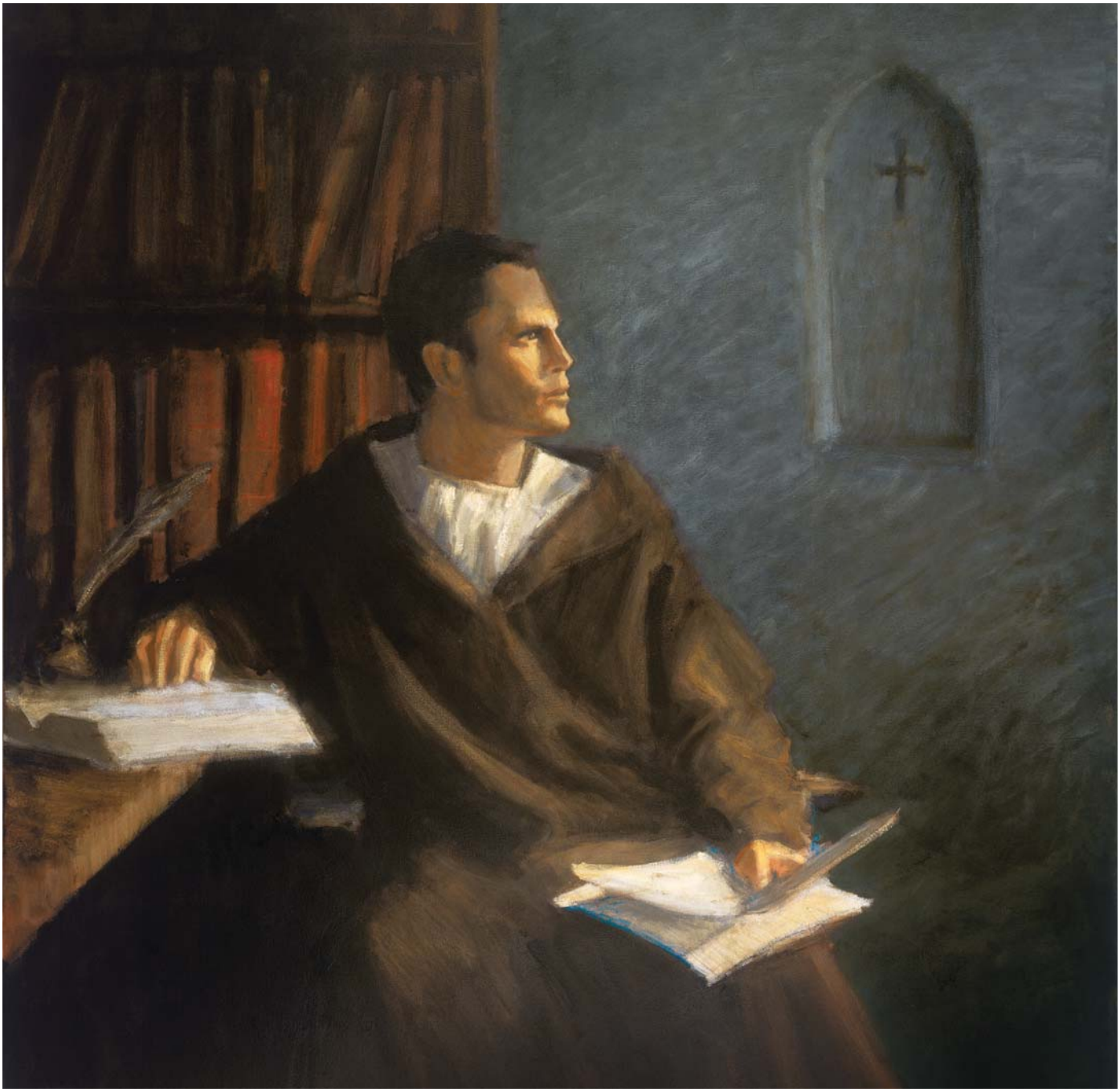
intersections

Summer 2006



in this issue

Lutherans and "Our Calling in Education"

Purpose Statement

| This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-eight colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Vocation and Education unit of the ELCA. The publication has its home at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, which has generously offered leadership and physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the publication.

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators that have addressed the church-college/university partnership. The ELCA has sponsored an annual Vocation of the Lutheran College Conference. The primary purpose of *Intersections* is to enhance and continue such dialogue. It will do so by:

- Lifting up the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities
- Encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the partnership of colleges and universities with the church
- Offering a forum for concerns and interests of faculty at the intersection of faith, learning, and teaching
- Raising for debate issues about institutional missions, goals, objectives, and learning priorities
- Encouraging critical and productive discussion on our campuses of issues focal to the life of the church
- Serving as a bulletin board for communications among institutions and faculties
- Publishing papers presented at conferences sponsored by the ELCA and its institutions
- Raising the level of awareness among faculty about the Lutheran heritage and connectedness of their institutions, realizing a sense of being part of a larger family with common interests and concerns.

From the Publisher

| In this issue of *Intersections* we feature articles based on presentations made at the 2005 conference on "The Vocation of a Lutheran College." Those presentations were focused on the upcoming ELCA Social Statement on Education. At that time we had before us a study document from the Task Force that is working on that social statement. Now we have a first draft of the statement itself: **"Our Calling in Education"**. If you have not seen that draft, I urge you to download it from the ELCA website at www.elca.org/socialstatements/education.

The task force would like you to respond to the draft. **Please send them your response before October 15, 2006.** There is a response form at the end of the draft document. The task force will study the responses, and then produce a second draft, which will be submitted to the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly for approval. This is the way the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America establishes its policies: a study, hearings and feedback, a first draft, more hearings and feedback, a second draft, final consideration by a representative body. It is a very democratic process, but like all democratic processes, it only works well if a large and representative set of citizens/members is engaged, gets informed, and participates in the process.

I worry about how many people will participate in this process because at the same time another ELCA Task Force is working on a social statement on sexuality, with a timeline culminating in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. My impression is that many more people care about what the official position of the ELCA will be on sexual issues than about our stand on educational issues. But for Martin Luther, and for us as who work at or with Lutheran educational institutions, education is as important as sex. It is likely that the social statement on education will establish the priorities of the ELCA unit for Vocation and Education, and that it will urge the colleges that are related to the church to do certain things and not do other things. So please, take the time to become an informed citizen, think about the issues raised in the first draft, and tell us what you think **before the October 15 deadline**. After an election, it does not help to say "Oh, I should have voted, but I just never got around to it."

Living in God's Amazing Grace,

ARNE SELBYG | Director for Colleges and Universities

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ON THE COVER
Young Luther, oil/canvas, 2005 by Michael McEwan, Artist in Residence at Capital University

From the Editor | ROBERT D. HAAK

AS I WRITE, the campus is beginning to stir from its summer dormancy. Faculty members have been trickling back from around the country and around the world. Football players are back in the dorms. Student workers are arriving for beginning-of-the-year planning. It's about to begin again.

This is what we are about—the education of young people in each of our places with all that entails. If anyone should be interested in the topic of the church's understanding of Lutheran education, it should be us. As we define our place in the academic world for our selves and our institutions, to one degree or another we look to the resources that our Lutheran heritage provides. We look for the guidance of the church, not to dictate who we are and what we do, but to inform the sorts of conversations that might take place on our campuses. This guidance will be forthcoming in the social statement on Lutheran education which is being prepared for dissemination and vote by the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. In order to facilitate the preparation of this statement, the Task Force on Education has prepared two documents, "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study" and "Our Calling in Education: A First Draft of a Social Statement." These documents are designed to begin and carry forward the conversation about "a Lutheran vision of education and its meaning for our church and society" (Task Force on Education 2004: 3).

The papers in this issue were presented at the Vocation of a Lutheran College conference held at Capital University in the summer of 2005. Each of them is intended to encourage and to be part of these conversations. Marcia Bunge correctly observes that no social statement can say everything about everything. Choices will have to be made about what issues are addressed and what elements of the issues will take priority. She makes specific suggestions of elements she believes must be included in a Lutheran statement. Paul Dovre reminds us of the context in which this statement will be received and points to important parts of the theological tradition that may provide resources for the statement. Samuel Torvend reminds us that this statement will not only speak at those in Minneapolis and Chicago but must be able to speak to a diverse community that wasn't raised within the cultural and theological traditions of ELCA Lutheranism. Cheryl Budlong points us to the ever-growing literature concerned with how young people learn. She asks us to reexamine our 'mental models' of what education itself means.

It is evident to those reading these papers: that, in good Lutheran fashion, the authors are more interested in raising the important questions than in proposing a single, definitive answer. It seems to me this is exactly the right thing for Lutheran educators to be doing—raising proper questions. I am confident that reading the following papers will make the issue of a Lutheran vision of education more complex, and therefore more truthful.

As educators at Lutheran colleges and universities, we are not only called on to hear the comments of our colleagues, but also called upon to bring our own voices into the conversation. As professional educators at Lutheran institutions, we have distinctive voices to add to the conversation, and areas of expertise that are needed by the Task Force and by the church. Several of the authors and Arne Selbyg, the publisher of *Intersections*, remind us that comments for the Task Force in Education must reach them by October 15. This deadline is fast approaching. Each of us is challenged to become familiar with the proposals and formulate our contributions by this deadline. In the onslaught of work that faces us each day in the arrival of real, live students in our offices and committee work on our calendars, each of us is challenged to take the time to consider the issues and make our views known. The full documents under discussion may be accessed at www.elca.org/socialstatements/education. Comments may be emailed to Ronald.Duty@elca.org.

If you have made it this far in the Editorial, you have proven that you are very concerned and involved in the question of the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities. I would invite you to consider submission of materials that speak to the concerns

voiced in the Purpose Statement at the front of this issue. Please submit your work (preferably in electronic MLA format) to me at BobHaak@augustana.edu.

The vast majority of copies of *Intersections* are distributed through an office on your campus (different on each college campus). If you find this forum valuable—and want to ensure that you receive your own copy and not be at the mercy of whomever distributes the newsletter at your institution—please send a note indicating your interest to LauraOMelia@augustana.edu. You will be added to our direct mailing list so that you may receive each issue in a timely manner.

ROBERT D. HAAK | The Augustana Center for Vocational Reflection, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois

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MARCIA J. BUNGE

"Our Calling in Education": Working Together to Generate a Strong Social Statement on Public Schools, Lutheran Schools and Colleges, and the Faith Formation of Children and Young People

The ELCA is preparing a social statement on education that will be considered by the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. Since the following talk was given in 2005, the first draft of this social statement has been published. However, the ELCA Task Force on Education is still in the process of revising the draft and formulating the actual social statement, and members of the Task Force welcome and encourage responses to the draft. This talk outlines many of the concerns about education that are addressed in the statement. The essay provides a springboard for your own thinking about education, vocation, church-related colleges and for your own response to the social statement, which you can submit to the Task Force via the internet to Ronald.Duty@elca.org. The website is www.elca.org/socialstatements/education. —MJB

AS YOU KNOW, the ELCA is preparing a social statement on education that will be considered by the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study" was written by the ELCA Task Force on Education as a way to prompt churchwide discussion on education and to help develop a final social statement for the church.[1] The actual social statement will be much shorter than this study guide, and it is hoped that it will help set policies on education for the church and guide its advocacy in the area of education.

A "Study Guide" or "Booklet" is an odd literary creation. First of all, it is written with the help of sixteen people. If you have ever edited or co-authored a volume, then you know yourself that such a writing process is a wild endeavor. Secondly, a study guide is a unique literary genre: it is a mix of theological essay, teaching document, information pamphlet, and questionnaire. In academic circles, some might therefore view it as a "nightmare." My own colleagues at Valparaiso University who have read the study guide appreciate its theological perspectives on education, and they are delighted that the church will address the issue of education in a social statement. However, they find the study guide itself lacks urgency, and some fear it cannot generate the kind of churchwide discussion on education needed to produce an effective social statement.

Our primary task today as a group is not to defend the strengths and weaknesses of the study guide or to revise it into some second edition bestseller. Rather, our common task is to use it as a springboard for a serious discussion about the most urgent issues in the church regarding education and how the

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church might address them in a social statement. I hope we can all agree that we do face serious challenges related to education and that the church at this time does need a strong and useful social statement on education. As educators, we have a wonderful opportunity to shape this social statement, to voice our concerns and commitments, and to help guide the church. Thus, I am hoping that these remarks will prompt you to share your ideas so that members of the Task Force can incorporate them into the actual social statement. Right now and throughout the process of refining a social statement on education, the ELCA is seeking your informed response to the basic question: What should this statement include? More precisely: What theological insights would best help guide the church in its reflection on education? What specific issues, questions, and challenges regarding education are most central to us and our communities? What kinds of specific policies and practices would strengthen the church in the area of education?

I would like to address these questions by making two claims that shape the two central parts of my remarks. First, the study booklet rightly builds its theological vision of education upon a Lutheran understanding of vocation. Education and vocation are deeply interwoven, and the social statement, like the study guide, should be based on and include a strong theological statement about vocation.

Second, although the study guide addresses a wide range of issues facing people of all ages, from early childhood education to life-long learning, if the social statement itself aims to capture the attention of members of the church, let alone to have an impact, then it must narrow its focus and address urgent questions in three specific areas of education that greatly affect the lives of children and youth today—public schools, Lutheran schools and colleges, and the faith formation of children and young people. These three issues should be addressed in a large social statement with three parts or even in three separate social statements. Thus, the second part of my paper lists the most urgent questions and challenges that I have heard expressed by colleagues and members of the church about these three areas.

Although people of all ages certainly face difficulties in the area of education broadly understood to include both academic training and faith formation, the ELCA's social statement should focus primarily on children and young people. They face tremendous challenges today in many areas related to education, and the church should address their challenges more intentionally and effectively and be a stronger advocate for them. For example, poor children are not prepared for school in the first place and then must also attend dangerous or inadequate schools. They also often lack the kind of health care or nutrition needed to thrive in school. Even children in affluent neighborhoods suffer neglect and abuse and struggle with drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and depression, and lack of sexual boundaries.[2] Scholars also wonder about the effects of technology, the media, and market pressures on rich and poor children alike. Although opinions vary on the extent of these problems or how to solve them, voices across progressive and conservative lines recognize that such challenges are real and should be addressed. Parents, religious communities, and the state are searching for creative and effective approaches to these problems. Although the ELCA, like most denominations, has spoken out and written about a number of social issues, such as abortion and sexuality, it has yet to produce a public document directly about concerns facing children and young people themselves, and the statement on education provides an opportunity to do so.

Build the Statement on a Robust Lutheran Understanding of Vocation

Like the study guide itself, a final social statement on education must be built on a strong Lutheran understanding of calling or vocation. The Lutheran church has a rich legacy of thinking about and supporting education in both church and society, and this legacy is built on a vital view of vocation. A strong concept of vocation, when incorporated into a final social statement, will do much to guide the church's reflection and advocacy in all areas of education, whether public schools, church related schools and colleges, or the faith formation of children and young people.

Although a Lutheran concept of vocation can richly inform our thinking about many areas of education in both church and society, unfortunately, in contemporary culture and even within Lutheran institutions, the notion of "vocation" is often misused and misunderstood, and this is why it should be clearly introduced and articulated in a final social statement for the Church. Through my own work on our campus for a national initiative on "The Theological Exploration of Vocation," funded by the Lilly Endowment, we have found that there are four common misconceptions of vocation among students, faculty, and members of the church as a whole. Some people equate vocation with one's occupation, career, or paid profession. Others, perhaps especially young people, understand vocation as "finding one's inner joy" or a sense of self-fulfillment. Some Catholics, but also Lutherans and other Protestants, often think of vocation or calling as entering the priesthood or ordained ministry. Finally, still others, even those who are committed Christians or work at Lutheran institutions, have no notion at all that vocation is a theological concept related to their faith tradition, and they simply equate vocation with "vocational programs" or "vo-tech."

Last year, at a national meeting of representatives from several Lutheran institutions that received Lilly grants, we also found that even Lutherans who are highly informed about a theology of vocation and engaged in programs with young people can unintentionally introduce them to narrow understandings of it. For example, on the one hand, we found that Lutheran colleges sometimes speak of vocation too generically in terms of "gifts and talents" for the common good and neglect other dimensions of a Lutheran understanding of vocation, such as baptism or unity in Christ. Here, vocation can start looking too much like leadership development or citizenship alone. On the other hand, Lutheran seminaries sometimes speak about vocation too narrowly in terms of baptism and neglect what Luther said about creation, the common good, or the two kingdoms. Here, vocation is sometimes equated with ordained ministry.

In contrast to these weak notions of vocation, a robust Lutheran theology of vocation, as the study guide articulates, deeply integrates faith and learning and empowers discipleship and service. Martin Luther emphasized that all believers are called to love God and to love and serve the neighbor, especially those in need.[3] They are called to express their faith in works of love and service within the church and the broader culture.[4] Although Luther claimed all believers share this common Christian calling, he also emphasized that they honorably carry it out in a wide variety of specific "vocations"—in specific "stations" or "places of responsibility" in which they serve the well-being of others, whether at home, at work, at church, or in civic life.

Furthermore, for Luther, all work that benefits the community holds equal religious value. As he states in his "To the Christian Nobility":

> There is no true, basic difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, between religious and secular, except for the sake of office and work, but not for the sake of status. They are all of the spiritual estate; all are truly priests, bishops, and popes. But they do not all have the same work to do...Further, everyone must benefit and serve every other by means of his own work or office so that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community, just as all the members of the body serve one another. (*LW* 44:129—30)

For Luther, everyone therefore has a calling: everyone has these "roles" or "offices"—whether given or chosen, for "all significant social relationships are places into which God calls us to serve God and the neighbor" (Schuurmann xi). Thus, even children and students have a calling here and now. They already have certain responsibilities that benefit the family and the community. Luther also recognizes that each individual serves others in multiple ways in various spheres of life: the home, professional life, the church, and the community.

Thus, from a Lutheran perspective, vocation is therefore not primarily about paid work, personal bliss, or ordained ministry but rather about how we are living out the totality of our lives, serving others, and participating in God's love and care of the world. A Lutheran view of vocation honors activities and responsibilities outside the priesthood or monastic life; it honors not only paid work but also our duties as parents, spouses, sons and daughters, students, aunts and uncles, and friends; and furthermore, it honors our role as citizens and the need to contribute to the common good. It emphasizes that all of our varied and specific callings are vehicles of the general Christian calling to love and serve others.

This robust theology of vocation is closely intertwined with Luther's views of education: not only his support of schooling and a solid liberal arts education for all children but also his emphasis on religious education and the faith formation of children and young people. Luther supported formal education and schools because he was convinced that well-educated citizens would serve both church and society. For him, government supported schools were necessary so that everyone could not only read and interpret scripture but also gain the skills and knowledge necessary to be good citizens. Excellent schools help develop the gifts of young people so that they can live out their particular vocations and take up particular roles or offices that serve others and contribute to the common good. As he stated in a letter titled "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" written in 1524 to political leaders, well-educated citizens are "a city's best and greatest welfare, safety, and strength" (*LW* 45:356).

Thus, Luther and his colleague Philipp Melanchthon were strong public advocates for universal schooling, the liberal arts, and educational reform. At a time when formal education was viewed as unnecessary for most children and educational opportunities were limited primarily to the nobility, to boys, or to those entering monasteries, Luther and Melanchthon recommended that all children, including girls and the poor, be given a basic education. Furthermore, Luther and Melanchthon recommended a broad liberal arts program for schools and universities that reflected the humanist reforms of the day.[5] Through their initiatives, Luther and Melanchthon prompted several reforms that influenced German schools and universities at that time and still today, including public education for all

children. Many Lutherans after the Reformation, such as August Herman Francke in the 18th century, have also been leaders in educational policy and reform (Bunge).

Luther's view of vocation also informed his emphasis on faith formation of children and young people both at church and in the home. He believed that those who are baptized should understand their faith and live it out in daily life. Although he believed that pastors and congregations should certainly help children and young people learn about their faith, he stressed that children must also be taught the faith at home by their parents.

Thus, Luther's own view of vocation included serious reflection on the central tasks and responsibilities of parenting. Although Luther knew that parenting can be a difficult task and is often considered an insignificant and even distasteful job, he believed parenting is a serious and divine calling that is "adorned with divine approval as with the costliest gold and jewels" (*LW* 45:39).[6] Luther further underscored the importance of parenting by claiming:

> Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal. (*LW* 45:46)

According to Luther, as priests and bishops to their children, parents have a twofold task: to nurture the faith of their children and to help them develop their gifts to serve others.[7] He also helped parents in this task by preaching about parenting and by writing "The Small Catechism," which was intended for use in the home.[8]

Even though there is more to say about Luther's view of vocation, a Lutheran understanding of vocation provides a solid theological foundation for a Lutheran social statement on education in church and society. On the one hand, the concept of vocation deeply integrates faith and learning and provides theological grounding for strong educational opportunities for all so that everyone can use their gifts to serve the neighbor and contribute to the common good. On the other hand, the concept of vocation also informs the need for faith formation of children and young people at church and in the home. Overall, the concept invites us to reflect on a number of issues related to both academic training and faith formation, such as: our service to the needs of the neighbor; our unique gifts and talents; how to strengthen and to develop them; our multiple duties in various spheres of life; the relation between faith and learning; our relationship to God; and God's love for and care of the world.

Three Urgent Areas of Concern

Given this Lutheran understanding of vocation, given the long history of Lutheran engagement in education, and given the many challenges that children and youth are facing in both church and society, the social statement should address three specific areas of education that greatly affect the lives of children and young people today (or the church could even offer three separate social statements on these issues).

Public Schools

Based on its understanding of vocation and its strong history of support for the liberal arts and universal education, the ELCA should address issues regarding the public schools. The social statement should clearly state the church's commitment to strong public education based on the Lutheran notion that the common good of society requires educated citizens, that all children should receive a good education, and that the education of young people is a shared responsibility. Here are six of the most burning questions that we have heard raised in Lutheran colleges and in the wider church that that should be addressed in a social statement on public schools, and you can add your own in the discussion:

1) How can the church help address the glaring inequities (along racial, ethnic, and economic lines) in our present system of public schools? How can the church ensure all children have equitable access to excellent schools and to strong educational programs that will help them to be responsible and productive citizens?

2) What role, if any, should public schools play in the character formation of children? Are there shared moral beliefs and values that public schools should teach? Can public schools even teach moral values and beliefs adequately if they are not taught within a larger religious framework?

3) Given the fact of religious pluralism and the legal right of public schools to teach about religion, should not the church encourage public schools to teach religion as an academic subject? If so, then how would it be taught? What would the curriculum include?

4) Should public schools sponsor or incorporate any religious practices, events, or symbols into their buildings, curriculum, or extra-curricular activities, such as posting the Ten Commandments or saying morning prayers?

5) Should the church support vouchers and school choice? How should the church balance its support of both public and parochial schools?

6) How can the church help lift up the importance of teaching and ensure that teachers are paid fairly?

Lutheran Schools and Colleges

The church also needs a strong social statement on Lutheran schools and colleges. The statement must start by informing members of the church about the nature and number of these institutions. Many members of the church do not even know that there are almost 2,000 ELCA preschools, 174 parochial schools, and 28 colleges and universities (Task Force on Education 2004: 44, 64). Like public schools and universities, these institutions seek to offer an excellent liberal arts education and to prepare young people for their particular vocations as family members, workers, and citizens. However, unlike secular institutions, Lutheran schools and colleges also have a "special responsibility and opportunity to engage faith and learning." They can provide "an excellent setting for the claims of faith to interact with secular learning in the many fields that make up a liberal education" (Task Force on Education 2004: 65). Unlike some Christian traditions, the Lutheran tradition encourages Christians to make use of the best of secular learning, and it emphasizes an open quest for truth in which faith and learning are not at odds but in vital dialogue with one another. This view of faith and learning is the basis for the Lutheran commitment to intellectual inquiry and academic freedom.

When students are given the opportunity to engage faith and learning, the benefits for both church and society are significant. Some of these benefits were recently confirmed in a national study on Lutheran college graduates. The study found that compared to Lutheran students at flagship public universities, Lutheran students at Lutheran colleges are far more likely to find opportunities to develop spiritually, to discuss faith and values in the classroom, to integrate faith into other aspects of their lives, to participate in service projects, and to engage in church activities (Task Force on Education 2004:67).

Despite such benefits and the rich theological heritage of Lutheran schools and colleges, these institutions face tremendous challenges. For example, only five percent of Lutheran high school graduates even attend Lutheran colleges. Some of the schools and colleges have closed or face serious financial troubles. Furthermore, some ELCA schools and colleges have lost or are losing their Lutheran identity. Many of their students do not know they are attending a Lutheran institution, and they are given few opportunities to engage faith and learning. Although Lutherans have inherited a rich theological understanding of vocation, and although it can be a tremendous resource for people today, we must humbly admit that Lutheran schools and colleges have not consistently helped people explore this understanding of vocation. My own institution, for example, was founded on a rich vision of vocation. When we at Valparaiso University applied for the Lilly grant, we proudly thought that we Lutherans already know all about vocation; we have the market on this concept; and we will be the leaders of this initiative. Yet we were soon humbled when we discovered that most students and even many faculty on our own campus had not explored, let alone appropriated, a deep theological understanding of vocation.

Thus, some of the most urgent questions regarding church-related schools and colleges are the following:

1) How could the church better inform its members about the mission and strengths of Lutheran schools and colleges?

2) How can the ELCA's churchwide office, synods, local congregations, and individual members better support Lutheran schools and colleges?

3) Even as they serve a diverse student body, how can Lutheran schools and colleges maintain their Lutheran identity? Should they ensure that a certain percentage of students, faculty, and administrators are Lutherans? If so, what percentage? What other ways can they maintain their Lutheran character and mission in academic courses and extra-curricular activities?

4) How can Lutheran schools and colleges more intentionally introduce their students, regardless of their religious backgrounds, to the intellectual heritage of the Christian tradition?

5) How can they more intentionally introduce students, regardless of their religious backgrounds, to the wisdom embedded in a Lutheran understanding of vocation? How can they expose all students to a Lutheran view of vocation as they think about their future work and life-commitments?

6) How can the everyday institutional practices and policies of Lutheran schools and colleges better reflect their mission and a Lutheran understanding of vocation? Do these institutions strive to carry out just practices and policies (especially in the areas of responsibilities to families, such as offering flexible working hours or day care; just treatment of employees, especially those with the lowest paid positions, typically adjunct faculty, housekeeping staff, and dining staff; and environmental responsibility on campus)?

Since I have worked with the Lilly Endowment's project on vocation both nationally and at Valparaiso University, I would like to say a little more about the 5th and 6th questions and offer

you a few resources. You can also find more resources on the project's website or by contacting any of the eighty-eight college and universities that are carrying out Lilly-funded vocation programs (see http://www.ptev.org/schools.aspx?iid=4).

As I have worked with the Lilly initiative on vocation nationally and on our campus, ten general kinds of activities or "best practices" have proven to be especially effective in helping students, faculty, and administrators to nurture faith and to reflect on vocation. All of them are valuable ways of creating a space for nurturing faith, reflecting on vocation, and discerning a sense of calling. If one looks back at the history of Christianity, then one recognizes that these kinds of activities or practices have commonly been used throughout various faith traditions for moral and spiritual formation. Recent sociological and psychological studies also confirm the value of these kinds of activities for moral and spiritual development. [9] There are, of course, many more than I mention now, but these ten have been the most significant on our campus and on other campuses around the country.

1) Exposure to Role Models
2) Naming the Gifts and Talents of Others
3) Narratives of Lives of Faith and Service
4) Prayer and Spiritual Fellowship
5) Leadership in Worship
6) Music and the Arts
7) Service Projects
8) Cross-cultural Experiences
9) Church Camps and Wilderness Experiences
10) Biblical Study and the Study of other Texts

Most church-related colleges and universities that are participating in Lilly's national project on vocation do include several of these activities because students have different interests and backgrounds, and therefore the "doorways" through which they can best enter reflection on vocation vary. These ten activities or practices also reflect the varied answers one finds in the Christian tradition for answering the question: How do I discern my particular calling? For some, a sense of calling arises primarily out of meditation, prayer, and contemplation. For others, a sense of calling arises more in response to learning about and then actively addressing the particular needs of individuals or communities. Yet for still others, discerning a sense of calling is more a process of carrying out responsibilities in the roles in which they already find themselves and recognizing these roles as part of God's care of the world. In general, a sense of calling does not come as a voice in the night to isolated individuals but rather through relationships to others and through activities and practices.[10]

Although these ten kinds of activities can be carried out with little or no money, they do require intentionally creating spaces and opportunities for people to engage in them, and they can be carried out effectively when individuals and institutions work cooperatively to share their assets and ideas. Among Lutherans, there are many new collaborative efforts and initiatives that are creatively changing the "ecology" of the church to invite more reflection on vocation and to deepen our shared discourse about it. We see collaborative efforts and events, for example, among ELCA colleges (through the annual Vocation of Lutheran Colleges conferences or the vocation grants); among colleges and seminaries that received Lilly grants for work with high school and college youth; among individuals who participate in programs such as Lutheran Summer Music, the Lutheran Academy of Scholars, or the Rhodes Consultation; and among colleges, seminaries, campus ministries, church camps, parachurch organizations, and synodical and national church offices through efforts such as the "Making Connections" grants or the Western Mission Network Consultation. Although we sometimes see our church as fractured, from a national perspective, such cooperation and networking is unusual among most Protestant denominations. Although Lutherans hesitate to be proud, we can feel genuinely proud and excited about the ways such cooperative efforts are currently renewing the life of the church.

Faith Formation of Children and Young People

Finally, the ELCA must also pay more attention to the spiritual formation of children and young people and the roles and responsibilities of both parents and the church in this task. This is a burning issue for many parents and members of the church, and a section of the social statement on education or even a third separate statement must address it. Unlike some issues related to public schools, this is also an issue that the church could effectively and directly address without depending on political policy decisions.

Although the Church certainly cares about children and young people and offers a number of programs to serve them, parents and other caring adults need to do more to nurture the faith of children and young people. Just one of many signs of the weakness of faith formation in the church as a whole is that children and young people, even those who attend church regularly, know little about their faith traditions and have difficulty perceiving or articulating the relation between faith and their daily lives. Based on the findings of the National Study on Youth and Religion, Christian Smith, author of *Soul Searching:*

The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, claims, for example, that a large number of teenagers are "remarkably inarticulate and befuddled about religion" (27, 32, 260). Even though a vast number of them identify themselves as Christians and are affiliated with a Christian denomination, they have "a difficult to impossible time explaining what they believe, what it means, and what the implications of their beliefs are for their lives... Religion seems very much a part of the lives of many U. S. teenagers, but for most of them it is in ways that seem quite unfocused, implicit, in the background, just part of the furniture" (262, see also 218). The study also shows that Mainline Protestants "were among the least religiously articulate of all teens." Smith cites this response of a seventeen year-old Lutheran: "Uh, well, I don't know, um, well, I don't really know. Being a Lutheran, confirmation was a big thing but I didn't really know what it was and I still don't. I really don't know what being a Lutheran means" (131-32). Researchers conclude that what they call a vague "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism" appears to be displacing the substantive traditional faith commitments of most historical U. S. religious traditions (262).

I also know from my own experience as a college professor, and perhaps your experience is similar, that although most of my students are bright and articulate, and although ninety-five percent of them come from Lutheran or Catholic backgrounds, have attended church, and are confessing Christians, they know very little about the Bible and their own faith traditions, and they have difficulty speaking about relationships between their beliefs and their everyday lives and concerns.

If a vast majority of children and young people are going to church and confessing to be Christians, then what are the grounds for this situation? There are certainly many causes, and I'll mention just three that the church could address. First, although there are certainly examples of sound religious education programs, many congregations offer weak religious education programs and fail to emphasize the importance of parents in faith development. The curricula of many programs are theologically weak and uninteresting to children, and they assume children themselves have no questions, ideas, or spiritual experiences. Programs for children and youth are often underfunded, and leaders for them are difficult to recruit and retain. Furthermore, there is little coordinated effort between the church and the home in terms of a child's spiritual formation. Many parents don't even know what their children are learning in Sunday school, and parents are also not given the sense that they are primarily responsible for the faith formation for children.

As a result, we find, in the second place, that many children and young people are not speaking to their parents or other caring adults about their beliefs and values, and they are not carrying out central religious practices that nurture faith with their parents in their homes. I am taken aback, for example, when many of my students tell me that they have rarely, if ever, spoken to their parents about any issues of faith, when they know so little about their parents' beliefs, and when they are highly misinformed about their church's positions on issues such as creationism or sexuality. Many students also tell me that although they went regularly to church with their parents, they did not pray at home with them. Their experience has been confirmed by several recent studies of the Search Institute and Youth and Family Institute. For example, according to one study of 8,000 adolescents whose parents were members of congregations in eleven different Protestant and Catholic denominations, only ten percent of these families discussed faith with any degree of regularity, and in forty-three percent of the families, faith was never discussed (Strommen and Hardel 14). Many people apparently consider religion to be a private issue—so private that you don't even pray or share religious thoughts and questions with members of your family.

In general, when we also consider that in our current consumer culture young people and now even very young children are the targets of intense and highly sophisticated marketing campaigns, vying for their money and brand loyalty and shaping their values and assumptions, the question we must ask is not "Will our children have faith?" but rather "What kind of faith will they have?" Our children and young people are and will be shaped by messages around them, and parents and churches must be more intentional about the messages they want to their children to receive. When I learned that children under eighteen in the United States watch an average of twenty-seven hours of television a week (not including time spent playing video and computer games), I wonder how even the best Christian education programs, held perhaps one or two hours a week, can possibly compete with television and help young people critically appropriate the faith, especially if their parents are not intentionally taking time to complement these church programs with religious practices in the home and with regular family discussions about religious questions and beliefs. This is especially important when common sense and recent studies show that, for better or worse, the most important influence on the moral and spiritual lives of children and adolescents continues to be parents.[11]

A third reason perhaps that faith formation is not the priority it should be and that children and young people know little about their faith traditions and are not carrying out religious practices at home is that the ELCA, like many other denominations, has not offered serious theological reflection on either children or parenting. Although children and parenting are central to Luther's understanding of vocation and faith formation, Lutheran theologians and ethicists have generally neglected

these themes. Certainly, they have devoted significant attention to many issues related to children and parenting, such as abortion, human sexuality, gender relations, contraception, marriage, reproductive technology, and the family. Yet even most studies on marriage and the family have neglected to include serious reflection on fundamental subjects regarding children themselves, such as the nature and status of children; parental obligations to them; the role of church and state in protecting children; the role of children in religious communities; the moral and spiritual formation of children; the role of children in the faith maturation of adults; adoption; or children's rights.[12] Like contemporary theologians and ethicists in other traditions, Lutherans have tended to consider such issues as "beneath" the work of serious scholars and theologians and as a fitting area of inquiry only for pastoral counselors and religious educators. Thus, theological discourse in the Lutheran tradition, as well as other Christian traditions, has been dominated by simplistic and ambivalent views of children and teenagers that diminish their complexity and integrity, fostering narrow understandings of parenting and other adult-child relationships.

Given these and other concerns, here are some of the most burning questions related to faith formation at home and in the church that the ELCA social statement on education must address:

1) How can the church best strengthen its religious education and faith formation programs?

2) How can the church create a stronger partnership between the home and the congregation and better support parents in their task of parenting and shaping the moral and spiritual lives of their children?

3) How can both parents and church leaders more intentionally introduce children and young people to the "best practices" outlined above for helping them nurture faith and discern their callings?

4) How can the church better support the efforts of para-church organizations that are already doing so much for children and young people, such as through national youth events, mission trips, campus ministry, Bible camps, or retreat centers?

5) How can the church strengthen its theological and ethical reflection on children and parenting and lift them up as serious and legitimate areas of concern for the church as a whole?

Conclusion

I have offered just a few burning questions in the areas of public schooling, Lutheran schools and colleges, and the faith formation of children and young people. Certainly, however the last draft of the social statement is written, it must narrow its focus and address some of the most urgent questions being raised by members of the church about children and young people. It cannot be a generic statement that covers all areas of education most broadly understood. However, if the statement does embrace children and youth, addresses urgent questions, and is built on the vibrant theology of vocation that is embedded in the Lutheran tradition, then it is bound to have an impact and to serve and to renew both church and society.

Endnotes

1. Task Force on Education 2004. Additional copies of this resource can either be ordered by calling Augsburg Fortress (1-800-328-4648) or downloaded from the ELCA website (www.elca.org/socialstatements).

2. For more information about the situation of children see the following web-sites: United States Census Bureau (*census.gov*); The Children's Defense Fund (*childrensdefense.org*); The United Nations Children's Fund (*unicef.org*); and The National Center for Children in Poverty (*nccp.org*).

3. This sense of calling is built on Jesus' command to his followers to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" and to "love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:28-24; Matt. 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28.

4. As Luther wrote, "Faith is truly active through love, that is, it finds expression in works of the freest service, cheerfully and lovingly done" (Luther 1989:617).

5. Their program embraced "language, reading, and writing; the capacity for critical thinking; history and philosophy; scientific and mathematical skills; familiarity and training in the arts, music, and poetry; as well as instruction in Bible and theology" (Task Force on Education 2004:14).

6. In an often quoted passage, Luther says, "Now you tell me, when a father goes ahead and washes diapers or performs some other mean task for his child, and someone ridicules him as an effeminate fool—though that father is acting in the spirit just described and in Christian faith—my dear fellow you tell me, which of the two is most keenly ridiculing the other? God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling—not because that father is washing diapers, but because he is doing so in Christian faith" (*LW* 45:40).

7. For a full discussion of Luther's views on parenting, see Strohl, Lazareth, and Strauss.

8. The German Lutheran Pietist, August Hermann Francke, also spoke meaningfully about the sacred task of parenting. He claimed that the primary goal of parents is to help children live out their vocation. They are to help children grow in faith, empowering them to use their gifts and talents to love and serve God and the neighbor and to contribute to the common good (Bunge).

9. See, for example, studies by the Search Institute (http://www.search-institute.org/) and the Youth and Family Institute (http://www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org/).

10. As Gustaf Wingren says, "In reality we are always bound up with relations to other people; and these relations with our neighbors actually affect our vocation" (72).

11. Smith 261. This is a point also made consistently in the work of Strommen and Hardel.

12. As Todd Whitmore has argued, "For the most part, church teaching simply admonishes the parents to educate their children in the faith and for children to obey their parents" (161-85).

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PAUL J. DOVRE

The Lutheran Calling in Education: Context and Prospect

SINCE ITS FOUNDING, and following the practices of its predecessor church bodies, the ELCA has prepared and adopted social statements on a variety of critical issues from the environment to the economy. Following in this tradition, in 2001 the ELCA commissioned the preparation of a social statement on education. The purpose of the statement will be to inform public policy advocacy and provide counsel to the church, its institutions, congregations, and members.

With the goal of producing, reviewing, and adopting a social statement at the Churchwide Assembly in 2006, the Task Force charged with preparation of the statement produced a study document in 2004 and a draft social statement in 2006. In this essay I will undertake three tasks: first, to focus on the current social context and its consequences as a way of identifying some of the issues that the social statement seeks to address; then I will spend a bit of time reflecting on why it is that Lutherans care about such matters; finally, I will consider some of the prospects and possibilities available to us in addressing the critical issues. Given the nature of my assignment, this will be more an annotated listing of issues, elements, and resources than a substantive philosophical argument.

Social Context and Consequences

I begin with consideration of young people. In a review of *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual lives of American Teenagers*, Sandra Scofield notes that while 84 percent of teenagers say that they believe in God and 50 percent say that faith is extremely important to them, a minority of them regularly practice their faith and they have no idea what their parents' religious values are about. And while the seriously committed "tend to show compassion for others in volunteer activities, do well in school, maintain good family relationships and avoid drugs and sex" they do not seem able "to tie their sense of moral directives to the teachings of a historical church or orthodoxy that underlies their faith." The result, says Scofield, is that "religion gets interpreted with a template that comes straight from the general culture, with its emphasis on individualism" (3).

In the April 15, 2005 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Thomas Bartlett reports on the Higher Education Research Institute's study on spirituality in higher education. Among other things, the study's authors concluded that "most college freshmen believe in God, but fewer than half follow religious teachings in their daily lives. A majority of first-year students (69 percent) say their beliefs provide guidance, but many (48 percent) describe themselves as 'doubting,' 'seeking' or 'conflicted'" (A1). A related study coming out of UCLA found that the percentage of students who frequently attend religious services shrank from 52 percent of incoming freshman to 29 percent of juniors (Bonderud and Fleischer 2). According to Roland Martinson's research, there is among the young great interest in spirituality but little interest in knowledge of the faith and the tradition. Too many of the young find the tradition trivial and unengaging, and so their spirituality and morality are shaped by the popular culture.

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Meanwhile in the mainline denominations, education and worship get short shrift in comparison to other religious traditions. In a national study of 549 randomly selected and diverse congregations, Nancy T. Ammerman found that "the religious groups that spend the least organizational energy on the core tasks of worship and religious education are the mainline Protestant ones" (8). Small wonder that the mainline churches struggle for loyalty, for an evangelical strategy, for an effective educational pedagogy, for a youth strategy and for leaders and teachers of competence and vision for the work of Christ's mission in church and society.

And the family map features too much brokenness and multitasking, too many absent parents and proxy parents, and too little attention to faith and character formation. In Christian families, the vows that parents make regarding the spiritual formation of their children are often neglected or delegated to congregations whose educational programs are short on time and leadership.

The next dimension of our context that I will examine is our schools. Folks are not happy that our schools do not measure up to the performance of schools in other nations. People are unhappy that too many students fail, that there is too much violence, that character formation is being slighted, that school lunch programs do not feature nutritious foods, that there is too much or too little or the wrong kind of attention to sex education, and that special education is receiving either too much or too little of school resources. The public cries for accountability and improvement, and the government responds with No Child Left Behind and a bushel of money that some say is not enough and others say is misdirected. Special interest groups, in increasing numbers, pursue agendas in behalf of prayer or intelligent design or the teaching of religion.

Teachers are increasingly restive under multiple roles and mandates about teaching to tests. Educational leaders wonder how to maintain morale and how to attract teachers of good quality in adequate numbers.

And while schools continue to be resegregated in the cities, schools in rural areas fight to sustain viability. And the unequal distribution of wealth results in an unequal distribution of financial resources for schools, so equal access to quality education is not the reality, political rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding. And surely it's not all about money...but yet it is about money.

A third element of this review of context is our communities. Robert Bellah and his colleagues did the fundamental diagnostic work two decades ago and Robert Putnam verified their underlying theses one decade ago. These theses are familiar: individualism trumps community, feeling good trumps being good, and self-satisfaction trumps altruism. And civility is a rarer commodity than we would wish. Politicians on the left and right are so focused on their respective power bases that their capacity to identify and pursue the common good is increasingly problematic. So the rhetoric is hotter, the tactics less responsible, and all of it is justified according to a Machiavellian calculus.

- We seem increasingly to believe that dollars spent in behalf of the common good would be better spent for the individual good. And, of course, misdirected public expenditures are a reality and governmental reform is a continuing necessity. But the animus to public spending runs deeper than that, so we cut taxes, resist new ones, and refer those that we do pass to public referendum wherever possible.

- The economy is viewed globally and experienced individually. The mantra is that outsourcing is going to create new opportunities for those who are displaced and cheaper, better products for all. And while our employment rates remain high, polls tell us that the poor and the middle class are anxious and uncertain about their place in the new global economic order.

- Since 9/11 we have experienced a war without lines or borders and a world in which uncertainty and anxiety often transform hospitality into hostility in the case of those who are viewed as different because of color, creed, or culture.

- The realities of diversity in our communities are met with celebration and welcome on the one hand and with fear and exclusion on the other. And the reality of pluralism and multiculturalism is met with relativism, or critical tolerance, or an anxious and sometimes angry fundamentalism. As if this isn't enough to disrupt the human community, advances in science create crises for both patients and practitioners.

The final destination in this environmental scan is higher education. Our society is clear that education, and higher education in particular, is the key to the economic well-being of our citizens and our nation-state. To that end, we have commodified higher education in the sense that the ultimate measure of its effectiveness is its capacity to fuel the economic engine. To the despair of Lutherans, vocation is equated with career, and education for citizenship is thus marginalized.

Since there is a strong argument that higher education possesses the keys to the economic well-being of our nation and the economic equity of its citizens, access to education is a high priority. But as costs have escalated, public support and family capacity have not kept pace. Demographers are warning us that if we do not address the educational quality issues in K-12 and

the access issues in higher education, our new Americans and our poorer Americans will not be able to matriculate, and the workforce needs of a high-tech society will not be met.

In the wake of modernism, post-modernism, and deconstruction, higher education is a place where soul questions are often either ruled out of order or treated as matters primarily of subjective interest. Our post-Weberian narrowing of the vocation of a scholar as detailed in Mark Schwehn's *Exiles in Eden* is part of this matter, as is the fact/value split documented by Douglas Sloan and some misconstrual of the doctrine of the separation of church and state. This narrowing of academic vision had a significant and continuing impact in both public and religious higher education according to both Robert Benne and George M. Marsden. Adding to the stress in the case of religious colleges, including Lutheran colleges, is the declining capacity of the sponsoring church bodies and the consequent rearranging of denominational priorities at the expense of higher education. And so scholars, both young and old, quest for vocations that will, in the words of Gail Godwin, "keep making more of you" (31). For all of these reasons, life in the academy in a post-modern, post-Christian, and pluralistic society may be an experience of exile.

Why Lutherans Care

But why is this Lutheran Church—to which we are connected either as members of the communion or members of a Lutheran academic community—concerned enough about our context and its consequences to commission this ambitious and sometimes arduous study process? Here are at least some of the reasons:

- Because God created us as beloved creatures, in the image of God, with capacity to know and understand God and the world.
- Because we marvel at and claim our God-given capacities "to communicate, reason, explore new realities, discover meaning and truth, create art, technology and complex societies, enjoy beauty, and discern what is right and good" (Task Force on Education 2006: 6.14-18).
- Because God calls us into the vocation of service and responsibility toward our neighbor and in our communities: religious communities built around faith and grace (the heavenly kingdom) and secular communities built around laws and the common good (the earthly kingdom).
- Because historically we have been concerned about education in the faith. One recalls Luther's injunction to families regarding such matters. We are reminded of his energy and leadership in establishing schools so that children and adults would possess the skills necessary to read and interpret the Word. We remember Luther's preparation of educational materials including the Large and Small Catechisms.
- Because Lutherans have been concerned about, and respectful of, human reason and secular knowledge—recognizing them as God's good gifts, gifts that contribute to knowledge of the faith and gifts that are essential to our vocations in the world.
- Because Lutherans are committed to civic righteousness (Augsburg Confession, Article XVI) or to the common good if you will. Luther exemplified this conviction in his own life. One thinks of his commitment to the establishment of the common schools, to the university, to social welfare, to new governance arrangements, to new social institutions and new laws (Witte). To be sure, Luther's judgment in these matters, as in the case of the Peasants' Revolt, was not unerring, but his concern for civic righteousness, consistent with his formulation on the two kingdoms, was clear.
- Because we are a people of hope: freed from the oppressions of "Context and Consequences" by the blood of the Cross, we are able to respond to God's call to nurture the young, to care for creation, to love the neighbor. And God has given us both experience and resources with which to build meaningful vocations in our lives individually and in the lives of our families, congregations, communities, colleges and universities.
- And finally, we are encouraged to address our calling in education by the signs that we see around us, including educational reform in schools, a vast expansion in congregational schools, educational innovation in our colleges and universities, a renewal of mission in higher education, and revitalized youth ministries. And there are leaders with vision and expertise who are passionate about the Lutheran calling in education.

Prospects and Possibilities

Given the looming issues and the resolve to address our calling in education, what are the prospects and possibilities? As a foreword to this discussion, let me pause a moment. In good Lutheran tradition, our theologizing and thinking about vocation is grounded in Word and sacrament. The Word provides grounding, counsel and revelation as we seek to discern the will

of God for our time and in our station. So let me frame these remarks with these words from Romans. Paul writes:

> Do not be conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom. 12:2)

I believe that the Lutheran calling in education is about transformation. And I think it is about renewing our minds by acquiring new knowledge, by wrestling with the paradox and ambiguity of the current circumstances in education, and by developing and testing new strategies and insights. And it is about discerning the will of God in these matters: a process fed by prayer, faithful study, and honest conversation. In that spirit, I submit some grist for the renewing of our minds—for we have significant resources with which to pursue our calling in education.

In assessing our prospects and possibilities, we begin with the legacies: the biblical legacy, the confessional legacy, the theological legacy, and the pedagogical legacy. I have already illustrated the biblical legacy. Now let us consider the confessional legacy.

- Earlier I noted references to the first article of the Apostles Creed. This article affirms our creation in the image of God, the gift of knowledge, and the call to steward God's creation.
- The second article acknowledges the fallenness of creation, the reality of sin, of evil, of the sorts of inequities and injustices identified in the study document.
- But it also establishes the gospel, the transforming capacity of Christ that allows us to transcend our brokenness, to transform life and the world. This is an exercise of the Christian freedom that Luther celebrated.
- The second article is also an account of the gospel, this good news that motivates us to serve God, to love the neighbor, and to engage in the sometimes arduous tasks of being in community.
- And it is in the third article that we acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit in calling us to faith and into community. It is the Holy Spirit that produces in us and in our communities such fruits as love, joy, peace, and kindness.
- And alongside the Apostles Creed stand the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Augsburg Confession, and the Book of Concord—all documents that seek to articulate the faith and its implications. Taken together, they constitute a rich legacy.

Companion to the legacies of Word and the confessions stands our theological legacy. Luther did not produce a systematic body of theological writings. What we have are his sermons, lectures, prayers, occasional letters, and his Table Talk. Luther was always engaging scripture and reason and people around central questions of life and issues of the community. From this work we deduce a series of theological insights. For example,

- His insights about vocation are central to the enterprise of this annual conference. Luther's understanding was and is distinctive. For Luther vocation is motivated by gratitude for the Good News. It is inclusive of all careers. We are, said Luther, a "priesthood of all believers," so whether cow herder or castle dweller, priest or plumber, teacher or tool maker—all careers provide places of service to the neighbor, places to glorify God in the doing of good work. Further, in Luther's view our vocation is comprehensive of all dimensions of our lives—family, community, church, and career. Luther saw vocation in incarnational terms: in our lives of service to the neighbor we who are finite creatures bare the infinite love of God.
- Luther's teaching about the two kingdoms is another element of his legacy. It provides refreshing insights about our call to work with others in behalf of justice in a world of many faiths and cultures, and it affirms the place of secular knowledge and human reason. "For Lutherans the knowledge given in faith and the knowledge given through human reason are distinct, and both are gifts of God; the two belong together, the one challenging and strengthening the other" (Task Force on Education 2004: 65-66). And his helpful distinctions between law and gospel provide insights about the error of misplaced piety, the necessity of good laws for our temporal existences, and the freedom of the Christian.

Now we move to Luther's pedagogical legacy.

- First of all, this man was committed to learning and to the free, unfettered search for truth. He exemplified St. Anselm's dictum that "faith seeks understanding." It was intellectual inquiry fed by religious anxiety that led Luther to his breakthrough reading of Romans on the nature of salvation. It was Luther's commitment to the laity, the priesthood of all believers, that led him to champion a universal education that would give people of both sexes and all ages direct access to knowledge. He advocated for instruction in both divine and human wisdom (Lotz 9). It was his respect for human curiosity that led him to write the catechism with its recurrent

question, "What does this mean?" And it was his commitment to learning in church and world that led Luther and Melanchthon to spearhead a reformation of the curriculum at Wittenberg University.

- The reformation of the curriculum reflected another feature of Luther's pedagogical legacy—his commitment to education in the liberal arts. Luther thought it necessary and appropriate that those who would provide leadership in church and society should be acquainted with history, science, philosophy, and language in order to discover the truth of God's word and the best course of action in the church and community.

- And we also celebrate Luther's commitment to excellence in all things. He was alleged by some to have said, "A good cobbler makes good shoes, not poor shoes with little crosses on them." Whether he said it or not, he viewed piety as an unacceptable excuse for mediocrity. And no doubt he subscribed to the Apostle Paul's admonitions about running the good race with perseverance.

- Luther's commitment to the dialectic, to the engagement of faith and life, and to moral deliberation about faith and the common good is another aspect of his legacy. He exemplified it in his writing and speaking, he demonstrated it in his Table Talk that addressed both the ordinary and extraordinary experiences of life, and he advocated for the dialectic in the reconstitution of the curriculum of Wittenberg around a more rhetorical, dialogical model of engaged learning.

- A final piece of Luther's pedagogical legacy was his sense of contingency. It is expressed in a number of ways, including the famous *simul eustis et pecator* formulation, the confession that we are both righteous and sinner. We also see it in Luther's view on the limits of reason. Luther viewed reason as the "most important and the highest in rank among all things and, in comparison with other things of this life, the best and something divine" (*LW* 34: 137). But he was leery of Erasmus and others who thought they could rationalize divine grace and revelation, and he was sensitive to the ways in which persons who were simultaneously saint and sinner could corrupt reason. The sense of contingency is also evident in Luther's preference for the paradoxical, the reality of the sometimes irresolvable tension among alternative ways of understanding and negotiating reality. This sense of contingency leads to a sense of intellectual humility.

Let me move beyond the legacy to another set of observations on the prospects and possibilities for the Lutheran calling in education. A particular sign of encouragement is the renewal of the apostolic paradigm in the church. The work of Loren Meade and also Stanley Hauerwas and William B. Willimon a decade and a half ago described the stagnation of ministry and mission in many churches. They were, in a word, focused on self-preservation and unseen and distant mission activities. But in the fifteen years since the publication of these books, we have seen remarkable movement in many congregations. We see, in particular, a focus on equipping the laity for their ministries in daily life. We see the preparation of pastors for apostolic ministry in a post-Christian world where Christian beliefs and values are not shared by the culture. We see focus on small group ministries that address social needs and spiritual development. We see lively and engaged forms of worship, education, and youth ministry.

Another reason for optimism is the renaissance of Christian colleges. The post-modern consciousness and the secular angst among many of us led to some deep reflection about religious identity and mission on many of our campuses. The result is, in many cases, a revitalized community evidenced by lively conversation about faith and learning and about vocation. New curricular and pedagogical models are surfacing with a powerful assist from the Lilly Endowment. Scholars like Schwehn, Benne, Bunge, Simmons, Christenson, Jodock, and Lagerquist (among others) have provided excellent material for the renewing of our minds and our campuses and our programs. This annual conference, the Lutheran Academy of Scholars, and the publication *Intersections* further testify to the reality of this renaissance. And furthermore, we know that Lutheran colleges and universities make a difference. The data gathered by the Lutheran Educational Conference of North America in its multiyear research program indicates that our institutions excel in educational outcomes related to faith development, the integration of faith and learning, in opportunities for discussion of faith issues, and in levels of participation in the life of a church following graduation.

And we hasten to include on our list of encouraging news items the reform movements in public K-12 education. Upset with the experience of their students and the performance of schools, parents, politicians, and philanthropists are developing alternative formats and platforms. Consequently, vouchers, charter schools, and home schools are now part of our vocabulary. And that doesn't begin to describe the myriad innovations occurring in many schools where teachers and administrators are showing very creative leadership.

I mentioned earlier the response of Lutheran congregations to the educational needs of their members and their neighborhoods.

Our study document reports that one in five ELCA congregations is sponsoring some sort of educational venture, reaching 225,000 students and engaging 20,000 teachers, administrators and staff members. Between 1999 and 2004, an average of fifty school or early childhood centers were opened every year. (Task Force on Education 2004:44) This ministry is, in all likelihood, our church's most effective venture in reaching an increasingly multicultural population.

Finally, the prospects for our calling in education are enhanced by the quest for values, for virtue, and for meaning that we see exhibited in our society. One thinks of the popularity of books like Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* or the "Ethics and" movement exemplified at the Hoover Institution where Fortune magazine senior writer Marc Gunther led a seminar on "Compassionate Capitalism" and authored several books and essays on related subjects ("Media Fellow"). Or one could cite the growing number of independent Bible study groups that are springing up across the country and across denominational lines.

This set of reflections on the context and prospect for the Lutheran calling in education is necessarily incomplete. These are some of the issues as I see them and the resources available to us as we seek to shape our calling. I leave it to you to fill in the empty spaces and then make the connections between our resources and our challenges. Indeed, these days together will provide a hospitable environment and a highly competent community in which to do just that.

This may or may not be a *kairos* time but it is, I submit, a time of significant opportunity for people committed to the kind of holism in education to which our colleges, universities, and church have a historic commitment.

Luther did not conform to the religious ideologies and practices of his place and time, nor did he conform to the civic practices and ideologies of Saxony. He was transformed by the gospel as it was revealed to him in his studies, in his conversation with others, in the writings of St. Paul, and in the work of the Holy Spirit. In the vocation that followed, he became an agent of transformation in church and society.

It happened in the time of Saul who became the apostle Paul. It happened in the time of Luther who became a reformer in the church, the schools, and society. So why not now? That's what the Lutheran calling in education is all about—transformation. So be it. Amen, so be it.

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SAMUEL TORVEND

Lutheran Education in the *None* Zone

IF ONE WERE TO VIEW a map of North America that presented concentrations of Lutherans with the demographer's red dots (no political symbolism intended), it would be possible to trace a red line that runs from eastern Pennsylvania through Ohio into northern Illinois with one branch then entering Iowa and another running into Wisconsin, through Minnesota, and ending in the Dakotas. Of course, there are Lutherans and Lutheran schools throughout the nation, from Southern California to Maine, from Alaska to Florida, but the heaviest concentration runs through that northern tier of the country, which follows earlier patterns of German and Scandinavian immigration.

For those of us who labor in the western reaches of the continent, the Rocky Mountain range that runs from southern Alaska into Mexico separates us not only geographically but also culturally from the more established centers of Lutherans and Lutheran schools manifested by the red demographic line that runs westerly from Pennsylvania and then stops, almost abruptly, at the Little Missouri River as it meanders along the border between North Dakota and Montana. Indeed, in the geographical imagination of my relatives who live in Virginia, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, we are "out there," *way out there*, in what religious leaders of all stripes continue to consider "mission" territory.

Regional context shaping perceptions of Lutheran education

I offer this brief prelude on North American geography and the demography of religious density because I want to claim that regional cultures throughout North America both shape the experience of religion and present a series of challenges to those who serve in church-sponsored schools and colleges. As a native Washingtonian raised in the West, who spent half my life in the Upper Midwest before returning to the West and Pacific Lutheran University, my observation of cultural practices and culturally formed expectations of religion has been confirmed, challenged, and expanded by the recent works of the Lilly-sponsored series, Religion by Region, organized by the Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion and Public Life at Trinity College in Hartford.[1] To say the least, both reflection on experience and patient study can reveal that *distinctive regional cultures shape the conditions in which education takes place and in which education and statements on education are received.*

To the first point, then: regional culture shapes the conditions in which Lutheran-sponsored education takes place.

The Pacific Northwest

My colleagues and I labor in that physical space between the Olympic mountain range to the west and the Cascade Range to the east. We live close to the deep bay of the Puget Sound, among the evergreens made verdant by the gentle rain and mild sun. We work in a distinctive and diverse natural ecology where the lush green fern grows next to the towering cedar; where the waters, filled with orca, salmon, and oyster, ebb and flow next to mountains filled with volcanic fire; where the rhododendrons flower next to the native dogwood. Our climate is so mild that most of our homes, schools, and churches don't know what an air-conditioner looks like, a practice unthinkable east of the Rockies where the intensity of winter's chill is balanced by summer's heat and humidity. Indeed, since Lewis

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and Clark first mapped the "territory" (since the "Northwest," then, was Minnesota), most people have been attracted to the region simply because of its astonishing beauty rather than its educational, religious, or cultural promise. Consequently, it would seem impossible for any college or university in the region today to attract students if it lacked a vigorous program in Environmental Studies. Indeed, the first course I taught at Pacific Lutheran University was on the "Theology of Nature," one among the numerous offerings in the Religion Department and the University that attend to the natural ecology of the region and the strong but currently contested cultural value attached to this sense of place.

We also labor in another "ecology," one that I would suggest is shaped, in part, by the first and natural one, that is, a distinctive human or cultural ecology that has been alive in this region since the early nineteenth century when immigrants began to make their way to the western reaches of the continent. Seeking to escape, yes, to leave behind the seemingly entrenched social stratification of the eastern seaboard and the communal sensibilities of Midwestern farming communities, trappers, fortune seekers, the adventurous, and the deeply independent made their way to this "last" place at the edge of the continent. Suspicious of established authorities and institutions, of government, religion, and education, of history and "tradition," those who settled in the Pacific Northwest, who imprinted the region with a unique "cultural coding," and those who continue to wander into this region, have nourished a cultural ethos marked by a fierce individuality rather than a cooperative spirit. Unlike those who were raised and educated within the Populist inheritance of the Upper Midwest—and experienced or experience church, school, and government working hand in hand—those who labor in a region such as ours, marked by a skepticism of "organized" religion and anything but the most pragmatic of educational programs, cannot take for granted *for one second* the cultural support for religion and church-sponsored education alive in other regions of the nation (Killen; Killen and Silk 2004:9-20, 169-184; Szasz).

Our predecessors were drawn to the Pacific Northwest by trees, mountains, and water, that is, timber, minerals, and fishing with the dream of quick economic gain. And now, computers and cyberspace, a world of disembodied communication, continue to attract a new generation of immigrants to a cultural ecology where the last thing just about anyone wants is a stable community in which they are known, known deeply. Indeed, logging, fishing, and mining—extraction industries that created a transient sense of work—seemed to have indelibly imprinted this highly mobile culture in which, today, almost every student at Pacific Lutheran University (if not elsewhere) imagines that he or she will have to move from job to job, frequently and quickly, if they are to survive and succeed as the social networks their parents and grandparents took for granted, from a previously benevolent government, seem to be withering away.

In the Northwest, the future of Christianity, or, at least, the deeply theological, sacramentally rooted, and socially engaged forms of Christianity, remains an open question. Indeed, in the Evergreen Empire, less than a third of the population claims any affiliation with a community of faith, and, when such affiliation is noted, it runs the gamut from Anglican to Zoroastrian and everything else in between.[2] In the Pacific Northwest, less than half that third—that is, around 15 percent of the total population, that 15 percent made up of Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants, and Reform Jews—value and support higher education as a requirement for their clergy and as a laudable goal for their children.[3] In what is arguably a *pre-Christian milieu*, since neither Christianity nor any other religion has ever dominated the cultural landscape of the region, there is little if any cultural support for the practice of religion and for religiously-sponsored schools and universities. Indeed, the mantra—"I'm spiritual but not religious"—falls from the lips as if it were a cultural norm. From Anchorage to Eugene, the voice of the skeptic and the shrug of the indifferent constitute the many who, when asked if they claim any religious affiliation at all, simply answer: *NONE*, none whatsoever (Killen and Silk 41-43).

To be sure, then, we do not teach in Philadelphia, saturated with Catholicism, Swedish or German Lutheranism, and colonial history. We do not labor in St. Paul and Minneapolis, brimming with Scandinavian Lutherans or those trying to escape the pleasant confinement of Lake Woebegone. We do not count ourselves among those who view the church or the academy through the lens of a denominational bureaucracy in which most people take for granted the "Lutheran" pedigree of their coworkers. We work in what looks like a post-Christian world that, if truth be told, is becoming the western world: a world that has more in common with Rome, Alexandria, and Jerusalem in the first century than Paris and its great medieval university, or Wittenberg and its small early modern university, or the American Midwest in the nineteenth century when so many Lutheran colleges sprang to wondrous life.

Lutherans in the Northwest

In the Pacific Northwest, there are 186,000 ELCA Lutherans, that is, 1.9 percent of the total population, a statistically insignificant number (Killen and Silk 33-35). That Lutherans have been able to create and sustain one of the largest universities in the ELCA system and promote a smaller college in the foothills east of Seattle is, I would claim, nigh unto miraculous

given (1) the cultural antipathy toward established religion and liberal arts education, (2) the recurring and volatile swings in economic fortunes that influence benevolent giving, and (3) the steady growth of conservative evangelical and fundamentalist groups who view Lutherans as ripe for conversion and their schools as dangerous places to send their children (Nordquist 1986; Nordquist 1990). That a small number of Lutherans in the Northwest have been able to create and sustain a vigorous network of social services in the face of dwindling governmental support for the most vulnerable citizens is a testament, I would claim, to the Lutheran *charism*, the gift, of linking robust, critical learning with service to real human need. Indeed, it is no surprise to me that the region with the smallest percentage of religious participation also claims the highest levels of child malnutrition and food insecurity. Were it not for Lutheran and Catholic Community Services that together represent only 13.2 percent of the total population, we would experience a level of impoverished hunger that could rival Third World nations.[4]

This is to say that in the midst of a regional culture marked by aggressive levels of individualism, suspicion of religion, low levels of religious participation, and skepticism about educational institutions that highlight the meaning and moral dimensions of learning for the common good, *it takes hard work to participate regularly in religious communities and to support religiously-sponsored institutions such as schools, universities, hospitals, shelters, and food distribution centers*. Perhaps to Lutherans, who cherish the unmerited graciousness of God, the juxtaposition of "religion" next to "hard work" may seem, at first, unwise if not ill-founded. Yet ask any university admissions counselor, religion professor, campus minister, or culturally observant pastor in our neck of the woods, and they will tell you: absent any cultural or ethnic support for established religions and liberal arts education, only heroic labor and imaginative and adaptive strategies have sustained the educational, pastoral, and social service initiatives that rest at the heart of the Lutheran charism.

Pacific Lutheran University

Indeed, the University my colleagues and I represent at this conference is a microcosm of the regional culture. We can boast (albeit modestly in Northwestern fashion) of an astonishingly gifted faculty, deeply committed to teaching, scholarship, and service. Many, nonetheless, know little about the middle name of the university and, some consider it an obstacle in student recruitment and an annoying thorn in their resolutely a-religious flesh. Given the fact that a large number of faculty recruited in the last fifteen years have little familiarity with Lutheran higher education (much less Lutheran theology, history, or practice), it can come as a surprise that what many of them take for granted as "secular" qualities of higher education—academic freedom, resolute questioning of the status quo, the sanctity of one's conscience, an egalitarian community of scholars—were first promoted among the early Lutheran and Christian humanist professors who insisted that medieval education for the elite be made available to the many.[5]

Many of our students and faculty have *no experience* of a "faith that seeks understanding" *or* a community of faith that actually welcomes the troubling questions raised by the academy *or* clergy that do not fear raising such troubling questions in preaching and teaching (even when such questions might jeopardize the new idolatry of keeping the pews filled at any cost). Given this fact, it should come as no surprise that we are faced with the difficult but necessary task of communicating the richness and complexity of the Lutheran charism as it shapes higher education in *a language accessible to the listener*.

To the second point, then: regional cultures shaping the conditions in which educational statements are received.

Receiving Lutheran educational statements in a regional culture

In my first year at Pacific Lutheran University, I was invited to a number of gatherings focused on new faculty orientation. At one of these meetings, I was seated next to a professor born and raised in India, with a PhD from an American university, who had lived in this country for about seven years. The topic for the evening was "Lutheran higher education," a discussion led by an administrator who happened to be a Lutheran pastor. As the impressive Power Point presentation came to life on the screen, the presenter spoke about the "two kingdoms," God's right hand and God's left hand, secular righteousness and the righteousness of a Christian, dialectical theology and paradox, the incarnation, and Luther's redefinition of vocation; that is, many of the same themes found in Part 2 of the draft document under consideration at this conference. As slide after slide went up on the screen, I gazed around the room at the increasingly glazed expressions on the participants' faces. I thought to myself: Oh boy, we're losing this crowd in the one chance the university possesses to make a first and persuasive presentation on Lutheran higher education. At the end of the talk, the Indian professor turned to me, knowing that I was a new member in the religion department, and said in all seriousness: "Excuse me, but I don't understand: the Lutheran god has two hands, a right hand and a left hand?" In that moment, it dawned on me that this Hindu colleague knew something about Shiva, the creator and destroyer who possesses *many* hands. Would not the "Lutheran god" look impotent compared to mighty Shiva? He went on to

ask: "Where can you see these hands? How do you find these hands? And what do hands and kingdoms matter in teaching business or economics or biology?"

Communicating Lutheran wisdom in the* None *Zone

Thus, my first point: regardless of what we intend to communicate, people will receive that communication in light of their own experience. To say the least, it was unclear at this faculty gathering that the presenter was speaking in metaphor, what we know to be the building block of all complex thought. But more significantly, what became clear is what so many of us encounter in the classroom every day: the dynamic between what is communicated (on the one hand) and what is received by the listener (on the other hand). The medievals spoke of this dynamic in the chaotic phrase, "quid quid recepitur recepientes," what is received is received according to the capacities of the recipient. What the writers of "Our Calling in Education" (Task Force on Education 2004) might consider normative Lutheran views of higher education may be received in the manner intended by Lutheran seminary faculty, professors of Lutheran history or theology, and those who are familiar with the language of Lutheranism. Yet I am not convinced that the faculty and administrative staff of our university would be able to receive and use such a document as a source of discussion about the Lutheran character of higher education since it seems to assume an almost exclusively Lutheran audience.[6] Now, perhaps, ecclesial statements need to be focused exclusively on the ecclesial community receiving the statement. My concern is that a document written, in part, for a college and university system in which the minority of professors and administrators claim a Lutheran identity will need to be "translated" once again, if it is to be received and used by the intended audience.

I say this because the challenge we encounter in our regional context, as well as in many of the church's colleges, is the desire to welcome people into Lutheran higher education without requiring them to be Lutheran or adept at "Lutheran language." Indeed, this is a critical pedagogical issue in a culture that is marked by increasing religious pluralism, the collapse of impermeable boundaries between denominations, and the public captivity of Christianity by the Religious Right. In other words: *How does one communicate Lutheran wisdom regarding education in a language that is neither biblical nor confessional yet deeply Lutheran? Is it even possible?* It is this question that compels me to introduce my students to the work of Paul Tillich who, in the face of much opposition and ridicule from some Lutheran and Protestant theologians, attempted this very act of translation in an idiom that could speak to mid-twentieth century North America culture (Tillich 1951-1964). It was his attempt to communicate, for instance, through the disciplines of psychology, history, natural science, art, theology, political science, philosophy, and education that, I would claim, can serve as a model—but only as a model—for Lutherans to communicate their wisdom in a religiously pluralistic, secular, and contested cultural context.[7] The document rightfully notes the "loss of confidence in" and, I would add, the marginalization of "the intellectual and moral claims of the Christian faith" in the larger cultural context. This is not due, however, simply to increasing secularization, but also to the failure of mainline Protestant communities, their pastoral leaders, and their schools to articulate their vision and communicate their wisdom in categories other than those that were vitally alive in the sixteenth century.

You see, I am not arguing for a simple or simpler explanation of great Lutheran ideas about education as if one needed to dumb down "church speech" for the great unwashed, as if writing teams needed to create a new "catechism" on education or any other topic for that matter. Rather, I am suggesting that philosophers, scientists, artists, theologians, economists, psychologists, and musicians, for instance, probe the deep meanings of the Lutheran core insights around education and communicate those insights in an idiom that can be received by those who may enjoy teaching or studying at a Lutheran college but will never become Lutheran.

Introducing students to the mystery of humanity or educating them in the faith?

Second, when the draft document speaks of higher education, it recognizes that student bodies are composed of "Lutherans, Christians of other traditions, [and] people of other religions, or no religion" (Task Force on Education 65). That would be a fairly accurate appraisal of the pluralism many of us encounter in the classroom and the faculty house dining room on a regular basis. In this context, mention is made of the need to teach Bible, theology, and ethics "in ways that respect a diverse student body." Yet very quickly the document notes that one of the primary purposes of Lutheran higher education is to "educate in the faith." This goal is underscored when the document notes that "Lutheran colleges have the challenge of engaging students with the intellectual heritage of the Christian faith" and "strengthen[ing] the faith of their Christian students" (65). Perhaps such goals seem perfectly normal in a college that counts a large percentage of faculty and students who identify themselves as Lutheran. I ask: How will this play in a university whose faculty and students view "the faith" within a range of responses that extend from outright disdain to utter indifference to benign or admiring tolerance to strong commitments?

As a professor of the history of Christianity who teaches courses on the Christian Tradition, Lutheran Christianity, and Luther, I believe that I engage my students in the "intellectual heritage of the Christian faith" and, as a social historian, something more than the history of ideas. As a human being, I draw upon a rich theological tradition that is sacramentally grounded and socially engaged, but I don't think my purpose is to "educate students in the faith," in Christianity or the Lutheran form of Christianity as if I were a pastor or catechist.[8] Between the conservative evangelical students who expect me to do nothing more than affirm their passionately held assumptions about religion and the many students anxious about taking a course in religion because they fear I will force my own version on them, I can bring a measure of engaging scholarly objectivity that will infuriate some and awaken deep interest in others. If, in the course of their studies, students are challenged to move beyond the psychological stage of needing or requiring an external authority (e.g., parent or ecclesial leader) to confirm the faith of their childhood, so much the better.[9] If this means that our students move from Ricoeur's first naiveté into the world of critical self-consciousness and all the attendant relativism such a necessary movement entails, so be it. Lutherans and Lutheran schools do not need any more pastors, bishops, teachers, administrators, or professors who simply repeat the core insights of Lutheran theology. Rather, Lutheran schools need administrators and faculty who can imagine how those insights *might or might not* respond to the questions being asked in the world today or the critical point in human history that now confronts us. The question my students ask in light of the formative events of *their* lives—the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the seemingly intransigent conflict in Iraq—is not Luther's question: Where can I find a gracious God? Rather it is this: Will there be a future in which we can flourish? That question, it would seem to me, asks us to consider the virtue of hope in terms most realistic. This does not eliminate the virtue of faith so dear to Luther and Lutherans or the virtue of charity. It does suggest a shift in priorities.

Preparing students to be "good" citizens or agents of reform? Thus, to my third point. When my Norwegian, Danish, and English grandparents immigrated to Oregon and Washington in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, they arrived by train and horse-drawn wagon. They came as farmers and tree-toppers who read from the Bible, sang from the hymnbook, and knew the catechism by heart. What had begun in a small and relatively unknown German university town in the sixteenth century was found surprisingly alive four hundred years later and thousands of miles away in the farming communities of the lush Willamette Valley and the hill country of central Washington. They imbibed the great American dream of seeing their children and their grandchildren survive and flourish in this new land guided by a provident presence, hard work, and a Lutheran education. They could readily assent to the draft document's claim that "Lutheran colleges aim to prepare people for their vocations as family members, workers, citizens of their country and of the world and members of churches" (Task Force on Education 65).

In the course of their lives, however, the world shifted dramatically and fearfully under their feet. Traveling westward and settling into ethnic communities centered on church and school, they never could have imagined at the beginning of the twentieth century that humans beings would hold in their hands by the end of the century what virtually all previous generations had believed was a divine power: the ability to destroy human life throughout the planet, this destruction now made possible with invention of weapons of mass destruction by German and American scientists. As people who tilled the fields and labored in the immense forests of the Northwest, they had no idea in their young lives that their grandchildren would be faced with a startling and unthinkable scenario: a planet so terribly poisoned by the wealthy few that the future of earth's viability would become an open question.

From the upper campus of Pacific Lutheran University, it is possible to see one of the largest army bases in the country, whence soldiers depart regularly for Afghanistan and Iraq. In the classroom we hear, on a daily basis, the sound of Air Force cargo planes and fighter jets landing and taking off at McChord Field. In less than forty minutes, one can drive to the Trident naval base, its submarines filled with nuclear missiles. We know that while Saddam Hussein could have never launched any kind of missile that would have reached the Eastern seaboard, much less the Rocky Mountains or the Puget Sound, we do know, from the many maps produced in The New York Times, that we are located within striking range of North Korea.

Many of us know these things and yet we go about our daily work: preparing for class, going to baseball games, paying bills, picking up children at school, or slogging through committee work. "Others will deal with these problems," we may think. But we would be naive to assume that this previously unimagined moment in human history is simply one more thing to take in stride as we walk into the classroom, grade papers, or attend a chapel service. In the face of profound social anxiety and the possibility of widespread destruction, it seems to me that only the privileged imagine that they will be protected by their privilege or by the promise of a blissful eternity if things don't work out in the world today.

In this context, both religion and education can serve many purposes. Each can be used as an anesthesia to blunt one's senses to the suffering alive in the world. Each can be used as

a compensatory and comforting psychological mechanism when faced with unfulfilled ambitions and personal loss. And each can be accommodated to the quantification of success so pervasive in American culture. Thus, it is not surprising that college presidents and synodical bishops, admission directors, and parish pastors are counting numbers and studying demographic charts these days as if they were seasoned sociologists. When religion and education are imagined primarily as supporting the social fabric and affirming the status quo—"preparing people to be family members, good citizens, and church members"—they all too easily become captive to the prevailing cultural ethos that will allow religion and education a sociological function yet deny them a prophetic political or economic one. If you don't believe me, ask Lynn Cheney why she constructed and advertised a blacklist of college and university professors who publicly opposed the conflict in Iraq, many of whom are numbered among the faculty of Lutheran colleges and universities.

While Fortress Press is publishing a bevy of studies on Bonhoeffer, the educator, pastor, and martyr, it is not clear to me that we have yet fully learned from the experience of the German church and German higher education during the previous century, both of which forgot, tragically, the critical "re-forming" instincts that gave birth to Lutheran churches and Lutheran universities. This is to argue that the colleges and universities of the church, with their concentration of scholarly expertise and moral commitment, are capable of forming students in far more than "good citizenship and church membership." If we cannot imagine them *as centers of vigorous public engagement that hold together the "deconstructive," critical voice that calls the status quo into question and the "reconstructive" visionary voice that imagines a more gracious and just alternative to the troubling world in which we live*, then why not pull the plug and let these schools become centers for middle-class camaraderie in which people are more concerned about Lutheran choir competitions than global economic competition?

Or say it this way. I profess that one of the most energizing legacies of the Lutheran commitment to higher education rests in two "freedoms" that asked to be held in tension: (1) the freedom to call into question the accepted norms and practices of a society that can lead to intellectual, emotional, relational, economic, and political diminishment, and (2) the freedom to seek and shape a life in common with others that is clearly attentive to the deeply moral nature of learning for the good of others. This is to say that at the heart of the Lutheran charism in higher education rests the freedom to question one's own and one's culture's assumptions about this world and the freedom to construct and affirm, again and again throughout life, a purposeful commitment to this world rather than (what I witness in some faculty colleagues) a cynical withdrawal from its failures and tensions. If this is what "vocation" might mean—welcoming the voice of the scholar as cultural prophet committed to life in this world now and the requisite protection of that voice from political or ecclesial, popular or corporate censorship—then we are on good ground to imagine that the colleges and universities of the church will be able to prepare students to engage the powers that shape their world even when such engagement might lead to marginalization and apparent loss.

Conclusion

But, this should come as no surprise to anyone who is familiar with the Christian story or the Lutheran interpretation of that story. For at the heart of that ancient narrative one encounters a Jewish prophet who called into question the political, economic, and religious powers of a global empire with an alternative vision that issued forth from a gracious and just God. That public witness, rooted in the imaginative capacity to reinterpret the law and prophets in a new context, led to the charge of sedition against the state and a terrible, humiliating public death. Why and how that deeply reforming project was tamed and domesticated by his followers needs to be discussed elsewhere. That it has not been forgotten and, as the witness of Luther makes clear, is filled with vital energy and transcendent promise could make even the most skeptical citizen of the "*None* Zone," or any zone, pay attention to a university community where the future of life on this earth is its abiding passion.

Endnotes

1. A preview to the entire series, edited by Mark Silk and Andrew Walsh, can be viewed online at http://www.religionatlas.org/default.asp?page=rel_region&ext=htm.

2. See Table 1.2, "Number of Adherents in the Pacific Northwest by Religious Family," in Killen and Silk, 29.

3. Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian U.S.A., UCC, United Methodist, American Baptist, Christians (Disciples), Mennonite, and some groups of African American Protestants.

4. See "Even PLU Students Can Go Hungry: Research Looks Into How to Help," in *Scene* 35:2 (Winter 2004): 8-9, concerning my research with Matthew Tabor on hunger in the Pacific Northwest, funded by a Kelmer Roe Fellowship in the Humanities [http://www.plu.edu/scene/issue/2004/winter/sections/life-mind.html]; Torvend 2005.

5. See Torvend 2003. This is one attempt to communicate a Lutheran vision of education to first-year students in a language that is rooted in a biblical, confessional, and theological framework yet prescinds from using terms and concepts that would be alien to students from diverse backgrounds.

6. In the last two years, Pacific Lutheran University's Center for Religion, Cultures, and Society in the Western United States has sponsored study groups of Washington and Oregon ELCA and LCMS clergy, all of whom report the critical need to communicate Lutheran wisdom in a "language" that can be "received" by persons who are unfamiliar with the biblical, confessional, and theological languages of the Lutheran tradition.

7. Here I am referring to the collection of essays in Tillich 1959 that suggests, in the very discussion of culture, language, philosophy, religion, art, psychoanalysis, science, and education, a way to discover and articulate the deep meanings of the "languages" and "practices" of a particular religious tradition such as Lutheranism. Such an articulation may (or may not) set aside the philosophical, psychological, or political symbols so prominent when Tillich was writing these essays. For instance, his criticism of national ideologies (rooted in his experience of Germany in the 1930s and the emergence of the United States as a Cold War superpower in the 1950s) can still be applied today (and one might think with ever great need) to national ideologies but also to multinational corporations that are replacing national governments as centers of political and economic power in a global economy.

8. While the religion or theology departments in some Lutheran colleges retain curricula that correspond to a "preseminary" offering of courses and consider one of their chief responsibilities the cultivation and preparation of future candidates for the ordained ministry, others have responded, through modulation in their curricular offerings, to student desire to pursue graduate studies in religion or theology (e.g., MA, PhD programs) as well as interdisciplinary studies (e.g., religion and science, social work and theology, gender/race/class and religion). Regional cultures also influence student consideration of ministerial vocation. For instance, within the cultural ethos of the western United States, clergy are tolerated or considered socially insignificant, a perception of clergy different than that found in other regions of the nation.

With the support of a Wabash Center grant, Pacific Lutheran University's Department of Religion engaged in a two-year process of welcoming many new faculty into the department and learning from retiring senior faculty who had taught in the university for thirty or forty years. In the course of discussion on teaching and scholarship, attention was given to Tillich's "Theology of Education" (see Tillich 1959:146-57) as a helpful way of thinking about a Lutheran "humanist" model of education in contrast to a Lutheran "induction" model. In this section of the paper, my remarks reflect a preference for the former.

9. See Parks 2000. This text is read by faculty and administrators engaged in the Lilly-funded, five-year, "Wild Hope" project on discerning "vocation in a Lutheran university" at Pacific Lutheran University. Parks makes cautious reference to the work of Erickson and Fowler on stages of psycho-moral and faith development in young adults. Her work merits sustained attention.

That authority-based certainty gives way to a self-reflective and "deliberating" conscience during early adulthood (at least in Western contexts) might call into question the expectation, held by some, that church-related colleges should be regarded almost solely as centers of "faith affirmation." Frequently one encounters Lutheran and other mainline Christian students in the classroom who have never been confronted by their *pastoral* mentors with the necessary and bracing critique of religion by the Enlightenment or the movement from a prescientific to a scientific worldview (this implies more about [1] the singular failure to integrate wide bodies of university-level liberal learning in seminary curricula and [2] the "monastic" separation of seminaries physically from universities where seminary faculty and students would be confronted with the forms of learning and worldviews that exercise far greater influence in North America than those of seminaries). Faced with questions that arise out of the post-Enlightenment world, college students who bear all the marks of a sixth-grader's level of faith development encounter a series of challenges that cannot be effectively negotiated in two or three religion or theology courses. Smart science students walk away from a religious tradition that cannot effectively converse with the world of science; others too easily opt for a comforting form of American pietism that only solidifies the compartmentalization of "religion" from "life."

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CHERYL BUDLONG

"Our Calling in Education": An Educator's Perspective

LET ME BEGIN my perspective as a professional in teacher preparation on "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study" (Task Force on Education) with what I would call my "mental model."

I did not attend Lutheran elementary or secondary schools. However, I did attend a stringent confirmation program in the Lutheran church. Many of you may have been raised with this same model: three hours a week on Saturday mornings for three years. Yes, I could prompt you on any part of Luther's Small Catechism, and we could continue to recite it. I memorized Bible verses and was very emotional about the day I was confirmed. Another aspect of my heritage is that my grandfather, who emigrated from Germany, started a Lutheran church in Clinton, Iowa.

My college experience is a BA degree in middle school (then called junior high school) mathematics. I received a MA degree in secondary guidance and counseling–proving that I can in fact utilize both the right and the left sides of my brain. I taught mathematics and was a guidance counselor in Iowa and Illinois school districts. Then I stayed home for almost ten years raising four sons. My sons have attended five Lutheran Colleges (Wartburg, Gustavus Adolphus, Luther, Augsburg, and Pacific Lutheran). Three graduated from Lutheran colleges and two have master's degrees from Catholic, yes, Catholic universities. One son is currently in the seminary to become a pastor, beginning his work at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary.

After what seemed like ages to get the boys in school, I returned to the university to obtain my doctorate in education with a cognate area in educational psychology. For the past twenty years, I have been a professor in the education department at Wartburg College. This autobiography should attest to my commitment to Lutheran education ... and again provide a mental model for my comments to follow.

I am going to use the term "mental model" in many of the ideas discussed. What exactly is a mental model? Ruby Payne, an educational leader who has explored the concept of poverty and how it impacts learning, defines mental models as the way our brains hold abstract information. She provides a mental model—or picture—for us. Just as a computer has a file manager to represent software content, so does our human mind. We must have a shared understanding to be able to communicate. We must be able to use our minds to sort information—what is relevant and what is not, what is important and what is not. This is made possible through mental models. Again, definitively, mental models tell us structure, purpose, or patterns. How do we hold these structures, purposes, or patterns in our minds? Through stories, analogies, and drawings. It is how we explain things (Payne). Let's put our mental models to work as we explore "Our Calling in Education."

The Historical Model

The historical overview of Lutheran education was evident in this study. Martin Luther's impact on education was profound. Let's use the mental model of the Luther bobble-head figurine my son owns (remember he's the one training for the ministry). Picture this–a wobbling head on a monk-like church leader. His head moves to affirm his belief in education: the importance that ALL could read the Bible (yes, his head moves affirmation), his commitment to the common good (again a bobble of

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affirmation) and his statement about "masks of God" (bobble once more). We need strong, knowledgeable, committed teachers, parents, and clergy to "train up our children in the ways they would go and when they are old they will not depart from these" (Prov. 23:6).

What memories do we have of colonial America? Can we picture what the colonists looked like? The clothes they wore? The plantations? The slaves? What about the role religion has played in schooling? Religion was the main purpose of education in colonial America. Children were taught to read primarily so that they could read the Bible and gain salvation. The first real textbook to be used in colonial elementary schools was the New England Primer. First copies of this book were printed in England in the 1600s. The Primer was a small book usually about 2 ½ x 4 ½ inches with thin wooden covers covered by paper or leather. It contained fifty to one hundred pages containing the alphabet, vowels, and capital letters. Next came words arranged from two to six syllables followed by verses and tiny woodcut pictures for each letter of the alphabet. The contents of the Primer reflect the heavily religious motive in colonial education (Johnson).

Private education has been extremely important in the development of America. Private schools carried on most of the education in colonial times. The first colleges—Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton—were private. Most early colleges were established to train ministers. Roman Catholic schools have been the most recognized of the religious schools. Over the past twenty-five years, enrollment in non-Catholic schools has grown dramatically while Catholic school enrollment has declined. Some Roman Catholic dioceses operate extremely large school systems, sometimes larger than the public school system in the same geographic area. The Chicago Diocese operates the largest Roman Catholic school system, enrolling approximately 150,000 students (Johnson).

Therefore, our mental models for the historical foundations of education are strong religiously based systems impacting the education of America's children.

The Current Model

Next let's look at the mental models of current educational initiatives. Many of us were "educating" or being educated ourselves in the 1980s. What mental model comes to our minds when we think of "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission on Excellence in Education)? The Reagan administration? Falling behind other countries in math and science? This report, commissioned by Reagan and authored primarily by Ted Bell, said we needed to fix education—longer school days, strengthening teacher preparation and certification, more rigorous standards and curriculum, more testing, hard-nosed accountability with rewards and punishments—all this designed to make education stronger and remove the label of "our nation at risk" (Johnson).

Does this sound like what is happening today? Only a few years ago, *Goals 2000* was initiated during the first George Bush presidency and passed as legislation during Bill Clinton's presidency. This legislation required states to develop by the end of the decade clear and challenging standards for student learning, to develop examinations based on the standards, and to report student progress.

By focusing on standards-setting and assessment at the state level, Sharon Robinson, the current leader of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, believed "Goals 2000 prompted states to establish more explicit commitments to the level of achievement expected of all children, including poor children served by Title I programs" (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education 52-53).

But our most recent legislation has become a common phrase for all parents, teachers, and community members: "Leave no child behind." In January 2002, George W. Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, called No Child Left Behind (and as some state leaders phrase it, NCLB). Marilyn Cochran-Smith (current president of the American Educational Research Association and professor at Boston College) gives her perspective on this legislation. This law's purpose was "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to attain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education 68-69). Specifically, this law aims to improve the achievement of poor and other disadvantaged students by sending more federal resources to high-poverty and struggling schools. Testing in reading and math (with science to follow) is required of all third through eighth grade students, and schools are required to track test scores, report scores to parents, and disaggregate and publicize the results by race, gender, and other factors. The law requires that all schools make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) toward universal student proficiency in core subjects by 2013. Serious sanctions will be in place for schools that fail to do so.

The law also requires that students have teachers who are highly qualified—with at least a bachelor's degree, full certification or a passing score on a teacher licensing exam, and demonstrated competence in the subjects they teach. One concern I and many others have on this particular NCLB component is the emphasis on content—with little mention of pedagogy or other professional knowledge and skills. A scarier part of current

research shows that disadvantaged students are least likely to have a fully qualified and experienced teacher. This may lead to labeling schools with high disadvantaged populations as "failing." And what teacher would seek to teach in a "failing" school?

Another controversial aspect of the legislation is the emphasis on high-stakes testing. Remember the concept of "adequate yearly progress" (AYP)? This is the rate of improvement schools and all subgroups within the schools must make each year on the state tests. Schools that miss that mark may then be labeled "needs improvement" or "failing" and are subject to sanctions. Specialists in assessment often posit that these requirements are unrealistic and probably unreachable. Some statisticians suggest that almost all schools will fall short of targets over the next few years.

And what are the consequences for minority students? The NCLB goals include separate AYP targets for all subgroups of students. Districts must have at least ninety-five percent of their students taking the high-stakes tests and must make their yearly target toward one-hundred percent proficiency. The requirement to disaggregate the data and publicize the results may draw attention to the inequities in quality of education; some critics say that this is creating a "diversity penalty" for schools with the greatest diversity. In fact, the graduation rates of minority students may be exacerbated by the NCLB.

The Effective School

Beyond the current reform movements, let's begin by exploring the research on what constitutes an effective school as posited by Lezotte, Edmonds, and many others (Johnson 446-48). Several characteristics and practices have been identified as hallmarks of effective schools. School district data demarcate high student achievement and the characteristics that contribute to this achievement.

Research into effective schools has identified the following components that contribute to high achievement:

1) The instructional program is goal directed—students know what is expected of them.
2) There is constant and consistent assessment and monitoring of student progress.
3) There is immediate feedback on student progress.
4) Instruction is appropriate to the learner.
5) Individual differences are given prime attention.
6) The program gives emphasis to basic skills—both academic and life skills.
7) There is continuity of instruction across grades.
8) The staff works together to provide common types of learning experiences in all parts of the curriculum.
9) There is effective grouping for instruction—groups are flexible and correspond to the task at hand and the individual differences by task.
10) Instructional time is organized to maximize the effectiveness of the "teachable moments." Students experience different time modules for learning.
11) All lessons are adjusted to the students' needs.
12) Teachers are concerned about the concept of "time on task" in learning.

The following environmental characteristics also impact effective schools.

1) There is a democratic administrative leadership—fairness in leadership and decision making promotes sound mental health among teachers and students.
2) There is an orderly, safe environment (social and academic)—free from fear.
3) There is clear, firm, and consistent discipline—students know what is expected of them and practice that policy.
4) There is a cooperative/family atmosphere.
5) There are few classroom interruptions.
6) There is parental involvement in student learning—parents are encouraged and expected to be partners in their child's learning.
7) There are positive community relations—the school uses community resources and members in the learning process.
8) There are adequate activities and learning materials—budgets are appropriate to meet the objectives of the school in terms of materials, equipment, and (I will add) salaries.
9) There is a well kept school plant—attractive and kept at a highdegree of maintenance.

Effective Schools and "Our Calling in Education"

How does "Our Calling in Education" correlate with what we know about effective schools and good teaching and learning?

One strong aspect of "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study" is the focus on mission. Peter Drucker, a leader in business management and leadership, advocates the need for a strong mission statement to guide all that occurs within a business. In fact, our family has often articulated a family mission statement. This is true, also, in a school or church setting. It needs to be articulated

and shared with all stakeholders. The mission of the church's ministry in education is to "form and equip wise and faithful disciples who will live out their baptismal vocation both in the church and in the world" (Task Force on Education 20). A strength of this statement is the focus on knowledge, skills, and dispositions both within the Lutheran setting and throughout the world. These three—knowledge (what we think), dispositions (what we feel), and skills (how we act)—are the same three dimensions of performance-based teacher education professed by both state and national education organizations (NCATE, INTASC, etc.).

Another key term linked closely to mission is vision. Many of you have visited the Seattle Fish Market. Lundin, Christensen, and Paul have written an earlier book about the FISH philosophy and now a more current book entitled *Fish Sticks* (2003). These authors talk about "vision moments." These are the opportunities we have to reinforce or creatively extend our vision. If you can create a vision in a fish market, can we not in our Lutheran schools? Do we have a mental model of the Seattle fishmongers, tossing the fish from person to person, adding humor and joy in their vision for creating an experience of buying fish? I strongly recommend you watch the FISH videos to enhance this mental model. As educators within the Lutheran tradition, it is important to know clearly what we are doing and trying to create. We need to find the vision and communicate our goals. They encourage us to create an experience people value. Let me add one more thought from their books. They say that having deep conversations about the vision increases energy levels. The impact of conversations strengthens commitments and values. We are also able to find our place within the vision through conversations. Is this not what this conference is all about? We are not throwing raw fish from person to person, but we are throwing around ideas with fun and conversation to strengthen the Lutheran calling in education.

Another strong aspect of "Our Calling in Education" was the intentional articulation of vocation, or God's wondrous and awesome call. At Wartburg, we have a focus on Discovering our Calling. It is a language discussed often with new teachers. Is there a passion and commitment to education? This study obviously exemplifies such passion and commitment. As educators and church leaders, we need to find our calling in many venues. Through my consulting work, I have taught courses in finding our calling, although expressed in many different ways. More than twenty-five years ago, the Junior League, an organization that fosters volunteerism in communities, offered courses in Volunteer Career Development. The Lutheran church offers a course in GEMS (Gift Empowered Ministries). The curriculum used in these programs was focused on how to discern our calling—how to identify our strengths, and then use those strengths for the common good.

Once we have found our calling, we need to honor that calling. And that calling transfers to many different roles. As teachers, we are what the report terms "special servants of God" (Task Force on Education 33). We need to earn and demand respect. One challenge is pay—is the pay in Lutheran schools commensurate with this respect? We must guarantee that the pay is equitable in our Lutheran schools. Being a student is a calling. Do our students know and value this? Being a parent is a high calling. Being a parent is an obligation, as well as a calling. How about our calling as citizens? The government at both the state and local level has a new-found calling in education. And what about globally? Are children in Africa and other less-industrialized nations subject to the same equal opportunity to learn as American children? There is also an explicit calling—Does the media communicate the same calling and values that we want instilled in our children?

A third strong component permeating "Our Calling in Education" was the idea of context. Learning and teaching do not occur in a vacuum; many areas impact the education of our children. One influential area outlined in the study was diversity. God has designed us to be unique individuals and that is never more evident than in a classroom, particularly in a middle school. One young boy may be four foot something tall still playing with Legos and actions figures sitting beside a near six foot basketball player interested in the young girls also seated in the classroom. Think of the diverse societal conflicts mirrored in today's youth population: divorced homes, mixed parental cultures and races, teen pregnancies, drugs. Yet, God has made us all precious and important. This view of human dignity is espoused in this study. In the educational setting, this means no bullying, fairness to gay and lesbian students, equal opportunity for all to learn in our classroom, as well as access to technology and teaching strategies for the twenty-first century. The "digital divide" dare not separate the haves from the have-nots in our schools. Pluralism will always be evident in our schools, in one form or the other.

Financing is another context that will impact learning. This will vary based on the socioeconomic status of the communities. In fact, many researchers have stated that the socioeconomic status of the parents is the biggest predictor of success of students. What does this say to us as educators of the church in high-poverty areas? Remember our phrase—"equal opportunity for success for all." Not only is this a federal mandate, it is a Christian one as well.

"Our Calling in Education" also states that Lutheran education is relational. Malcolm Gladwell, the author of the current bestsellers *The Tipping Point* (2000) and *Blink* (2005), states that connectors are the social glue that holds society together.

He even goes so far as to say that the more acquaintances you have, the more powerful you are. As a little aside from this talk but from his research, Gladwell also states that power is in direct proportion to the amount of clothes you wear—the less clothes (with skin showing in this current fashion trend for young women) the less power. How is that for a little mental model picture at this moment? We have also heard of the game of "six degrees of separation"—I only wish I could give you the common example of Kevin Bacon, but I am movie-star deprived in my mental model.

One strong relationship that is so very critical in our schools is between teachers and students. I believe (as do the No Child Left Behind authors) that it is critical to have highly qualified, certified teachers in each classroom. If I did not hold this belief I would not commit my time and energies in teacher preparation. Teachers need those same three components identified earlier: knowledge of the content, dispositions or attitudes toward learning and children, and skills and strategies. We also know these roles are birelational. That is, the teachers are also learning from the children. Teachers must follow God's law: they must act responsibly in human affairs. This is one reason Iowa and many other states require background checks on teachers. As the licensure officer at my institution, I have found that many more teachers lose their licenses for moral rather than content issues.

Parental involvement is another component of effective schools. Our document identifies parents as key people in children's education. In fact these authors state that it is an obligation for parents to "create the structure and climate for children to grow" (Task Force on Education 33). In addition to parents, another key influence on children and their growth is their peers. There has been a long debate on the impact of nurture vs. nature on children's growth and achievement. A current leader in the area of child development has recently made a strong statement about this debate. Judith Harris, a child development specialist, states the nurture assumption—the belief that what makes children turn out the way they do, aside from their genes, is the way their parents bring them up—is nothing more than a cultural myth (1998). She believes that what they experience outside the home, in the company of their peers, matters most. Parents don't socialize children; children socialize children. If this is the case, the community within the school—and I would add the church—significantly impacts the lives of children. This may be a new mental model for many of us, but one not to discount.

Educational Psychology

Let's take a small detour here to look at what an educational psychologist believes is important in educating our children (Slavin):

1) All students deserve an effective teacher.

2) All students learn in different ways. Variety must be evident in the curriculum and school activities for all children to succeed. This means that the teacher must be attuned to what works for each child in the classroom and then use the strategies, methods, and skills to enable the child to learn.

3) The curriculum must be developmentally appropriate. This means it is at the level where the child can learn. The psychologist Lev Vygotsky calls this their zone of proximal development—the level where the child learns with assistance from the teacher.

4) Learning is always changing. Can't we all attest to this fact? Learning about child development becomes ever so important once we have our own children. In addition, we find what works well for one child may not work at all for another child. I know we have all experienced this with our own children.

5) Learning does not occur in isolation. Sometimes what we call the "hidden curriculum" in our schools teaches far more than the explicit curriculum. Can we teach children to be honest and truthful if we as teacher and parents are not honest and truthful ourselves?

Another psychologist, Jerome Bruner, talks about a spiral curriculum (Slavin). This means students must be exposed to a similar concept over and over again for the student to learn. So the first grade curriculum is reinforced in the second grade, and additional learnings are added to the initial learnings.

Students learn in familiar settings. This was evident in the studies of Sesame Street and Blues Clues. Sesame Street was based on exposing children to many concepts during each program. The Monday program had nothing to do with the Tuesday programming, just more and more stimulation for the children. Blue Clues programs found students learned the concepts if they were repeated over time. So the concepts of Monday's program are identical to Tuesday's program, as were Wednesday's, Thursday's, and Friday's. Children thrived on the predictability. They anticipated and they learned (Gladwell 2000).

Brain research is impacting the way we learn and the way we teach. Researchers have isolated areas of the brain responsible for various types of learning. Let me share just a few findings from this new science of teaching and learning:

1) Emotions impact learning (controlled by the amygdale). When we feel happy, content, comfortable optimum learning can occur.

2) Music carries messages to the minds of receptive learners.
3) Learners must be provided with sufficient feedback.
4) We should provide complex, multisensory learning environments.
5) Preexposure provides learners with a foundation upon which to build connections.
6) Elaboration gives the brain a chance to sort, sift, analyze, test, and deepen the learning.
7) We may have greater influence over the quality of our learning than previously thought.
8) Brain-based learning considers how the brain learns best (Jensen).

Public Schools

Returning to "Our Calling in Education," let's look at the final sections of the study—first, educating our children in the public schools. We know that only about nine percent of our children attend religiously-based schools. Therefore, as the Task Force report states, a majority of students are in our public schools, over fifty-five million children. When my children were growing up, we attended a large Lutheran church in our community. Often the topic of starting a Lutheran school was initiated. It was the wise belief of our pastor that we impact the public schools with strong Christian teachers, parents, and students, not by "isolating" (his term for placing our children in a separate Lutheran school); we must make our public schools stronger. This is the option for many of us where a Lutheran school may not be an option. It is what the report would call the "shared responsibility."

Public schools are not without controversy. According to Phi Delta Kappan polls, most parents believe their schools are doing well. It is other people that are having the problems or suffering (Johnson). The charge to the schools is to teach children what is needed for living together in a democratic, pluralistic society. The schools are meant for all children, and all should feel welcome and accepted in them. This, however, is not always the case. In addition, the public schools are under a great deal of scrutiny at this time.

In Iowa, there is much discussion about school size. Can small rural schools, with graduating classes of twenty to thirty, offer all the curricular, athletic, social advantages of a larger school? Are very large schools able to offer these same advantages for all? Is there equity in funding in all districts? Are all of our children fortunate to have "highly qualified" teachers? Are there schools or districts where teachers want to teach? Are there others where outstanding teachers do not want to teach? Are all children awarded an equal opportunity to succeed? Are our schools safe?

Again we confront the accountability issue. Should the curriculum focus on the basics in order to document annual progress required by No Child Left Behind? Are other curricular areas suffering? Early childhood offerings and other compensatory programs may not be available for all children. Class size varies from district to district, and often from classroom to classroom.

Discrimination—racial, gender, socioeconomic—still exists in our schools. We must work to eliminate discrimination so all children have an equal opportunity to learn.

Choice. The voucher system is controversial and also political. Will the choice given to parents to select a school for their child provide more equality? Will choice foster a marketing approach to education? If it did, would this be harmful?

I believe, as does "Our Calling in Education," that we have an obligation to make our public schools the very best they can be. All students deserve an equal opportunity to learn. If this is true, I hope your mental models are similar to some of the statements I have just made about this commitment.

Education and the Church

Finally, let's explore the church's commitment to higher education. And let's begin with our mental models, many of which we would share. We have all dedicated a part of our careers to higher education in a Lutheran setting, so we know and attest to the benefits: the commitment of most of our students to learning within a religious perspective, to time within our curriculum for chapel or church services, to open discussion about religion in our course work, among many, many other benefits.

We know the history of our religious institutions began with the preparation of clergy and teachers. We know the ELCA has made a commitment to Lutheran education, for which we are proud. We proudly proclaim that our institutions are colleges of the Lutheran church, in our work with our prospective students as well as our media and marketing materials. We openly discuss our callings and our vocations. We integrate our faith and learning.

Many of our institutions administer the Astin surveys that document student expectations and satisfaction. We find many points from these surveys that contrast the Lutheran education with public universities. Findings from the Task Force's report on Lutheran colleges and universities show:

- a closer relationship of students with faculty and staff, including mentoring and discussions about faith and spiritual issues (38% to 8%);
- students who are more engaged in religious activities (64% to 28%);

- more interactions with others with similar values (79% to 59%);
- students experience college as a place that emphasizes faith and values (84% to 35%);
- students integrating faith into other aspects of their lives (60% to 14%).

We also know that about one third of eighteen-to-twenty-year-olds are in college and that three times as many college students attend public colleges and universities. Many of the same challenges are evident at the higher education level as with public K-12 schools. Among these are the need for strong Christian teachers in our public colleges; the need for opportunities for Christians to congregate and discuss moral and ethical values and issues, among many others. I want to stress the importance of the church to promote campus ministry programs on public school campuses. My son has a campus ministry internship at University of California at Berkeley with thousands of students; historically, only twenty to thirty students attend Lutheran campus ministry events. This is not satisfactory! I hope this can change. This is an untapped resource to provide leaders for the church and society.

Let us end with the mental model of access to higher education. If we truly believe in the concept of equal opportunity for all, then who can attend our colleges and universities? Who can and will attend Lutheran institutions of higher education?

Grants and scholarships must continue and increase. Fortunately, the Pell grant has enabled many students to attend college, although each year we hear of cuts in funding for scholarships and grants. Can congregations provide more support for our students attending colleges of higher education? Will the ELCA continue to support the institutions of higher learning? How can we assure that socioeconomic status is not the proimary determinant of college matriculation?

I applaud the efforts of the authors in "Our Calling in Education." How do we assure that the talking points continue and there is equal opportunity for all who want to receive a Lutheran education?

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