Christians' thinking about mission and evangelism. We have seen this way of ministry accelerating the spiritual growth in a natural way, not only in the schools but also directly in action, in the ministry.

Method of the Mission Teams' Establishment and Working

The following is an example of the mission team establishment. Several young people were challenged in a congregation to establish a mission team that would pray about what neighboring village, housing project, or town they should serve in. They had to cooperate closely in searching for and confirming the selected place with the church leadership. Then the team, a group of five to eight young people aged 15–23+, had to find a place to meet and arrange the rental, research the area and needs of people living there, develop program and club activities, and invite young people from the area. They also had to raise money for refreshments, equipment, and activities. In this way, they in fact went through a process similar to that of establishing a new congregation. It was a great learning experience, as well as adventure to them.

They enjoyed it because they had been given responsibility by the church leaders, and they could experience the mighty acts and miracles of God in real life. For example, they prayed for six months for a facility to meet in a housing project with 15,000 people but without any Protestant church. They visited all blocks and other places with no success during these six months. Finally, the town leased them some rooms in the cellar of a house, which they still use. They learned a great lesson in patience, trust, faith, and answered prayer. It helped them to see God as the living and powerful One who holds everything in His hands, and who counts on them and cooperates with them. You cannot learn this from books or classroom. A coach, someone older and more experienced, was an important part of the process, coaching the team, supervising and possibly guiding it to keep the work on the right track. We could see that young people mature spiritually quickly in such environment and become Christ's disciples with a passion for their congregation and church and for

saving the searchers around them. We could see a significant move in their perception of and relationship to God and their families and in the development of their leadership, communication, and social skills. We view these mission clubs as incubators for future active church members, church planters, and missionaries who would serve outside of the Czech Republic.

Current Challenges and Goals

With the M.I.S.E. Project transformed into the church-based organization M.I.S.E. Evangelism Centre, it started focusing also on the middle-aged and older people, which can change the mission activities of this kind significantly. That is why we began to carry out a plan of starting 21 mission groups in new places in 2013, praying that the Lord would bless our efforts and give rise to new congregations of our church, which has only 21 congregations now. It is beyond our means to establish all of the 21 new mission congregations due to the size of our church and the highly non-Christian nature of the country, but we are waiting for God's grace and help, and possibly also help of partner congregations and churches from other countries who can support us with their prayers, experience, and material or financial means. May God use the above described activities to bring glory to His name.

“Where Does Your Agape Stick?”

David Seabaugh

Editor’s Note: *Seabaugh starts in an educational setting—a Lutheran school—and finishes with a mission you can draw on a napkin at the coffee shop. This article is an example of how our most deeply held Christian beliefs will be expressed most meaningfully if we pay attention to the question: What is this person able to hear? This question is at least as important as: What do I want to say? This article can remind the reader, also, that we are educated, we grow as we serve, in mission.*

A couple years ago I was invited to my children’s Lutheran school to conduct chapel. I had done this before, and it was always a delightful time. However, this particular chapel would change my life. The chapel services involved a series on the Ten Commandments, and I had been asked to speak on the Sixth Commandment, “Do not commit adultery.” No problem. I teach this stuff in confirmation. I’ll just talk “in code” to the seventh and eighth graders and conveniently avoid the challenges of speaking directly about adultery to the younger children. A day or so before the service, I was informed that the seventh and eighth graders were away that day, leaving the preschool through sixth grade for my adultery talk. Lovely! There went my avoidance strategy. Oh, and talk about a delicate situation! Not only did I have to speak to children of multiple developmental stages about a really sensitive issue, but I knew for a fact that there were many children in the room with challenging home situations which likely involved adultery of one form or another.

After prayer and a little too much hand-wringing, I decided to approach the subject with as much simplicity as possible. Perhaps if I could capture the most basic beauty of God’s design for marriage, I wouldn’t have to delve into the innumerable complexities of sinful behavior. In order to keep things super-simple, I decided to use some basic illustrations. Not being much of an artist, I decided to represent the people as stick figures and their relationships with arrows. The arrows signified love. This wasn’t fickle emotional love, but *agape* love, which could be best defined as unconditional commitment. The arrows pointed to the one who benefited from the love, indicating what kind of relationship existed. Little did I know it, but in that moment Agape Sticks was born.

David Seabaugh is the Senior Pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in St. Paul, MN. He is the author and instructor of the Harvest Incubator for Mission through LINC-Twin Cities and serves on the Home Council of the World Mission Prayer League. Find more of his thoughts on discipleship at davidseabaugh.wordpress.com.

The day of the chapel came and the pressure was on to explain what these stick figures and arrows meant. The children got the stick figures right away, but would they understand the arrows? Did they ever! It was as simple as right versus wrong for them. I explained that God made us to have our love arrows pointing to others all the time (Figure 1). When we love others, we are committed to them and they benefit, even if it doesn't benefit us in return. When everyone does that, it's a beautiful picture. This was obviously good and right to the children. The opposite was equally clear. If God made us to love others, then the opposite of that was to love ourselves. I drew another arrow that curved back to the stick figure. The room changed. The children knew it. This was not good. I drew some other stick figures in the same picture to further demonstrate this selfish love. A love arrow missed one stick figure entirely, leaving him isolated and alone. The other stick figure must have felt loved, but the love wrapped around him, and so the one really benefiting from the love wasn't him. The children understood both scenarios and even expressed compassion for the poor stick figures. These children totally got it.

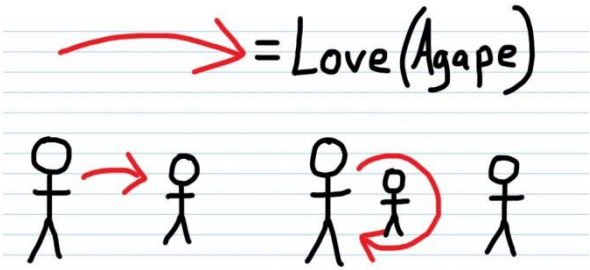

Figure 1.

At this point, the marriage relationship was easy to draw. He loves her. She loves him. It's really as simple as that (Figure 2). The arrows created a kind of circle in continuous motion between the two. Everyone was loved completely without any arrow pointing back to self. When "Little Johnny" enters the picture, Dad and Mom love Johnny, and Johnny learns to love them back the same way. It's a thing of beauty.

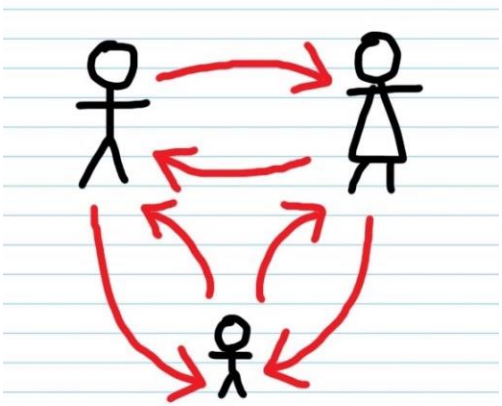

Figure 2.

I would have loved nothing more than to stop right there and leave them with the pristine image of God's intention for marriage. But we don't have a Sixth Commandment because all our arrows stay straight. So I swallowed hard and drew my man and woman up there again. This time, his love wrapped around her and back to himself. Her love did the same and returned to her. Suddenly we had a very different image (Figure 3). Yes, there was a relationship, but it wasn't the same. The children started saying things like, "He just loves himself," and "She's only using him." I drew Little Johnny, and the sadness in the room became palpable. Both Dad's and Mom's arrows went around Johnny and back to themselves. "Nobody really loves him," a child said. Then came the hardest part of the drawing. I had to explain that with this kind of self-love, we're actually taking from someone else. So there comes a time when we feel like we're not getting enough from that person. Unfortunately, we tend to look to other people to fulfill what we can't seem to get from our spouse. I drew another woman in the picture, and had the arrow of the man go around her and her arrow around him. I drew another man next to the first woman with the same result (Figure 4). "Children, this is adultery."

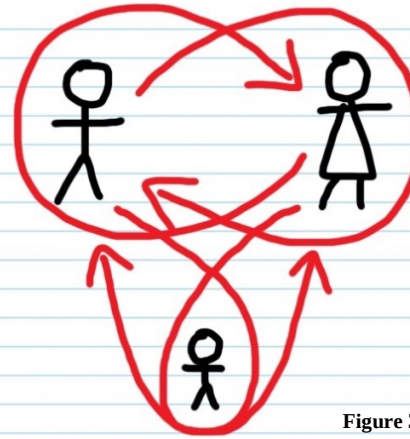

Figure 3.

Of course, the saddest part of the picture was still Little Johnny. In that moment,

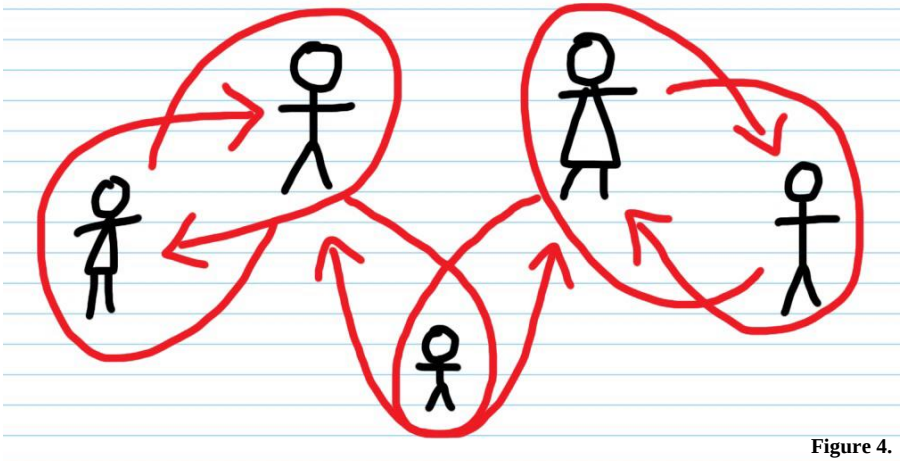

Figure 4.

I looked out over the children and saw the faces of so many "Little Johnnys." I expected tears or self-defense or some sort of backlash from them. There was nothing of the sort. They were intrigued and conversant, as if their crazy confused world had just been made clear and they only wanted to talk it out. These Little Johnnys needed the Gospel, and by the grace of God, the door was wide open. I asked them about what kind of arrow Jesus had. They shouted, "Straight!" "Does Jesus' arrow ever curve back to Himself?" "No!" "How do we benefit from Jesus' love?" "Jesus died for our sins. We are forgiven!" "What about people who commit adultery? Can they be loved by Jesus and forgiven?" "Yes!" they shouted.

I left that day with a tremendous sense of relief, affirmation, and a new appreciation for the power of simple illustration. How could I have possibly taught through the Sixth Commandment without referring to the raw mechanics of sex at all? There was something about this method that seemed to unlock the truth for preschoolers and teachers alike. It's as if we had dug down to the foundation and found the most basic layer upon which everything else is built. I had been taught an intricate complex theology that begged for higher and higher levels of education. I knew how that house was built! Yet, after a master's degree in theology and years of pastoral ministry, I had never understood the Sixth Commandment better or more intuitively than when I drew stick figures and arrows for preschoolers. I was beginning to rediscover the foundation, and it left me wanting more.

If stick figures and arrows could so beautifully explain the Sixth Commandment, what other eternal truths could they make plain? I began to fill sheets of paper with drawings. Some of the best illustrations made their way into sermons. It was a time of immense spiritual growth for me. I could see my own agape arrow, when it stuck to others and when it returned to me. I could see God's arrow toward me. At the same time, I found the tangled, complex systems of theology unraveling right before my eyes into something simple, accessible, memorable, and transferable. The mission of God and our place in it took on a new significance with each revelation. Even long-standing Lutheran theological debates, such as the interplay of justification and sanctification, were immensely clarified with a few stick figures and arrows. As I began to share this illustrative method with others, I would often say, "Where does your agape stick?" The name Agape Sticks stuck.

It's truly challenging to do justice to the Agape Sticks method with the written medium, but let me at least try to give you a taste of the clarity these illustrations can bring to the foundations of our faith.

If we were to assign an arrow to God, what direction would it point? Of course, it would be pointed to us. God is love. He's committed to us and we benefit. God doesn't benefit from making us or providing for us. He's already complete unto Himself! Well, God made us in His image. Think of it like a reflection. If God's arrow is pointed to us, then we should reflect His arrow back to Him and outward to

others (Figure 5). We love God and we love our neighbor. In a reflection, the image is not the real thing, but it looks like the real thing. In the same way, our love is not God's love, but it is a reflection of His love for us. We love because He loves us. That's the image of God.

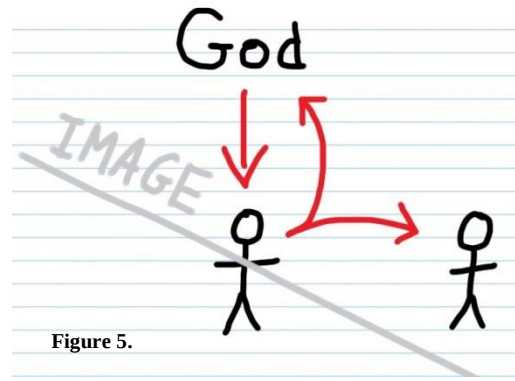

Figure 5.

God created us to live as an interdependent community. When everyone reflects God's love to Him and each other, we get a picture filled with a lot of arrows (Figure 6). Take a look at how everyone is committed to everyone else. Everyone benefits . . . a lot. In this picture, each person has the love of God and three other people, all without a single arrow returning to themselves. Imagine what a supportive environment this must be! Consider how the God-given gifts and talents of all four people would work together as a team! God made the whole creation to function as an interdependent whole. In a world of perfect mutual love, God's supply is funneled fully to every creature. It's the original picture of paradise.

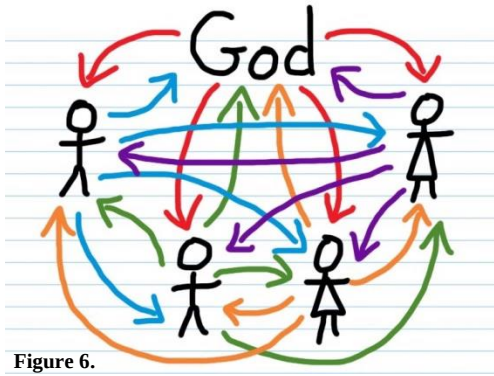

Figure 6.

This interdependent paradise is lost with the advent of selfishness (Figure 7). See what happens to our illustration when the arrows turn on themselves. God still loves them, but they no longer reflect God's love back to Him, nor do they love others. The mutual support and the supply of diverse gifts and talents have been hoarded and cut off. The ability to work together as a team has been severely impaired. They're only interested in themselves! The selfishness spreads like a cancer, turning the entire creation in on itself. Nearly every social evil in history can be illustrated with this one drawing: Poverty, starvation, war, abortion, prejudice, and the list goes on.

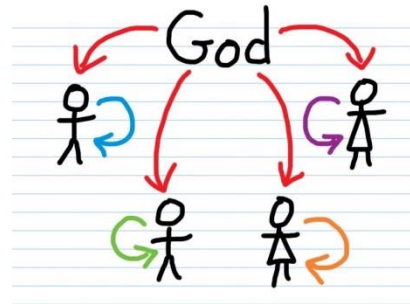

Figure 7.

In this light, the mission of God is simple. God wants His interdependent paradise back. How does God accomplish His mission? He loves us even more. God blessed Abraham to be a blessing to the families of the earth. God gave Moses the law and the tabernacle to encourage an interdependent community. God even chose David, a king whose heart reflected His own, so that His people might still experience selfless love. Time and time again, arrows bent toward self with terrible, often tragic, results. God's greatest expression of love came through Jesus, God Himself in the flesh, who embodied the perfect image of God. Not only that, but He took the sins of the world upon Himself, offering forgiveness and a new life now and forever to all who would, by grace, believe.

The Agape Sticks illustration of Jesus (symbolized by the ancient *Chi Rho*) shows Him being sent by God out of love for us (Figure 8). Everything from Jesus' birth to His teachings, miracles, suffering, death, and resurrection are all expressions of God's love for us. God saves us through Jesus. So far we've done nothing. As recipients of that love *through* Jesus, we love God and others *through* Jesus. Having been loved like this, we can now reflect the image of God back to Him and to others through Jesus. We praise God through Christ. We love sacrificially as He did. We gather as an interdependent community commonly referred to as the Body of Christ. We look forward to Jesus' returning and reestablishing a renewed interdependent paradise. Mission accomplished.

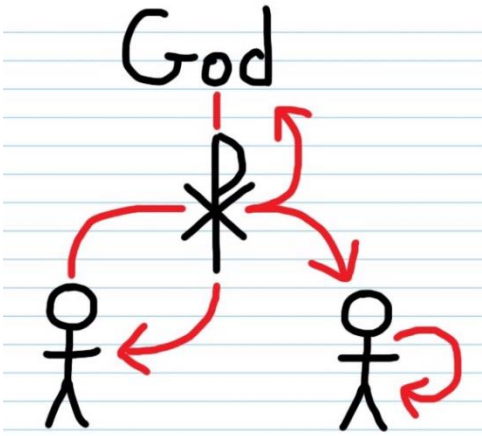

Figure 8.

While you can get a taste of Agape Sticks here, the real magic happens with a Bible open and a sheet of paper and a pen. Sick figures and arrows were amazingly effective in faith discussions with an atheist who, after seeing the illustration of an interdependent world, admitted that it would be great if everyone lived that way. With this method, challenging and complex relationship issues can be illustrated clearly, providing a chance to ponder a way forward with agape love. There have been countless times while I was teaching or preaching, regardless of the group's age or culture, that a picture spoke a thousand words and eyes lit up with fresh understanding. Perhaps the most touching is when the youth, bombarded with messages of self-love, is able to say, "I can see my arrow now. I know where my agape should stick. I'm going to love others the way Jesus loves me."

What started in a Lutheran school chapel service has taken on a life of its own. I guess I wouldn't be writing this article otherwise. By God's grace I've had the

opportunity to train teachers, missionaries, and the next generation of God's church to use Agape Sticks. Recently I took a sabbatical from my pastoral duties to write a year-long multi-cultural discipleship curriculum utilizing Agape Sticks. It's called the Harvest Incubator for Mission, administered by LINC-Twin Cities. Along with that, I produced Agape Sticks videos on YouTube for anyone to watch, use, and reproduce. Just search for Agape Sticks. I hope you find them helpful . . . especially if you're teaching the Sixth Commandment to a room full of Lutheran school children.

No Half-Baked Pastors in East Africa

Shauen Trump

"We don't want half-baked pastors," says General Secretary Fred Magezi of the Lutheran Church of Uganda (LCU), as he bristles at the idea of anyone less than a seminary-trained ordained clergyman administering the sacraments. According to Magezi, it is the Christians themselves in Uganda's Lutheran congregations who want men trained "through the seminary, the Lutheran culture." The LCU's President Charles Bameka explains:

> It is very clear and important that every congregation at least has a trained and ordained pastor. I know that is a far-fetched desire because in Uganda the congregations are growing faster than we can train men. But the ultimate desire is that every congregation is served and manned by a trained and ordained minister.

While the fervent desire to be served by a pastor is hindered by a shortage of ordained men in most countries in East Africa in the midst of significant growth in the church, the continent also celebrates increased capacity and capabilities of the region's seminaries.

When I arrived in Uganda as a vicar almost seven years ago, there was one ordained pastor in the church, that same Charles Bameka, who was serving some sixty congregations. Today the LCU has sixteen pastors serving 130 congregations. It's a better ratio than 1 to 60, but not much better.

Magezi laments, "Sometimes [the parish pastors] spend two months, three months without visiting [a] congregation. It is too far and no means of transport. . . . Most of our congregations are being manned by lay people. And so lay people need to be grounded in the Lutheran doctrine in order to effectively teach." The LCU trains the lay leaders of a congregation—the helper, elders, chairman, treasurer, and other office bearers through a Mission Training Center program designed for laity. Bameka is insistent, "If somebody asks me what is the most important thing that should happen in your church, it should be training, training, training. Because the more that men and women are trained theologically, the more healthy the church will be."

Uganda is not alone in their struggle. Bishop Joseph Ochola Omolo of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya's (ELCK) Lake Diocese oversees forty-eight parishes of three to eight congregations each, collectively served by about forty pastors. In order to serve new congregations, Omolo describes the typical process:

Shauen Trump is The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Area Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, overseeing the Synod's work from Sudan to South Africa. He lives in Nairobi, Kenya, with his wife, Krista, and their three young boys.

"We get a man there; he can read and write. Then we ask him to be a helper there, but [he] doesn't have any theological education." Rev. Andrew Atunga Ong'ondo, Chairman of ELCK's Nyamira Proposed Diocese, is in a similar situation with close to one hundred congregations and few pastors. He identifies far-reaching consequences of using untrained helpers in congregations,

> Even this counseling problem in homes, when people go to counsel, those who are trained know how to handle [it] but those who are not trained handle it in a different way and sometimes they end up causing more harm. . . . Even these wrangles that we have [in the church], it is because some leaders have not gone through training. So when problems come, they are not able to solve the problems in the right way. . . . [Those who are trained] know what they are supposed to do. They even know the hierarchy, that after this I have someone to give my report.

With a shortage of pastors and a heavy reliance on untrained lay helpers with their weaknesses, theological education continues to be the number one request the LCMS receives from churches in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Consequently, theological education at all levels dominates our conversations and priorities as we relate to church bodies across the region. The LCMS supports Mission Training Centers for lay helpers, continuing education conferences for evangelists and church workers, and local seminaries that serve a single church body. While each relationship is unique, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is an apt example. The LCMS supports a Master's program in the EECMY's Mekane Yesus Seminary through scholarships for students, short-term inter-seminary loan of faculty, and visiting professors. As a result of prioritized recruiting for Ethiopia, a new team of career missionaries is preparing to deploy into the EECMY built around missionary professors teaching at Mekane Yesus Seminary.

The pursuit of higher accreditation and degrees is not unique to Mekane Yesus Seminary. The need for recognized credentials is felt in every country. Omolo, who is also the Principal of Kenya's Matongo Lutheran Theological College, explains:

> The educational standard in this continent, not only in this country, is coming up higher and higher and many of our congregations need well-trained pastors with better education with better certificates. That also brings integrity and respect among the people. But the most important thing is that they are grounded in the proper theology of the church.

Those credentials won't have an impact only in the student's home country. Missionaries are increasingly being asked for and sent from Africa back to the West, where higher degrees grant credibility and open avenues for legal immigration and ongoing service.

For the sake of our partners and the West as a mission field, the LCMS prioritizes support for the widest-reaching impact: regional confessional Lutheran

seminaries that award internationally recognized and accredited degrees. Matongo Lutheran Theological College is the prime example in this field, with the LCMS providing career missionary professors, infrastructure development funds, and scholarships for students from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Omolo recognizes that

> One of the wonderful things that the Lord is giving us in Africa today is . . . sound confessional Lutheran theological education. I want really to thank [the] LCMS for working with us, especially [at] Matongo Lutheran Theological College, for networking and bringing various students from other parts of Africa, and [receiving] this theology together. . . . I am seeing a future of confessional Lutheranism in Africa as a result of this work.

A pastor who is theologically formed alongside students from across the continent, graduating with a bachelor's or master's degree in theology from a confessional seminary to serve in Lutheran churches in Africa and around the world. . . There's nothing half-baked about that.

Sending Isn't Easy

Seth Gehrke

"Next to the Word of God, the art of music is the greatest treasure in the world."
– Martin Luther

Music.

It builds community, friendships, teamwork and support.
It teaches us how to express an emotion without words.
It provides us an avenue for service.
It inspires and enlivens our faith.

I've found that music challenges and encourages adults, but it does something extremely powerful in the lives of youth. It provides them with a life skill, which they can use inside and outside of the church.

Everyone loves music. We hear it in elevators, waiting rooms, clubs, theaters, cars, headphones, gyms, classrooms, workplaces, movies, commercials, and, of course, churches.

If we are to be truly missional, we need also to consider the music found outside of the church walls. I'm not discounting the positive effect of church musicians or the necessity of them. I am a church musician and educator! Teaching people how to serve the church well is important, but shouldn't we also consider how we are equipping and discipling them to be salt and light in their musical endeavors outside of the church? Isn't that our goal? To release them?

While I was leading worship and teaching music in California, I was also teaching private music lessons on the side. Many of my students attended the church's contemporary worship service, and about half were students in the Lutheran school. Over time, it became natural to teach them some of the songs we sang in church. Many, including a number from our Lutheran elementary school, formed our Youth Worship Team. They led their peers in worship every Wednesday during chapel. Eventually, by the time they were in late junior high and high school, nine of them were playing on the Sunday morning adult worship team. We often talked about the purpose of worship, our focus on Christ, and that our aim would hopefully be translated to the worshipers we were called to lead. That is a difficult concept for young musicians to grasp, because the majority of music they encounter is a showy, performance-based, self-glorifying style. They have to draw the crowds, right?

Seth Gehrke currently serves as the Worship Leader at St. John Lutheran in Cypress, TX. He has served in many music ministry and education positions at three different churches, with one common attitude and approach: He loves the people first.

Teaching them how to lead people toward God, while getting themselves out of the way, filled many of our conversations. Four of the boys, who were extremely talented for their age, formed a rock band outside of church. They played shows around town and opened for a major band to a crowd of over a thousand people. It was a great opportunity to talk about how they could carry Jesus' love and His care into the world as a band of Christian brothers. The way they talk, treat people, and carry themselves will give them chances to rub up against the world and affect it positively. They taught me a lot about being a teacher and a leader.

Being a part of a musical ensemble provides enormous amounts of face-to-face time. It comes between rehearsals, after practices, during setup and teardown, and everything in between. Most things in the music realm are not isolated events. There is much time spent hanging out and working together for many hours leading up to the service or concert. I remember many discussions about friendships, faith, family, school, and even silly cartoons, which became the glue for a foundation of trust that can't be bought or forced. We experienced life together and learned together. Conversations would continue with the parents when they came to pick up their children. I will always remember being told about the impact I made in one child's life. A mom told me that her high school student's faith had grown by leaps and bounds by playing in the Vacation Bible School worship team; the joy that I felt made my heart want to burst. It made me realize that it's much more than the music; I want to see my students grow as disciples that bring Jesus to the world.

That brings up a tough subject for me: releasing people (especially youth) out into the world. I would suspect that any educator on mission who leads with a discipling-then-releasing focus may find this to be challenging. I always know the day is coming, but the difficult part finally comes when I'm standing next to someone during worship and I realize this is last time the person will be here regularly. There is a selfish part of me that says, "He's our best guitarist and worship flows so well because he can almost read my mind. Now I'm going to have to find someone new or raise up another one." I've joked with my students and told them that I'm going to find a teacher to fail them so that they have to stick around another year! We all laughed about it, but then I'd get a bit more serious and tell them how important they are to me and to God. They are a blessing to so many, and they will continue to be as they are sent out. It's that moment when I realize that I've fulfilled my mission as a musician and an educator: God helped me train and disciple them and now I need to release them. As I write this, I think about many of them, and my heart burns with joy and loss at the same time. It's a strange dichotomy. I prepared them the best I could and I pray that they hold fast to their faith and that they can be missionaries in whatever place God plants them. It may be a rock band in LA, a jazz quartet on a cruise ship, a college marching band, a fledgling worship team at a church plant, or just playing music with friends around a campfire on a Friday night. I hope that they take with them the faith, the skills, the positive relationships, the

Word of God, and the encouragement I have spoken into them for so many years. The prayer of this music educator on mission is to infect all areas of music with the love of Jesus through the disciples we send out.

A former student, now a senior in college, sings in the top choir, and he's majoring in business communications. I asked him recently what his plans were for the future. With a wide grin, he said, "My band is really good. A lot of the guys are passionate about it. We just need a good bassist. Then I think we're gonna go for it. We're gonna try and make it." I said, "You're gonna head into the pro-music life, huh?" He said, "Yep!"

Let's take a step back in time, shall we? I'm going to call him Barry. Well, in seventh grade, Barry ran into an issue. His voice was changing and he literally had about six notes he could sing. During voice checks, he couldn't sing above or below them. He voice either gave out, couldn't match a pitch, or just got airy. It was weird. I hadn't run across this in my many (ahem . . . three years) of teaching, at that point. I said, "Barry, you've only got six notes buddy. And that's ok. You'll get there. You can't control this. We have to ride it out, but I need you to do something for me. Don't give up. Keep singing through this change and you'll be stronger on the other side. Just sing those six notes strong when we get to them in each song." Barry nodded, half-smiled and kept going. To be honest, he's kind of a goofy guy with a silly grin and crazy ideas. The cool thing is that he loved people unconditionally, and everyone always knew it. I'm so thankful I had the chance to be his teacher for four years. I follow him on Facebook and watched him join choir in high school and be selected for the top choir as a sophomore. As a senior, he was one of the top in his district. His high school rock band played a lot and he taught himself guitar. I continued to see him go back to his grade school and sing for their auctions and help lead worship. I pray that God uses him mightily as he enters the secular world of rock. I have a good feeling that He will. Barry and his father talk often about being God's salt and light to the world. He will be a witness, a disciple in a foreign land. He's been trained and sent. My heart will continue to yearn for those wonderful times together, but my heart will also burn with passion as I see these young musicians bring Jesus to the world. My prayer has been answered, and I will continue to send.

Education in Mission: Why It's Important

Matthew Scott

Why is education in mission important? What does education look like on the mission field? How is education inspiring more missions? I hope to share a little bit about these topics by relating to you my experiences as one who has been educated on the mission field and as one hoping to go back as a teacher in the future.

The first question to answer is "Why is education in mission important?" The first call to missions answers this. In Matthew 28:18–20 Jesus tells us, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." We are called to teach all nations to obey everything He has commanded us. Education is inherently part of mission. There are many roles education can take on the mission field, from teaching someone how to use more effective farming practices to teaching orphans how to read and write. I grew up on the mission field as a missionary kid and have witnessed many forms of education as mission.

When I was five years old, my family moved to South Asia. Not long after, I was enrolled in the local missionary kid school. This school is what allowed my parents to stay in Bangladesh to continue serving there. Without it, their ministry would have been cut short, or worse, not even begun. I was strongly influenced in my Christians beliefs and immersed in the Word of God daily. I am in debt to the teachers who accepted the call to come and work in the small and little-known country. The school enabled the parents of over two hundred children to stay in ministry, while also bringing their children up in a positive environment.

My dad's ministry, which will remain unnamed, began as an education initiative using drama and the arts to communicate the love of God alongside holistic messages about healthy living, family building, and moral teaching. It has now moved into other media ventures and is involved in teaching communities how to use drama to communicate messages to people, especially those who are illiterate.

My education in missionary schools greatly influenced me to be a missionary myself. When I was in tenth grade, I changed schools to one in Thailand, where I could attend with over five hundred other students and kids my own age. Before I left the country, I was one of two students in ninth grade. This decision to go to boarding school was extremely influential in my life. It was in Thailand that I began

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Matthew Scott grew up in South and Southeast Asia as a missionary kid from '95 to '08. He currently works at World Mission Prayer League (WMPL) as the young adult coordinator. WMPL is a Lutheran-based mission agency focused on the power of prayer and reaching the unreached.

to use education as mission myself. Through a class called Sports Leadership, I was taught how to teach young kids how to play a variety of sports and swim. I was part of a team that planned a ministry trip to a refugee camp on the border of Burma. We also planned a rugby tournament for elementary students and taught local elementary kids how to play volleyball. These experiences led me on the path that I have taken in attaining a Recreation, Park, and Leisure Studies major, a Youth Studies minor, and now a pursuit of a Master of Arts in Teaching.

One of the most impactful experiences in these formative years of my life was the trip we took to visit the refugee school. On this trip, we led worship, devotions, and group games and lived life, if only for a short time, with kids from five to nineteen who had virtually nothing. They slept in a long thatched hut, wore the same clothes every day, ate two meals a day at most and yet were still happy. The one prized possession among all of the kids was a beat-up old guitar that would not stay in tune. We learned a lot about planning lessons, preparation, intercultural communication, and group games, but we left with so much more. We were able to minister to these kids for a short time, but the memory of my time with them continues to teach me to be thankful for what I have, and to fight for those who have nothing.

The dream that I have had since my first years in college is to start a camp in Thailand that can serve on a variety of platforms: a version of the "summer camp" that is widespread in America, a retreat center for missionaries and conference center for organizations, and tourist attractions such as a high-ropes course and guided adventure tours. All of this dream is secondary to the overall goal of community outreach, which will be spearheaded by students of the same school I attended and funded by the profits from tourism and conferences. The family structure in Thailand is in rough shape, and many young people find themselves without a job or training. It is my hope and prayer that a young adult mentorship program through the camp could attract some of these young people with adventure, connect them with a job, and change them through the Word of God.

I currently work at World Mission Prayer League as the Young Adult Coordinator, a Lutheran-based praying and sending organization. It is through this ministry that I am able to engage with young people, educate, and advocate *for* missions. Using education as mission has been so important in my own life, but inspiring and educating others about world mission is what will impact future generations. In Romans 10:14 it says, "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"

Book Reviews

Catéchèse protestante et enseignement religieux. État de lieux et prospectives. Edited by Jérôme Cottin and Jean-Marc Meyer. Bruxelles and Genève: Lumen vitae / Labor et fides, 2013. 248 pages. Paperback. 22,00 €.

The present volume is an outcome of a conference that took place in May 2012 in Strasbourg, France, organized by the Protestant Theological Faculty of Strasbourg University and the association of catechists (COC). The conference was devoted to the situation of Protestant (Lutheran or Reformed) religious education in France and francophone regions of Belgium and Switzerland. Although the language in which Christian education is taught is one issue, the context of the countries where this language is spoken can vary quite a lot. Even in France, the situation in Alsace-Moselle is different from the rest of country. This region was annexed to France in 1919, while it previously had belonged to Germany and was directed by a German system uninformed by French *laicité*, i.e., strict separation of the church and the state. The French government left the local laws unaltered, including the possibility of realizing church catechesis at public schools.

The collected material in the volume is composed of fourteen lectures under six themes:

1. The urgency in the field of Christian education
2. Catechesis in the churches (shared catechetical experiences from churches in France and French-speaking regions)
3. Catechesis in the schools (shared catechetical experiences from schools)
4. Historical anchorage
5. Responses
6. In-depth exploration

The section on the historical anchorage points to historical and philosophical roots of a teaching process in relation to Christian education from the Protestant perspective. Responses (part 5) include observations from practice, from the Roman Catholic and sociological perspectives. In-depth exploration (part 6) consists of two chapters of theological deliberation that explore the catechetical process more deeply and shift it forward.

There are several significant and various aspects of the issue that the contributors of the book engage: changes of the social context and its values, e.g., the increasing role of electronic media, growing secularization, atomization, and eroticization of society. Financial instability and unemployment also come into play. Then there are shortcomings noted in the catechetical work of Protestant churches, e.g., its separation from theology, the absence of reflection of social changes of the

day, and insufficient concentration on the catechesis of adults. Then questions emerge of how to conceive of the Christian education: as a confessional one or as an instruction of Christianity from a neutral point of view, as of the religion that shaped European culture? Requirements of respective states or regions regarding the fashion how Christianity be taught differ as well.

It is not possible to deal with each part of the book. Yet it is noteworthy to mention and follow the argument in the essays of Prof. J. Cottin at the beginning and close of the book in that an urgency as regards the state of the Christian education is reflected in them, taking form in the critical appraisal of the present state of Christian instruction, as well as a search for improvement and enrichment thereof. For example, he calls for a more extensive use of images and symbols, for (a greater emphasis on the) catechesis of the adult and of all ages, for placing catechesis into the center of the life of the Church and congregation, in short for a **catechetical conversion of the church** (224). Cottin's view of catechesis is complex, which is, among others, manifest in his idea that catechesis should enliven and fillip theology and/or that it should be the center of theological thought (225–226).

The book is crafted in a balanced, quite ingenious, many-sided, and complex manner, which is all the more laudable in view of its medium size. Concrete experiences of the catechetical process are presented, as well as its historical and philosophical assumptions—thus, both theory and practice. The work is informed ecumenically as regards willingness to learn from the work of other churches, specifically Roman Catholic. It also shows openness to reactions from outside theology, e.g., sociology. At the same time, the material has theological framing with practical ramifications. However, confessional theology plays no role in the questions canvassed. It should also be noted that a possible missionary and evangelistic zeal as a part of Christian education is ignored in deference to a tone of neutrality and of eschewing "proselytism." All in all, the book is a great source of inspiration, not only for catechetical work, but for a Christian work too.

Marek Říčan

SERVING GOD GLOBALLY: Finding Your Place in International Development. By Roland Hoksbergen. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012. 240 pages. Paperback. $22.00.

In light of the title of the book under review, readers should be apprised that I have served God quite locally, not globally. Moreover, my vocation for the past thirty-some years has been in higher education, not international development. However, given the intended audience of this volume, and the format that follows therefrom, I do have a sound vantage point from which to explore and commend this book. Roland Hoksbergen is introducing the field to largely Christian undergraduate

students who have an interest in pursuing international development as their career. He assumes only this interest, and perhaps a modicum of travel in the developing world, and not any firsthand or professional expertise.

To that end, Hoksbergen surveys the field of international development in realistic ways. While consistently positive and even devout in places, any romanticism about the nature of this work is eschewed. He describes clearly four contemporary and essentially secular models of development—arguably the most helpful chapter in the volume for a neophyte reader. The chapter is followed by a survey of how four major Christian traditions (Roman Catholic social teaching; the Reformed tradition, as represented by Abraham Kuyper; the Mennonite accent on praxis; and largely post-Lausanne [1974] evangelicalism) engage the task of development. Both of these chapters manifest an eclectic respect for and appropriation of the best of these secular and ecclesial models. The Calvin College professor is open about his personal sympathies and his own Reformed context, spelled out winsomely in a succeeding chapter on "basic principles" of international development. However, the critical appreciation of these various models is a strength of the book.

Much of the rest of the volume consists of a description of the field itself; an identification of the kinds of persons and activities that are necessary in international development; and a thorough discussion of what it will take for a young person to cultivate the knowledge base, personal outlook, and set of skills required for an effective and satisfying life in this field. Indeed, Hoksbergen offers an extended discussion of these topics, not a written lecture. Moreover, the knowledge base, outlook, and skill set are cumulative and interdependent. (His refusal to call for a largely utilitarian model of education was music to this reviewer's ears. The one consistent admonition pertaining to the desired educational preparation is the need for foreign language training.) Finally, one entering this field is truly embarking on a way of life, not merely beginning a job or pursuing an exciting adventure.

In this latter section of the book especially, Hoksbergen writes in consistent conversation with people in this field, often people who have entered the field relatively recently. Identified by name and position, their experiences and insights, every bit as much as the author's unifying narrative, carry the last several chapters of the book. These longer or shorter passages never interrupt the flow, are never tiresome to read, and add to the credibility of the volume. If I were a curious undergraduate, I would find this approach very helpful.

Readers of this journal will rightfully wonder about the book's overt theological dimensions. In sum, a Lutheran reader will not be troubled by what is here; but he or she will be disappointed by what is not here. Hoksbergen acknowledges the contributions of other traditions to the broader discussion, and one endnote accounts for the only overt reference to Lutheranism or to Lutheran theology that I discovered.

(Development agencies associated with Lutheran churches in the world are found in various lists.)

Lutheran readers will seek a different theological context within which to situate the work of international development. For the most part, the activities described in this volume under the development umbrella pertain to "First Article" considerations. They are God's good and indispensable works for the benefit of creation and especially those human creatures created in God's image. To be sure—and to his credit—Hoksbergen never identifies these First Article works with the proclamation of the Gospel. But their *connection* to the proclamation of the Gospel is not made as explicitly as it might be. The First Article is the first article of a unified and coherent Christian creed only because there is a Second and a Third Article that do deal with Christology, soteriology, and eschatology.

Probably the closest Hoksbergen gets to making this move comes in his discussion of "the Christian view of transformation" (56, 59). Significantly, much of his biblical support comes from texts that describe the kinds of things that will transpire with the advent of the messianic age. Lutherans work to instantiate these values precisely because they are among the characteristics of the reign of God inaugurated by Jesus (e.g., Lk 4:18–19). One needs no further rationale or endorsement to pursue these tasks. God's own announcement of Good News in Jesus is thus the catalyst, the context, and the comfort for those whose vocation is international development, especially when the latter is defined as the care and protection of those neighbors whose circumstances call for the sustaining hand of their Creator.

Roland Hoksbergen should not be faulted for not doing what he had never intended to do. Certainly, the theological "connection without confusion," for which I call in the above paragraph, is much more easily said than done; and, in any case, it exceeds the task that the author set out for himself. In helping Christian students find their place in international development (cf. the book's subtitle), Hoksbergen has succeeded quite admirably.

David A. Lumpp

VIABILITY IN CONTEXT: The theological seminary in the Third World—seedbed or sheltered garden? By Herbert M. Zorn. Bromley, Kent, England: The Theological Education Fund, 1975. 108 pp. Paperback. OUT OF PRINT, but available in seminary libraries worldwide and can be obtained through inter-library loan.

This year, 2015, marks the 40th anniversary of the publication of this important book dealing with the development of education for pastoral ministry in the young mission churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. When I first read the book not long after its publication and at the beginning of my own missionary service teaching

in African seminaries, I thought that no one in the West should make decisions about pastoral education in mission lands without first reading this book, an opinion I still hold today. The equation easily made by missionaries and their supporters—I was trained for ministry in a seminary, and therefore this new body of young believers needs to be led by pastors trained in the same way—is fraught with the dangers of unexamined presuppositions and unrealistic expectations. Zorn, through his research and clear writing, provides an essential tool to inform—not offer the one appropriate answer, but to inform—the process of deciding what needs to be done.

The book itself reflects how things have changed in the last forty years in the Lutheran church in North America. Herbert M. Zorn was a missionary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) serving at the seminary of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nagercoil, India, for seventeen years out of his twenty-five years of service in India. Because of his reputation as a sensitive and sensible, cross-cultural seminary leader, he was asked by the Theological Education Fund (TEF) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to survey seminaries worldwide along with churches and mission agencies to determine what models of pastoral education were being used and what the results and prospects of the various models might be. During the two and one-half years required for the study, Dr. Zorn was seconded to the TEF by the LCMS with continued LCMS support.

The Lutheran world is quite different now. On the one hand, the Theological Education Fund has morphed into the WCC Programme on Ecumenical Theological Education with different emphases and concerns as a result of the growth and development of the young churches and changing perspectives within the WCC as well (cf. the closing statement of the 2011 Birmingham conference: http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/education-and-ecumenical-formation/ete/wcc-programme-on-ecumenical-theological-education/common-collaboration-in-theological-education). On the other hand, Lutheran churches in the Missouri Synod part of the Lutheran family today tend to prefer bilateral relationships, raising traditional issues rather than attempting to create new knowledge and contribute to issues raised by the larger ecumenical world.

Zorn did his research early in the post-colonial era. (In 1960 alone, seventeen sub-Saharan African nations gained independence from Great Britain and France.) At the beginning of the post-colonial period, European and American models were continued without question since it was assumed that Western development models could be used in every time and place with the same results they had in the West. By the 1970s, there were concerns about the adequacy of Western models to bring about change and about the dependency on continuing Western resources that these models required. Could imported Western models produce the pastoral leadership needed to address the new social-cultural religious questions that were being raised after independence, and could the young African churches develop the support models

that would enable them to support the seminaries and use seminary graduates in the mission and ministry of the church?

The metaphor of the seedbed is the point of departure for Zorn's work. The gardener places young plants in seedbeds to give them their start in life. The climate and soils outside the greenhouse may be entirely hostile, but the plants growing in the seedbed will continue to grow. However, the plants cannot remain in the seedbed forever. Sooner or later, they must be replanted in the real world, where, the gardener hopes, they will thrive and produce fruit. The process is by no means guaranteed, however. For a variety of reasons—the ignorance of the gardener, the different nature of the seedbed soil, the failure to water and fertilize at appropriate times, weaknesses in the characteristics of the seed itself, etc.—the seed may not reach the point that it can survive in the real world. At that point the seedbed changes into a sheltered garden. With the help of his supporters, the gardener supplies whatever is lacking. As a result the garden may look fresh and beautiful, but it cannot live and bear fruit in the real world, and it will continue to survive only as long as the gardener continues to nurture it.

In Zorn's world, various programs that trained men for ministry had been planted in mission lands, largely by missionaries from the Western world. These were not new creations arising from the soil of these lands that were hearing the Good News of Jesus for the first time. Rather, they were Western seeds of ideas about how men should be prepared for ministry based on models that had worked in the West and were now expected to take root in the rest of the world. By the 1970s, serious questions were being raised about the viability of this process. As Zorn expresses the questions,

> What will the viability test show? Is the transplant of theological education vigorous enough to establish itself and become fruitful in its context? Will it lack roots and wither away? Can it be remoulded to flourish in its context through changes in style, approach and content? Or must it simply return to its original seedbed of foreign dependence and use it as sheltered garden until doomsday tolls? (ix)

These are important questions, questions that require answers based on more than past experience in Europe and North America. Zorn visited seminaries on all continents, and included institutions of a variety of sizes that served a variety of Protestant denominations. He studied intensively thirty-three seminaries serving young churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Lutheran seminaries included in the study included Japan Lutheran in Tokyo, Makumira Lutheran Seminary in Tanzania, Umpumulu in South Africa, and Sr. Flierl Finschafen in Papua New Guinea. His personal visits were generally preceded by a questionnaire enquiring about the institution's history, governance, its relationship to the sponsoring church body, faculty and faculty development, the student body, finances, etc. (The full text of the questionnaire is found on pp. 99–106 of this book).

On the basis of the research, Zorn was able to describe what he termed "A Viable Traditional Model." To my mind, this is his most important contribution, for his research demonstrates the multitude of issues that must be addressed if this model is to succeed in producing the truly indigenous pastoral leadership that the young church needs to proclaim an authentic message in its cultural context.

The "constant" in this model is that students would be involved in a full-time course lasting from three to five years, depending on schooling background and the qualifications students bring to their classes. Given the fixed costs of running a school (libraries, dormitories, etc.), the seminary needs approximately 120 students served by eight full-time instructors or their equivalent. Viability around the world required a faculty:student ratio of close to 1:15.

The support base for a seminary of this size would require a supporting church body of about 300,000 members. The congregations would be largely self-supporting and would be actively involved both in caring for their existing members and in mission outreach to the unbelieving community. The size of the church body is important because the seminary would need 60 suitable candidates each year to study for ministry, on the one hand, and would need vacancies in congregations as well as financial support for mission outreach where its completing students could be placed, on the other. (If the LCMS has 2.5 million members and the same ratio is applied, the MDiv programs and other routes to ministry offered by the LCMS seminaries would have about 500 students.)

In Zorn's model, the supporting church would have about 600 active pastors on its clergy roster, and it would need about 25 pastoral candidates each year to fill vacancies. In addition to these men, others would be required to provide personnel to the mission efforts of the church.

To financially support this kind of institution, Zorn proposed that 75 percent of the institution's costs would be borne by the related church or churches, as well as by the students; and 25 percent would come from either local or foreign endowment sources. He emphasized that information about financing needed to be widely and openly shared, especially when foreign funds were involved, since suspicions about fairness easily arise when foreign funds are involved.

He estimated that students would be responsible for about 25 percent of the costs or at least for their living expenses while attending the seminary. Educational costs, tuition and other, would be the responsibility of the institution and its sponsoring churches and agencies.

His study recognized the importance of faculty development. Seminary teachers need advanced study, and those programs are most fruitful that require the institution that sends the student for graduate study to take some responsibility for his expenses. Zorn suggests that a church body should aim at advanced training for at least twice as many people as are presently needed for seminary teaching. With this pool of

trained talent, the church will be able to quickly respond when vacancies occur or when expansion is needed.

Zorn discusses a host of other issues and raises alternatives to the "Traditional Model" that cannot be discussed in a short review article. He does not present "A Traditional Model" as a mistake that needs to corrected, but his contribution is to demonstrate that many non-theological issues need to be considered as the people of God make decisions about their theological education programs that prepare men for ministry. No one in the Lutheran church wants to end up with a program that can exist only as long as outside (and especially foreign) donors can be found. Even more importantly, however, the Lutheran church needs men who grow in a seedbed so that they are ready to thrive in the soil of the real world. The alternatives chosen (and there are many) are critically important to the life of the church.

Daniel Mattson

IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS AMONG US: Immigration across Theological Traditions. Edited by M. Daniel Carroll R. and Leopoldo A. Sanchez M. Foreword by Juan F. Martinez. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications. 162 pp. Paper. $19.00.

This book focuses theological reflection on questions and problems concerning immigration, a major political issue in both the United States and Europe. Edited by Danny Carroll and Leo Sanchez, the essays in this collection include contributions by representatives of the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal traditions, as well as a chapter devoted to biblical theology regarding the stranger or foreigner rooted in Old Testament texts. It is to be welcomed because immigration is a major ethical and political issue both in the United States and Europe today. This issue has a major impact on the church and its mission as well, as attitudes toward the political issue of undocumented immigration easily spill over into discussions of mission and Gospel outreach, at times influencing the commitment of the church to bring the Gospel to those who are on society's fringes.

The first chapter, written by Carmen Nanko-Fernandez, Associate Professor of Hispanic Theology and Ministry at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, IL, draws from papal writings about migrants and refugees dating back to World War II and Pius XII. Nanko-Fernandez recalls the idea of the "preferential option for the poor," a key phrase in the liberation theology movement in the 1970s, and applies it to the life situation of immigrants. She cites Pope Francis on the need for societies to eschew xenophobia and embrace immigrants in the spirit of Christian charity. She quotes Francis: "How beautiful are those cities which overcome paralyzing mistrust, integrate those who are different and make this very integration a new factor of development" (17). This statement summarizes a perspective on multicultural openness which could be useful for both society and church to adopt.

In his chapter, Sanchez, Director of the Center for Hispanic Studies at Concordia Seminary, challenges Lutherans to develop a perspective on immigration that does justice to the core of the Lutheran tradition and avoids a legalistic perspective on immigration law and civil authority. The title of this chapter, "Who is my neighbor?", reminds us of Jesus' answer to this question with the parable of the Good Samaritan, an answer which challenged heartless legalism while reminding us to love our neighbor regardless of every form of social exclusion, whether it be in the name of orthodoxy, nationalism, or ethnic loyalty. Sanchez argues that the Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms enables us to have a critical and responsible engagement with divisive political issues like that of immigration. He reminds us of the danger that the distinction between the two kingdoms can be used to justify an unjust status quo. However, he also argues that this distinction enables us to move beyond political arguments about immigration to unite as a church in the mission to reach out in love to meet our neighbor's material and spiritual need, regardless of their immigration status.

Ruben Rodriguez, Director of the Mev Puleo Scholarship Program in Latin American Politics, Theology, and Culture at St. Louis University, writes on the Reformed theological tradition's perspective on immigration. He argues that for Calvinist theology "social and economic matters do not stand outside theological concerns but are inherently part of the proper worship of God" and that the offices of the church established in the New Testament make poor relief a necessary function of the church and its polity. He questions why there has been so much political animus against undocumented immigration from Latin America and argues that without considering the wider national and international issues concerning the use and abuse of labor, the immigration issue cannot be adequately resolved. He argues: "It is imperative to shift the discussion away from the undocumented worker and onto the business owner. The root cause of illegal immigration is the market demand for an undocumented—and therefore easily exploitable—work force" (60). These issues of social justice must be addressed to adequately deal with the question of immigration, and Rodriguez argues that the Calvinist tradition of civil engagement requires Christians to face these economic and social issues squarely.

Hugo Magallanes, Director of the Center of the Study of Latino/a Christianity and Religions at the Perkins School of Theology, articulates what he regards as the Wesleyan perspective on this issue, rooted in Wesley's transformation from a legalistic piety to one based on the experience of conversion and the resulting comprehension of God's grace. He describes this as a shift from deontological ethics focusing on rules to a character or virtue ethics focusing on God's love. He suggests that this shift in orientation led Wesley to embrace abolitionism, although in the earlier pre-conversion stage of his career he did not challenge slavery. Magallanes also argues that many of those who hold strong positions against immigration reform have little or no personal contact with undocumented immigrants and thus view the

issue in legalistic terms rather than considering their immigrant neighbor as one created in the image of God. His essay reminded this reviewer of a Lutheran discussion of racial prejudice entitled *Bias and the Pious* (James Dittes, 1973), which argued that legalistic piety increases racial prejudice, whereas piety rooted in a true understanding of the Gospel produces a loving and open-hearted response to one's neighbors, regardless of their civic or social status.

Sammy Alfaro, Assistant Professor of Theology at Grand Canyon University, discusses the Pentecostal perspective on immigration. He argues that the Pentecostal community's close connection with the undocumented and the burdens they and their families face lead them to take the side of the undocumented immigrant. Their congregational life and practices of prayer, preaching, and hospitality give them the insider's point of view and inevitably lead them to a whole-hearted support of the undocumented immigrant's struggle.

Finally, Daniel Carroll, Distinguished Professor of Old Testament at Denver Seminary, concludes the book with a chapter entitled "Towards an Hispanic Biblical Theology of Immigration: An Independent Evangelical Perspective." He argues that the Old Testament teaches God's people to care for the foreigner, remembering their own sojourn in Egypt and the unjust treatment they had received there. He makes a number of significant points based in the Old Testament. Regarding human creation in the image of God, he argues that in the ancient Near East images of the king were viewed as symbols of his rule in distant places. However, God's statement that man is created in His image democratizes the idea of the image of God: His image is shared by all people, not just kings. He also argues that the divine command to fill the earth implies that human migration is an essential part of God's plan, for it is God who designates the boundaries of the habitations of the people of the earth (see also Acts 17:26).

Old Testament law required Israel to be especially attentive to the needs of the most vulnerable: widows, orphans, the poor, and foreigners who lacked full social standing in the community. Since there was no nation state with bureaucratic procedures for incorporating foreigners legally as "citizens," in many ways the social situation of any foreigner bereft of kinship ties and alien to the Hebrew culture could be considered analogous to the status of undocumented immigrants in the nation state today. Carroll argues that Old Testament "laws were driven, not by strict controls concerning qualifications for entry and legal status or questions of national security (this was the impetus behind Egypt's laws), but by an appreciation of immigrant liabilities and limitations and the divine command to love the sojourner" (111). He points out that the concern for the foreigner in Old Testament law in the light of Israel's experience in Egypt should serve as a "moral compass" in our day and that we should be wary of laws which seek to exclude and punish the immigrant rather than incorporate and assist our neighbors. Like the Israelites, we should

remember how immigrants have been marginalized and mistreated throughout our nation's history of immigration.

Carroll also describes how the Bible includes many narratives in which God's people live as foreigners, e.g., Joseph and his family in Egypt, Abraham, Ruth, and Daniel. "The Bible offers a narrative theology of immigration, a rich resource for migrant peoples" (118). These narratives encourage immigrants to view their experience as part of God's plan and to see themselves as recipients of God's providential care.

Sanchez and Carroll and their contributors are to be commended for producing this fine collection of essays that encourage Christians of various traditions to think biblically and theologically about our immigrant neighbors and respond to them in love out of faith in our Lord's redeeming love for us. Such reflection is essential, not only for Christian participation in the civic realm, but also so that our congregations may indeed be loving and hospitable communities for those who, due to their status as immigrants both documented and undocumented, find themselves vulnerable and at the margins of our society. May we continue to shine the light of God's marvelous grace on all people in our communities, as God in His wisdom brings them to us!

Eric J. Moeller

THE 7 HABITS OF JESUS: Faith Formation Handbook for Discipleship. By Robert Schmalzle with Aaron Schmalzle. Available through Amazon.com. 2014. 456 pages. Paperback, $24.99. Kindle, $14.99.

One of my passions as a pastor is encouraging people to focus their lives more intently on Jesus. To this end, I've read a lot of books on discipleship, but as a Lutheran (ELCA) pastor, one thing normally frustrates me about these resources: They inevitably focus on practices which *we should do* to follow Jesus better. It's not that engaging in these practices is wrong, but that the resources put the focus in the wrong place. All that we do, all of the practices in which we engage, are merely a *response* to the grace and love God has shown us in Jesus: *God acts first.*

Enter *The 7 Habits of Jesus.* Pastor Robert Schmalzle does a superb job of framing discipleship habits (practices) as a response to God's grace. As he writes in the introduction, "The seven habits open our hearts to the wonder and mystery of *Christ's* redeeming work in our lives, in our faith community, neighborhood, society, and in the world" (27, emphasis added). This focus on discipleship as response continues with the very first habit: *remembering our Baptism.* Martin Luther encouraged all believers to remember their Baptism every day, for it was in Baptism that God adopted us into God's family and joined us to Christ's death and resurrection.

Another example of discipleship as response occurs in his discussion of financial stewardship. Most resources title this section "giving," but Schmalzle rightly refers to this as *returning.* After all, we are returning to God a portion of what already belongs to God. Good stewards know that they don't own anything; God owns it all (Ps 24:1). One insightful corollary to this point is a comment he makes on giving time and talents in lieu of financial resources (251). He notes that when people rationalize this decision, they mistake themselves to be the giver, when they aren't; God is!

This is the most authentically Lutheran book on discipleship I have ever read. I am excited to introduce this resource in my congregation over the next year, both for adults and youth. The book is designed to be used as a resource in three related formats: in a small group setting, in one-on-one partnerships, and as a self-study resource. I plan to use it in all three ways in my congregation to maximize its impact on our lives. Thanks be to God for inspiring Pastor Schmalzle to write this book!

Jerome W. (Jerry) O'Neal

THE SPIRITUAL IN THE SECULAR: Missionaries and Knowledge about Africa (Studies in the History of Christian Missions). Edited by Patrick Harries and David Maxwell. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012. 341 pages. Paper. $45.00.

This is a scholarly book intended for a scholarly audience. The series, Studies in the History of Christian Missions, reexamines missionary motives and means in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century world, the colonial and post-colonial worlds. This distinguished series has produced more than twenty-five volumes since the first volume appeared in 2000. They have dealt with mission efforts in virtually all parts of the world and have also paid close attention to motivations for mission in mission-sending lands.

These are important issues in the postmodern years of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. On the one hand, historical studies in this period have tended to identify mission agencies and missionaries as purposeful or inadvertent allies of the imperial powers of the time in their subjugation of African and Asian peoples. It is alleged that military force destroyed the indigenous civilizations, and missionaries followed with their allegedly superior religious ideas intended to bury the African and Asian past and proclaim the new colonial situation as the will of God that required obedience. If one listens closely in Lutheran congregations, one will find that these views are not uncommon among Lutherans as well. For all too many people, mission work is connected with coercion and lack of respect for indigenous people and their cultures.

On the other hand, it is a common modern criticism that missionaries proclaimed a one-dimensional Gospel, interested only in eternal life in heaven. Their version of the Gospel message had no resources to deal with the challenges of the culture change introduced by colonialism, such as the abandonment of traditional family and authority structures, the challenges of life in rapidly growing urban areas (often where family members had to be left behind), and the manipulation of governments to enrich a few and oppress the poor majority. I remember well conversations with young Marxists in revolutionary Ethiopia in the 1970s. "You Christians are willing to put Band-Aids on the people who have been injured by the system, but you will not do anything to change the system."

To provide a more informed picture, the two editors, Patrick Harries, professor of African history at the University of Basel, and David Maxwell, Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge University and Fellow of Immanuel College, have brought together nine scholars from African, European, and American academic institutions to author articles on the contribution of missionaries of the last two centuries to anthropological science. Although all the authors have solid research backgrounds in mission history and anthropology, especially mission history during the colonial period, only one has actual service as a missionary, serving for twenty-two years as a Roman Catholic missionary in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). These scholars have produced articles dealing with missionary contributions to such anthropological fields as linguistics, ethnography (particularly the study of social organization), medicine and healing, and the anthropological study of religion.

The articles are rigorously researched and presented. Each essay is thoroughly annotated and followed by a select bibliography enabling further research.

The essays are in no way defensive, attempting to prove that the missionaries knew more about Africa and African peoples than the anthropological scholars of the time. Rather, one sees again and again the developing conversation between missionaries and the new science of anthropology. (Anthropology began as a discipline in the 1830s–1850s.) In many ways, the conversation was most free and open at the beginning. As anthropology became more and more a profession on its own, with its own standards of orthodoxy and approved procedures, and Christian missions pursued their own line of development, the conversation became more difficult. Anthropology had its own concerns that it addressed using its own procedures. Those involved in Christian missions continued to use what they learned from anthropology, but as a developed "practical" anthropology, just as other institutions from colonial governments to multinational corporations were doing.

So it is that the various authors note that that the missionary they are studying was not particularly interested in making a contribution to anthropological science (there are exceptions) but rather recognized that a process used by anthropologists or that a cultural framework proposed by anthropologists had relevance to the

missionary task. In many cases, missionaries took the time and trouble to describe what they had discovered to help other missionaries to communicate the Gospel and/or to help supporters at home understand the complexity of the challenge of communicating across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

What one notices in the essays is how important is a strong sense of curiosity about the people and the culture of the people to be addressed. The clear proclamation of the Gospel is always a creative act; but in a cross-cultural situation, questions related to what people are actually hearing and to better ways of communicating the Gospel must always be at the top of the list. If one is not curious about people and the world they have constructed, missionary effectiveness does not grow.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of anthropology to the missionary task in this early period was the intimate interaction with indigenous people that anthropology required. Their ideas and attitudes were important. There were reasons for the choices they made and the ways in which they ordered their lives, and these could be discovered. If they were treated with respect and could safely talk about what shaped their lives, the missionary could learn the questions that people were actually asking and needed addressed and become far more effective in his/her own communication.

Questions raised by anthropology also helped missionaries to understand the need for holistic ministry. In the West, the Enlightenment had taught people to think in terms of a division between body and soul, between the material and spiritual worlds. For African peoples, this division did not exist. In the treatment of the sick, for example, Africans recognized physical disease often could not be cured without paying attention to spiritual problems. When and where missionary doctors learned to take this seriously, healing became an important part of the Gospel message. This same emphasis on holism helped many missionaries to see that far too many people were victims, rather than beneficiaries, of the changes that colonialism brought.

Many smaller issues are raised as well. In the question of language learning, for example, the author of the article on Basel Mission efforts in the Gold Coast (Ghana) to produce a written, Twi language regularly used fighting metaphors to describe their efforts to learn the Twi language. This metaphor is not uncommon also among modern seminary students who are expected to learn the Greek or Hebrew language in a very brief period of time. One can only be thankful that one- and two-year-old children do not appear to live in the same metaphorical world of conflict, or we would live in a very silent world. The real problem, the author notes, is that these early missionaries (arriving in 1828 ff.) had not yet learned to elicit information from their indigenous informants that would enable them to correctly analyze and learn the language. Thankfully, in these days the Wycliffe Bible Translators organization has developed a linguistically sound method of using indigenous informants to learn rapidly, to analyze, and to reduce to writing unwritten languages, a technique used also by Lutheran Bible Translators.

This is probably not a book for bedtime reading, but if one is interested in the ways in which Christian missionaries and anthropologists have interacted with each other to enrich each other's task, and/or if you are interested in why mission in Africa has or has not taken a particular direction, you will find this a stimulating volume and a basis for further research.

Daniel Mattson

DAWN BREAKS IN THE EAST: A Time Revisited. By Zhou Peter Bangjin. St. Andrew's Abbey: Valyermo, CA, 2014. Paper. N.P.

This book may seem a slight misfit here. Neither the author nor the publisher is mainstream, certainly not familiar to folks not from a Chinese Catholic tradition. Indeed, it came to this reviewer's attention quite serendipitously. My daughter spent a week at St. Andrew's Abbey in Valyermo, CA, as part of a Gonzaga M.A. course. There she met the author, Br. Peter Zhou Bangjin, an 89-year-old priest whose autobiography and witness comprise the book. She couldn't resist, and so the book came to me—a book tracing twenty-six years' harsh imprisonment during the chaotic years of China's Cultural Revolution, but a book tracing also the remarkable resilience of this solitary Christian's faith.

Zhou was born to a devout Roman Catholic family in the interior of China in 1926. Beginning at age 12, he joined a Benedictine monastery, took vows in 1950 (one year into the Chinese Communist reign). In 1953 the monastery was expropriated by the government, to which Zhou responded with a *Letter to the Clergy and Laity of the Church in China*, followed by *From Paradise to Purgatory.* In 1955, agitation led to his arrest for "opposing the revolution." The spiritual warfare in the twenty-six-year succession of hard labor camps and prisons was relentless. The government tried multiple means of persuasion: physical torture (leading to loss of use of his left hand), constant pressure from cellmates, solitary confinement, offers of lighter punishment to lead Zhou to "thought transformation," namely to self-examination and to confession of his (and the Roman Catholic Church's) anti-revolutionary spirit and to consequent affirmation of loyalty to the Communist movement. He persistently refused . . . and didn't make things easier for himself by refusing to purchase *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and to participate in study sessions. After twenty-six hard years (1981) and as part of the easing of the suppressive era of the Cultural Revolution, he was released, a withered, exhausted, but joyous child of God whose spirit and faith the powers could neither crush nor compromise. In his words, his life was a "grim defense of the Catholic Faith during those seemingly, endless, and very difficult years." Interestingly, from a perspective only faith can give, he also understood that it was God "who allowed me to be thrown into jail," but who also sustained him and delivered him.

Interspersed with the narrative of suffering are moving insights both to the resilience and warmth of his faith and also to his deep love for his Chinese heritage. By his count, he wrote some two thousand poems in prison, many lost (unrecorded), but many kept in his memory because he sang them to Chinese melodies based on the treasure of ancient Chinese poets. His love for China never ceased; and one of his most moving poems is one that he spoke/sang wistfully when he left China in 1984. Even stronger was his love for his Roman Catholic Church; there was virtually no reference to the Protestant church or a Protestant prisoner. After leaving China, his travels including an audience with Pope John Paul II, and he finally settled into the Benedictine Abbey of St. Andrew in Valyermo, CA. From the perspective of deliverance from persecution, but also awareness of growing religious tolerance by the Chinese government (which he still does not trust), he could sense that "Dawn Breaks in the East."

As moving as his sharing of suffering and of faith is, the book itself would be helped by significant editing. The narrative (170 pages) moves well and is followed by a selection of poems (25 pages). He does provide and identify photos, but they look more like selections from a scrapbook rather than illustrations of narrative or poems. The following 150 pages are official documents, submission, and correspondence, some of which are linked to the narrative; but most seem miscellaneous. Finally he includes 75 pages of prefaces to the various recensions in the development of this book. As one might guess, the grip that the narrative makes is dulled considerably by what is repetitious and stilted. At the same time, I must say that what strikes one as disjointed does allow the raw severity of his suffering and the tenacity of his faith and witness to make an indelible impact on the reader.

Henry Rowold

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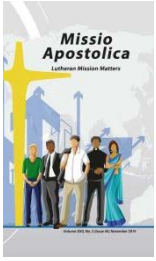

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