intersections

Spring 2008

in this issue

Lutherans Engage the World

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

| Some of you may know that I am retiring this summer. For months people have been asking me to look back on my work and give assessments. I tell them that my primary task has been to be a spokesperson to the church for the colleges related to the ELCA, and to be a spokesperson for the church to the colleges and universities. I also tell them that the links between the colleges and the church have grown stronger in the last ten years.

That surprises many, since they have heard and read about the slippery slope away from their church bodies on which many American colleges and universities were seen as sliding away, and they know that there have been many lamentations about how the Lutheran colleges are not like they used to be. I will not now go into the evidence that supports my claim, but instead discuss why most Lutheran colleges and universities still embrace their church connection.

One reason is that Lutheran church leaders see the link as important. Rev. Dr. Mark Hanson, the presiding bishop of the ELCA, is a strong supporter of the Lutheran colleges. He recognizes how crucial they are to the future of the church, and he says it often, and to all groups. College leaders like being appreciated. Another reason is the activities and programs that the church sponsors, like the annual conference on "The Vocation of a Lutheran College," and the annual conferences for groups of college administrators. They help create networks of likeminded people, and help faculty and administrators feel that the connection is valuable, that they learn from it and benefit from it. There is also some financial support for the colleges in the church budget. Even if it is much less than it used to be, the colleges welcome the contribution.

But I want to stress that the Lutheran theology of higher education is a strong basis on which to operate colleges and universities in the twenty-first century. Martin Luther stressed the need to question authority, and challenge practices based only on historical precedent. He stressed the need to go back to the original sources and reinterpret them. He invited previously excluded groups into full participation, and he used language that all members of society, not only the educated few could understand. He set us free from the anxiety and despair of not measuring up to ideal standards, and told us we would be saved by God's grace. He told us that we should respond to this grace by serving our neighbor in any relationship and position in which we found ourselves, but that we had to strive toward excellence.

It should not be surprising that many colleges and universities find these to be excellent principles by which to operate, and that both Lutheran and non-Lutheran faculty members, students and administrators embrace them.

Living in God's Amazing Grace,

ARNE SELBYG | Director for ELCA Colleges and Universities

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intersections

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ON THE COVER
The fabric pictured is called Adinkra cloth. Originally Adinkra cloth was used for funerary purposes. Adinkra means "farewell." This piece was purchased while visiting Ntonso, the center for Adinkra cloth-making, when students from Augustana (RI) learned how to make Adinkra cloth on Ghana term in 2006.

From the Editor

Run an experiment … first on yourself, and then on others—maybe your students. What is the answer to the question, "Why are you religious? What is the goal of religion, your religion?" I try this experiment in most of the religion classes I teach. The answer is surprisingly consistent. "I'm religious so that I can get to heaven (or, in some cases it is stated as avoiding the alternative)." This seems to be by far the dominant reason for religion in the minds of our culture. It is true of young people and those who are in our congregations. Religion is about the future world. Religion is a retreat from world….

All around we see the result of this sort of religion. The focus is on "saving your soul" (however that is imagined by the practitioner confronting us). Will you get to heaven? Or will you be left behind?

It's not the case that there isn't precedent for this way of thinking. From near the beginning of our history as a religion, Christians have withdrawn from the world—some seeking the grace of God in the solitude of the desert, some within the walls of monasteries. The complexities of the relation of religion and culture has been explored famously by Richard Niebuhr. It continues to be debated by those who wonder what the role of religion should be in our own day. Should religious folks withdraw to the scrubland of Texas to build their own society? Should religious folks take over the political system for good, Christian purposes? How do/should Lutherans be heard in this conversation?

It might be surprising to some who have had the experience of Lutheran churches (and colleges?) as insular that Lutherans, because they are Lutheran, enter the conversation among those who seek, even demand, engagement with the world as a religious principle. That viewpoint is well represented in the contributions in this issue.

What draws Lutherans into engagement with the world rather than retreat? Maybe the first motivator is the first story we read … and confess. "We believe in God … the creator." This world, with all its mystery and complexity is the world created by (and blessed by) God. Those who hold this view are understandably reluctant to leave a connection with this world too easily. It is the good gift that has been given. We are not too eager to walk away from it.

And secondly, this is the place that God has come to us. Incarnation. He may draw us to himself … but first he comes to us—here. In this world. God seems to think that it is pretty important to be involved. It seems like a dangerous *hubris* to claim that this place isn't *really* that important, that what concerns the divine is really only that which happens next, in some other/un-worldly place.

What are the implications of such doctrines? That is what is explored in the articles that follow … and we hope in the conversations that they spark.

This movement toward the world is clearly the thesis of Guy Erwin as he suggests that, as Lutheran colleges and universities, we must define ourselves as places that move across the flatland of the globe and engage. He suggests that, to be Lutheran, we have to move from our comfort zones into the larger world. He also suggests that we *tell* our constituents that we intend to do this. Mary Carlsson points out that at times the comfort zones that we need to leave are much closer than we admit. How do we as Lutherans relate to the borders that exist in our local communities? Peter Marty would claim, I believe, that this is not an either/or situation—either global or local—but rather a good Lutheran both/and. Mark Mattes provides one helpful example of how history shapes and defines one place—and might shape others.

This reach into the world may be exemplified by the image on the cover of this issue. It is a pattern of cloth encountered by students and faculty from Augustana (RI) while on foreign term in Ghana in 2006. These sorts of programs, to engage our students at home and around the world, are not unique to Lutheran colleges and universities … but they should be characteristic of what we are about as Lutheran institutions. We expect our students to engage "the other."

This Adinkra cloth is also appropriate for another reason. It is cloth about "farewells." With this issue if *Intersections* we say

"Farewell" to Arne Selbyg who, as Director for ELCA Colleges and Universities, has been responsible for the continuation of this publication.

I have known Arne for many years. He was my "boss" when he was Dean of the Faculty at Augustana College in Rock Island (as much as any dean can be the "boss" of a member of the faculty!). Those years ago I remember him well working hard to increase diversity at the college. It seems fitting that the last issue of *Intersections* continues that theme on a broader canvas. Since that time Arne has provided leadership from the ELCA offices to all twenty-eight colleges and universities. He has made a difference for me and for many of us. He will be well remembered. Arne, we wish you well and hope that from here onward you board only flights that are of your own choosing!

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

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MARY S. CARLSEN

Engaging the Local Community: Why Bother?

In the late 19th century, British settlement worker and teacher Margaret Sewell discussed the beginnings of social work education in Britain and around the world stating what was needed was a

> serious, thoughtful and organized effort to tackle social ills not only as part of personal religion, but a social obligation; not merely as an expression of sympathy but as a recognition of difficulties urgently presenting themselves to be resolved, and demanding for their solution gifts of the head as well as of the heart. (cited in Kendall 75)

The reformers were not abandoning the religious obligation to help the poor. They were instead wedding it to the emerging social science understandings of society. What I do in social work and what I teach as a social work educator are framed by this marriage of mind and heart, of academic and experiential learning. Both are informed by my religious faith. In this talk, I will address a series of questions: Why should colleges engage the local communities? Who/what *is* our local community? What should engagement look like?

My father was a Lutheran pastor, and at his funeral, many people I'd never met from our community made a point to tell me how Dad had ministered to them. These people were not members of our church. Several said they were unchurched. Yet, his commitment to the whole community made a difference in those lives and that message has stayed with me. We *need* to bother, with *passion, integrity and reflection.*

Why Should the College Engage the Local Community?

Through history, some have said "Don't bother." In years past, universities didn't bother. The initial relationship between the medieval universities and the host town was, in fact, often adversarial. The medieval universities had no investment in a physical campus. They could threaten to move. An excerpt from Wikipedia includes a description of some of these threats:

> Because they had no investment in a physical campus, they could threaten to migrate to another town if their demands weren't met. This wasn't an empty threat. The scholars at the University of Lisbon in Portugal migrated to Coimbra, and then later back to Lisbon in the 14th century. Scholars would also go on strike, leave the host city, and not return for years. This happened at the University of Paris after a riot in 1229 (started by the students). The university did not return to Paris for two years.

Can you imagine if St. Olaf decided to up and move to Chicago when neighbors complained about student housing? In addition, "students in the medieval universities enjoyed certain exemptions from the jurisdiction of the ordinary civil court.... This often led to abuses and outright criminal behavior among students who realized they enjoyed immunity from civil authorities." (Wikipedia) This exacerbated tensions between town and gown. At least we know that our students are ticketed and carded!

One of the most famous confrontations between students and the local community was the Battle of St. Scholastica Day that occurred on February 10, 1355 at the University of Oxford. An argument in a tavern—a familiar scenario in contemporary life—escalated into a protracted two-day battle in which local citizens armed with bows attacked the academic village, killing and maiming scores of scholars. For five hundred years, Oxford observed a day of mourning. So the steady encroachment of

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universities upon neighboring areas created contention between town and gown, continuing from medieval times to the present.

Lawrence Martin, in an essay entitled "University and Community: A Tale of Two Cultures," described succinctly the history of town/gown relationship in more modern times:

> In the United States, hostility towards universities was initially born out of geographical isolation. Universities were often located in rural (frequently remote) areas far removed from the economic and social problems of the broader society. [*true of most in the ELCA*—MC] Universities promoted themselves as elite bastions of information and knowledge. (Martin 3)

Despite their beginnings in relative isolation, many became urban universities simply by the expansion of areas around them. The response of many was to build higher walls and stronger gates in an attempt to maintain a separation from their surrounding communities. This added to the pejorative use of the term "ivory tower," a world or atmosphere where intellectuals engage in pursuits that are disconnected from the practical concerns of everyday life or academic elitism that shows condescension to those around them/us. (Martin) They didn't want to bother.

Consider the entrance(s) to your campus. Ours at St. Olaf are pretty open and welcoming, but due to a conceal-and-carry law passed recently in Minnesota, we have on major buildings signs that say "St. Olaf bans guns on these premises." How welcoming is that? Ira Harkavy, who directs the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania, shows us that not only the physical expressions of our campuses separate us from the community, but also the internal workings.

> In the decades after World Wars I and II, American higher education increasingly competed, ferociously, egocentrically, narcissistically, for institutional prestige and material resources. Almost single-mindedly, pursuing their self-centered goals, they increasingly concentrated on essentially scholastic, inside-the-academy problems and conflicts rather than on the very hard, very complex problems involved in helping American society realize the democratic promise of American life for all Americans. (9)

So, for much of history, universities didn't bother much.

Not all historical relationships between universities and communities were hostile or aloof, however. Positive examples abound. The Land Grant College Act (1862) facilitated the development of agricultural and mechanical education, as well as other areas, for the middle and working classes. In 1889, the University of Chicago opened Hull House, a university-community partnership to help the low-income population of Chicago's West Side. When Seth Lowe was president of Columbia University, he encouraged faculty and students to become involved in community work (Harkavy). And in Northfield, Norwegian immigrant farmers, pastors and others founded St. Olaf as an institution of "higher education for the practical life" (Farrell). Your institutions no doubt also have important stories. So, if we are not hostile, and are now less indifferent, *must* we engage? Do we *need* to bother? Some think perhaps soon we won't!

Might the very future of town/gown as a relationship be in doubt? Online programs such as at the University of Phoenix hardly rely on geographical presence. Many universities have distance education courses via television and the internet. Maybe the college student of the future will be sitting at his or her personal computer miles from a college campus. Maybe the traditional commencement ceremony will be gone as students graduate year around. However, many leaders still stress the continuing value of traditional learning and teaching methods at brick and mortar places. So far, ELCA colleges do, too. Are there some reasons now why we do/should connect with our geographical communities? I suggest many reasons for college engagement with the community are relevant; reasons can be practical, educational, ecological, moral and theological.

Engagement is practical

We can give back in response to our large footprints. This footprint concept is described by Ronald Kysiak. "Although universities bring great prestige to a community, many citizens perceive them solely as large, powerful, non-taxpaying entities that soak up city services and provide little in return." (50) A college can generate housing, security, political, and tax issues. Off-campus parties and the excessive noise and public drunkenness associated with them can create town-gown animosity. Student voting can cause local political conflicts. In 2004, students at Hamilton College were turned away from the polls by election board officials in Utica, NY. Officials claimed that only permanent residents of the county could register to vote there, and that a college dorm does not meet this criterion. The question of jurisdiction for college security and local law enforcement can be an issue when students live off campus. And, as universities expand, more land is removed from property tax rolls. Our footprints can be large and deep.

The "engaged university" is a recent term used by Campus Compact to describe community partnerships and joint planning with city officials. In the case of St. Olaf and Northfield, the college paid for purchase of a tall ladder truck with the fire department so it could reach the top floor of our residence hall,

the highest building in the community. Both Northfield colleges contribute money annually to the Northfield Community Investment Fund. Our Dean of Students meets regularly with neighbors who want to discuss student housing concerns. Ameliorating the effects of our footprints is important, but what about the reason we exist?

Engagement is educational

Experiential learning for students is another reason we should engage the local community. An AAC&U report in 1991 on *The Challenge of Connected Learning* says "students come into the academic 'home' not to become permanent residents, but to be nurtured and supported as they develop the capabilities to enter, negotiate, and make connections across communities … inside and out of the academy" (qtd. in Dalgaard 7).

Social work history provides an illustration of experiential learning. As the governing council of the Charity Organization Society in London was poised to merge with the institution that would become London School of Economics, their written report stated:

> By a strange perversity … sociologists and economists are frequently led to deal with questions of social science without acquiring at first hand a careful and consistent knowledge of the facts and conditions of personal and social life in the daily competition and struggle of the common people, the poor, the very poor, who form a large part of the population. (Qtd. in Kendall 72)

We need to know what is happening in our community to better enable our students to learn and to apply their knowledge. This need to know has hatched a whole arena of scholarship, new departments at our colleges, and funding resources like the Lilly Endowment. Time limits my ability to further develop this reason for engagement here, but others have done important work on this.

Engagement is ecological

My colleague Dr. Mary Titus calls this the "mindful attention to place." Consider the following: St. Olaf is on Manitou Heights, an Anishinaabe word meaning "spirit," and "Gitche Manitou" means "Great Spirit." We sit on the Jordan aquifer. It's windy on the hill and we are surrounded by farms, rapidly giving way to development in our ex-urban environment. At St. Olaf, the attention to sustainability is growing exponentially, with a new wind turbine and a new science building that will be green, among other initiatives. Our former president, Mark U. Edwards, said, "The experience of community at a Lutheran college should help students develop a sense of the world's true interdependence of both people and the rest of creation." (226) At our colleges, we need to prepare students for citizenship and leadership, including care and nurturing of our physical location.

Engagement is moral

We can, and should, provide genuine helping in our community. The Lutheran Educational Conference of North America recently surveyed thousands of graduates of both Lutheran colleges and public university graduates. Findings indicated that students at ELCA colleges benefited from an emphasis on values and ethics, and that college helped them develop a sense of purpose in life. I wonder if we've ever surveyed our local communities—leaders of organizations, townspeople of all ages and interests and human differences—about whether and how much we have "helped" them? I think it would be interesting to find out! In Northfield, my sense is that there has been genuine help provided over the one-hundred thirty-four years of our existence. While it is difficult to quantify the friendships between college students and seniors in the retirement centers, among the college students and the children needing mentors, in the churches where students teach Sunday school and help with youth groups, I think we can, do, and should provide genuine help in our communities.

Finally, engagement is theological

Location, location, location is our vocation! The Lutheran conception of vocation as connection to community is found in many places, among them are:

- *Our Calling in Education*, the social statement on education of the ELCA, which says, "Vocation involves God's saving call to us in Baptism and life lived in joyful response to this call. In Jesus Christ we are loved by a gracious God who frees us to love our neighbor and promote the common good; in gratitude for God's love we live out our vocation in our places of responsibility in our daily life—home congregation, workplace, neighborhood, nation, and global society." (Task Force)
- the ELCA Higher Education theme "equipping people to practice their callings under the Gospel for the sake of the world"; and
- the Luther Seminary Centered Life in the Center for Life-long Learning website that states that we are called, "… by God to God … to daily tasks and duty…

to use [our] unique strengths and abilities." We are called to all arenas of life ... "home in how [we] love, care for, and sustain those who live with or visit [us] there ... work in doing whatever [we] do in the way that best serves and supports others ... community [in] seeking the common good in neighborhoods, schools and elections.... To paraphrase Martin Luther: Wherever you are, there you are called. Only if you absolutely cannot serve God there, must you seek another place." (Calling: The Basics)

We in church colleges have this responsibility to live out our vocations where we are. There *are* reasons to bother**.** So, we start with our communities.

What and Who is Our Local Community?

Northfield was founded by John North, a pioneer statesman who was in the legislature of the territory and wrote the legislation that resulted in the charter for the University of Minnesota. He also founded Riverside, CA. We have 17,000 people, on the full socio-economic scale, with higher levels of education than many small communities. We have an active, engaged citizenry. We have an estimated 1,000 permanent Latino residents, and we have a protected, but polluted river. Our identifiable, quaint downtown is threatened by development out on the highway. And, we have 5,000 or so college students ready and eager to make a difference. Our organizational riches include churches, youth organizations, charitable foundations, civic and cultural organizations (e.g. Citizens for a Quieter Northfield, Defeat of Jesse James Days), health and social services, and schools and colleges. Numerous resources, strengths and needs. We must know our own communities. But, where to start? If we look carefully, such knowing is already present.

What Does Local Engagement Look Like?

It would only take a couple minutes in conversation with a colleague at this conference to learn about an initiative between another college and its community. These initiatives can include volunteering one time, volunteering over many months or years, experiential learning (service learning, practicums, clinicals, labs), and civic engagement (we've started a college student internship with the League of Women Voters and have work-study options in helping capacities like tutoring). While these imply campus *to* community; many initiatives also bring community *to* campus. You can think of other examples.

It was fun for me to view web sites of some of our colleges and universities. I would have liked to peruse all of them to see your community connections, but did not have enough time. Here's a sample of what I found in just *one* arena of engagement—community service.

Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA

The Center for Public Service celebrates the full partnership of the surrounding community, recognizing that in order for service and civic engagement to be responsive to community needs, participants must fully embrace their role as members of an on-going dialogue about impact and implications, as well as respect the complexity of the social fabric, the give and take of human endeavor.

Newberry College, Newberry, SC

The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences (esp. Mike Beggs, Religion) has courses in community service, among them *Service and Reflection* ... "an examination of the relationship between community service and contemporary thought. Literary, philosophical, political and sociological texts are examined to assist in the moral and social reflection about serving others."

Wagner College, Staten Island, NY

Curriculum named *The Wagner Plan* or the Practical Liberal Arts: Reading, Writing & Doing. *The Civic Engagement Certificate Program* exists to show students how they can bridge their academic life with the economic realities of the communities they serve. It helps immerse students into the Staten Island community by giving them access to different community organizations such as *Project Hospitality* and the African Refugee Center, and combines volunteer work with an academic curriculum.

Augustana College, Rock Island, IL

The *Center for Vocational Reflection* helps students recognize who they are called to be. Vocation/Calling is realized when one's skills, gifts, and talents combine with one's passions to meet the needs of the community.

What *Should* Engagement Look Like?

"Should" implies an ethical commitment. I'm convinced this is an ethical matter, and I hope you are also. Here's an excerpt from the St. Olaf website: "Welcome, Northfielders! St. Olaf College is proud to be a part of the Northfield community—and invite you to take advantage of having a college as your neighbor, too." David Gonnerman in our Communications office started a

piece called *Posten*. Three times per academic year he sends out a newsletter with a calendar of events to 11,000 "neighbors" of the College. That's a good start.

Here is my recipe for engagement: *Passionate* + *Ethical* + *Reflective***.**

First … Passionate

You need to want to do it. This will help overcome many challenges and barriers to engagement locally. What do you care about? What opportunities in your community match your interests? When you talk about the engagement with your community, do your eyes light up? Can you see that something is changing for the better? How might you tie that to your work at the college? Start small, for sure, but have it really address your own dream or passions so you are careful about it and stay with it. Maybe there is a little park near your campus that you pass every day in your car, and you'd like to see that it stays as colorful as possible with flowers. Maybe your parents have died and you want to spend time with older people regularly.

Next … Ethical

You need to be clear about your passions, and then make certain those fit with the community or are at least not at odds with what is happening. One of my biggest soap box issues is the unleashing of lots of *do-gooder* students, faculty, and staff on an unsuspecting community. Every time St. Olaf has a new initiative for working with the community, I raise my voice (some think I'm a pest, I'm certain). Doing good is not enough; doing good must be done well—with knowledge, skill and ethics. Several elements are crucial to ethical college/community engagement. I've listed seven:

Needed

In social work, we teach about the planned change process, not unlike change processes in many disciplines. To help students remember this, my colleague has among her Lennox Rules of Practice: *Intervention begins at R*. This means that if the process of change follows the alphabet, introductions and data-gathering start at *A,* assessment of need and planning are at about *H,* and intervention doesn't occur until about *R*. We shouldn't jump in and *do* before we know there is a need. Who says there is a need? Is it the people on the ground or those in positions of power and influence? What does the need look like? Who is defining it?

Welcomed

Even when a need is carefully assessed and understood, engagement might not be welcome. It's clear that the Latino youth in Northfield need to be educated. One way our community set about addressing that need was to motivate students to go on to higher education in the United States. Do they *all* want that? While many do, some want to get married and raise a family, some want to return to Mexico, some want to serve in the military.

Mutual

Why didn't I title this talk "The Local Community Engaging the College"? What initiatives come *from* the community *to* our institutions? I suspect you could think of many instances where this happened. In Northfield, our social work senior projects often respond to requests from the community. For instance, *Familias en Accion,* a group of local teachers, community organizers, and Latino youth, teach our students about reality in the public schools while our students carry out useful evaluation research for grant-writing purposes.

Long-term

I don't know what is worse, not engaging at all, or engaging haphazardly and short term. There are instances where short-term engagement is the only way … voter registration efforts before an election, one-time clean up after a tornado. However, many efforts to connect college and community start and then stop, leaving behind resentment and mistrust. This can affect later efforts, sometimes unbeknownst to the new engager. Some examples? The after school tutoring that falls apart when finals or spring break means our students do not attend; or, a service learning requirement in a course that is taught by a one year adjunct. Helping a little bit and raising hopes and expectations—then leaving or moving on to something more sexy and exciting. HIV/AIDS is off the radar in local communities because it isn't as interesting as HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Long term requires commitment and patience and even sometimes a written agreement and a paid person (or at least a permanent structure, like St. Olaf's student-run Volunteer Network).

Attentive to diversity

I'm an extrovert and the oldest child of five. I talk, loudly and directly. I am a "J" on the Meyers Briggs Personality Inventory. I like timelines, deadlines, and outlines. It is crucial to pay attention to diverse styles of work and diverse priorities. We *must* attend to differences in ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, religion, and other forms of difference in human beings. This is a soapbox of mine. "I want to help the Latino community in Northfield" is a phrase I hear a lot on campus. This community has sub-groups, though many do come from a certain area of Mexico. They are Catholic or evangelical. They speak Spanish and English with variable fluency. Some are undocumented, with families living in two countries. Many have worked in agriculture or factories all their lives. Some have high school education, others have primary school only. Some are immigrants; others

are first or second generation. They are mainly young and largely male (though this is changing). What does this mean for helping from our students, faculty, and staff who are primarily white, citizens, educated, middle or upper-class? Who speak English and perhaps are studying Greek?

A little excerpt from Wikipedia:

> … in medieval times, many university students were foreigners with exotic manners and dress who spoke and wrote Latin, the *lingua franca* 96of medieval higher education. Students often couldn't speak the local dialect, and most uneducated townspeople spoke no Latin. The language barrier and the cultural differences did nothing to improve relations between scholars and townspeople. The tenor of town-gown relations became a matter of arrogance on the one hand and resentment on the other.

Does this "strangeness"—both ways—between students and townspeople cause concerns in our communities? Must we be just like those with whom we engage? Not at all. My father taught me a valuable lesson. We don't have to be the same, but can work alongside people and learn from our differences.

Strengths-based

Engagement is often problem-based. In social work, we teach our students to first ask clients: "How do you see your future? What do you want to have happen? What's helping you live your life well?" We should not be surprised that even the most grief-stricken parent or the person with severe disabilities or the runaway with HIV has something positive happening. Maybe it's only that she got up and got dressed that morning. There are strengths in every situation, and our engagement is made easier when we look for them, capitalize on them, and help them mature. For an example, one senior recently was asked by the agency to design a financial information class for clients who were low-income. The agency said, "Our clients can't handle their money; they are in debt and spend foolishly" … PROBLEM. She re-framed it by saying, "they work hard, send money home" … STRENGTHS. The end result? The offered a class on managing money when the clients wanted it, with child care and transportation provided.

Respectful

Perhaps I should have put this first. At Olaf it's difficult, as we "come down" from the Hill to "help." We need humility. We need respect and care for those with whom we interact. We need to see everyone as children of God. We must respect the dignity of those served. Octavia Hill, another reformer in England who was a founder of the social work profession, said at the outset of her crusade to improve tenement housing for the poor in London that a major goal was to help people help themselves "… to believe in the value and dignity of even the most bedraggled and degraded of her tenants." (Kendall 13)

Last … Reflective

British social work educators teach "reflective practice." They routinely take time out in their work place to reflect actively and thoroughly on what they are doing. Who cares? What matters? Does it work? We need to be evaluating our collaborations with the community and be open to changing what we do. This can be difficult when we get set in our ways. We need to be open to evaluation, adaptation, and even (can we imagine!), termination of the effort (the fastest way to get action is for someone to say "let's just quit this" or "what happens if we just stop this tomorrow?"). Such conversation should be continuous and reciprocal. In 2001 the Task Force on Experiential Education at St. Olaf College broadly defined experiential education as the *study, action and reflection* of a "hands on" experience. The importance of *reflection* on our actions in the community was directly influenced by the writings of John Dewey and of Paolo Freire. Experiential education owes them a debt of gratitude.

So, the Best Engagement is Passionate, Ethical and Reflective

Ernest Boyer took the importance of engagement to a higher level when he made the case that the mandated mission of higher education is the "scholarship of engagement." He means

> connecting the rich resources of the university to our pressing social, civic, and ethical problems, to our children to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities … ultimately the scholarship of engagement also means creating a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other. (21)

We as faculty members need to view this work as scholarly, as important, and as weighty as other types of research, writing, and scholarly activity in our tenure and promotion decisions. A wonderful resource on practical aspects of community-college engagement, the "how to," is *The Promise of Partnerships: Tapping into the College as a Community Asset* by Scheibel, Bowley, and Jones (2005).

Conclusions

> In 1876, Daniel C. Gilman, the first president of John Hopkins University, expressed the hope that American universities would one day, "make for less misery among the poor, less ignorance in the schools, less bigotry in the temple, less suffering in the hospital, less fraud in business and less folly in politics." (Martin 3)

I would pose *this* question for the future of ELCA colleges and universities, **"How do we link the core mission of colleges—teaching, research and service—to help local communities?"** One answer, from Dr. Harkavy, is "to advance knowledge through service ... to improve human welfare. Service which does not seek to deeply improve the quality of life in the local community can become a hollow activity failing to contribute to citizenship and offering communities false, unfulfilling promises." (par.7)

My challenge to you today is to leave this conference with a promise to incorporate something from your local community, whether large or small, into your academic or administrative work. If you teach history at Carthage, give an assignment to bring to class one historical fact from the city of Kenosha. If you teach music, require your students to attend one concert in the Lindsborg public schools; better yet, make it possible for local school children to attend a concert at Bethany. If you teach theology at Texas Lutheran, have students count the number of churches in Seguin and discuss the array of theological stances present among them and how those traditions came to be in your community. If you work in Dana's administration, find out how many Blair residents are employed who live within two miles of campus. If you are in student services at Wittenberg, check when college last had a town/gown committee to discuss relationships in Springfield.

I believe that God intends us to live in community. For we who teach and work in Lutheran institutions, that means not only our own *campus* communities provide context for service, but also those communities that *surround* our campuses. These are the communities in which we live, shop, worship, and play, as well as work. It's not a bother to bother. It's an honor, a privilege, and a calling.

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R. GUY ERWIN

Lutheran Higher Education in Global Context: Called to Serve the World

A Diverse and Changing World

No one can deny that we live in what our Lutheran college and university mission statements like to call a "diverse and changing world." For some, even in the developed world, "diversity and change" have gone from being exciting to being somewhat menacing words: the growing gap between North and South, rich and poor; the rise of religious fundamentalisms and intractable ethnic and tribal hatred; the despoiling of the earth's natural resources; and the ongoing spread and persistence of epidemic disease—all these have challenged the optimism of many that the end of the Cold War would usher in a time of global progress and peace. At no point in human history has it been more true than it is now that what happens in one country or on one continent affects us all—and the Internet ties it all together in a web of instant news, potent images, and an overwhelming flood of undigested information.

If there was ever a time in which the qualities inherent in a liberal education would seem to be essential to the world's peace and prosperity, it is now. By that we mean an education that values critical thinking, the ability to communicate accurately and effectively, and the skill of judging and using information so as to create new knowledge—the kind of education the colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America pride themselves on being able to provide for our students. This is a "meaning-giving" education, not just a set of usable skills. Lutheran colleges and universities have an additional value to add to the traditional liberal education, however: the idea of "vocation" as the calling to a useful and meaningful life, one oriented toward the wellbeing of one's neighbors. That most ELCA colleges and universities aspire to offer their students such an education is a given. But who is the "neighbor" whose wellbeing we serve? How might we better and more consciously connect our vocation as Lutheran educators with our vocation to be responsible global citizens, and orient our students toward service to the world?

Luther, Vocation, and Education

> *Thesis One: The vocation of a Lutheran college is to live out its educational mission in a consciously service-oriented way, and the vocation of Lutheran educators is to model for and to teach their students the value of a life lived in relationship with others and in service to one's neighbor.*

This first thesis, that the vocation of a Lutheran college or university is to live out its mission in a service-oriented way, is a commonplace of our educational mission. Every ELCA institution of higher learning expresses this ideal in one way or another in its mission or vision statement; many of our institutions have focused programs within them that seek to define and apply this vocational ideal to the education they provide their students. The ELCA also sponsors regular reflection on this common ideal in the form of annual "Vocation of a Lutheran College" conferences

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such as the one at Augustana College in Illinois that is the immediate occasion for these reflections.

Seasoned Lutheran educators, particularly those who have attended a number of these regular conferences, know already in broad terms how Martin Luther's impact on what we in Lutheran contexts call vocation has determined the language for our conversations about the mission and calling of Lutheran higher education. But one of the primary purposes of these conferences is also to initiate those who are new to Lutheran higher education, or at least new to this vocation conversation, into the mysteries of what can seem like a somewhat bewildering special understanding of commonplace terms. Thus it makes sense to begin with a summary of what Martin Luther's thought has to contribute to the question of the vocation of a Lutheran college again as we consider what it means for our institutions to consider "Engaging the World."

Luther developed his understanding of vocation in the context of his break from Rome. He felt that the church of his day, both in its teaching and its practice, had obscured the essential message communicated in the life and teaching of Jesus and recorded in Scripture. This essential message can be expressed as a pair of realities that always exist in tension with one another: the loving kindness and mercy of God vs. the essential selfishness of the human person. (Wingren)

The particular area in which Luther saw this understanding obscured by the Christian authorities of his day was in two ways: the claim of the church to be able to change the equation by external action; and theologically, by the teaching that in some way it was possible for humans to cooperate with and build upon God's grace, thus contributing meaningfully to their own salvation. The first of these Luther saw as a false claim to a non-existent power, easily (and in the case of the selling of indulgences) egregiously abused; the latter, in Luther's view, led to a false confidence on the part of Christians that their actions, good works, and lifestyle choices could have an effect on the divine judgment all humans faced. A special focus of Luther's disdain was the idea that some persons in society, by dint of the religious status they enjoyed (as monks, nuns, or priests) were leading lives inherently more pleasing to God than were ordinary lay Christians, however devout.

It is in this connection that Luther's mature understanding of vocation must be understood, as an attempt to describe rightly the relationship of humans to God and to each other in a way consistent with Luther's Gospel understanding of human egocentricity and divine mercy.

For Luther, vocation (*vocatio* or *Beruf*) has three dimensions or definitions: first, the relationship of the human to God (God calls all persons to repentance and offers forgiveness and mercy); second, the relationship of humans to each other in daily life and work (giving shape to his idea of how Christians should live and understand their lives in community); and third, as the special "call" to public ministry—in traditional Catholic understanding, a call to the priesthood or consecrated religious life. It is this final definition that is probably best known to non-Lutherans, but for Luther it is by far the narrowest and least important. On the other side, the first definition is broad and basic to Christian belief. It is the second definition with which we will concern ourselves here, and which has come to be known as "Luther's doctrine of vocation."

It should be emphasized that for Luther all human freedom and responsibility and goodness are rooted in the prior love of God for a rebellious humanity, and the Luther never speaks of vocation outside a Christian context. This does not mean, however, that the term and its meaning cannot be understood or valued outside the Christian community and in a pluralist or even secular society.

Luther sees humans not as autonomous entities, but as essentially relational beings. Their primary relationship is—of course—to God, who created all things and loves all that has been created; the secondary relationship of humans is that to other human beings. It is in this second set of relationships that Luther develops his mature concept of vocation, and it is the cornerstone of his understanding of the Christian life.

"It should be emphasized that for Luther all human freedom and responsibility and goodness are rooted in the prior love of God for a rebellious humanity."

Luther is clear that all humans stand (from birth to death) in relationship with other humans. Quite literally, no man is an island. The relationships of humans to each other can be described as natural (based in the order of creation) or social (determined by human needs and desires). Luther believed that these social relationships, in turn, were expressed in three "realms" of existence: the ecclesial, the political, and the economic. These were in turn defined as church, government, and family. In the first, churchly realm, every Christian person is a member of the church, but within it some are called to leadership as clergy and the rest are laypeople. In the second "realm" belong the duties and relationships of political life: for Luther, this meant the duty of subjects to their rulers and of rulers to their subjects. In our time this could be

seen by rough analogy to involve the relationship of citizens/voters to politicians/officeholders. In the third "realm" that of "economy" or family, Luther explains that one is either parent or child, husband or wife, master or servant. In twenty-first century perspective Luther's schema seems simplistic and quaint, but the essence of the concept is not in his social typology but in his insight that humans live out their lives and callings in a variety of ways, relating to others in differing ways but all at the same time and in a layered way. One is never just "one thing" but may be many: parent and child at the same time, and a clergyperson or magistrate as well.

One important relationship, however—that of teacher to pupil—is not clearly placed in Luther's schematic, as it has elements of all three of the prior sets of relationships: teaching at a primary level was in Luther's time a church function, financed by the city government, and the teacher exercised both an official and a quasi-parental authority over the pupil. Even in Luther's own time, the realities on the ground did not always correspond to the conceptual frameworks he constructed.

But the key to this is that Luther understands human life relationally, not individualistically. His is an ethic of relationship, of connectedness, and of service to neighbor. Modern concepts of self-fulfillment or freedom of vocational choice were unknown to him, but the kernel remains useable: each human life is lived out in relationship, and when it is lived well, it benefits others. One of the places Luther makes this most clear is in his Small and Large Catechisms of 1529, in which he turns the "shalt not" prohibitions of the Decalogue on their heads and transforms them into positive rules for constructive life in community. Through Luther's lens, the commandment not to murder becomes an instruction to help one's neighbor flourish through concern for the neighbor's wellbeing and protection of the neighbor's interests. "Thou shalt not kill" thus becomes a positive obligation to look out for one another.

Luther understands vocation as a way of seeing oneself as a responsible agent imbedded in a community, one whose life should be lived in awareness of its impact on others and in charitable disposition toward others. If each of us lives with others in mind, Luther believed, society would be harmonious, hunger and misery and loneliness would vanish, and peace would prevail. But even Luther understood that this was an unattainable ideal—that human pursuit of self-interest militated constantly against such altruism and idealism. But even so, Luther believed people should try to act according to his principles of neighbor-love: to try and fail was perhaps inevitable, to fail to try another form of self-indulgence. Life is lived in-between the ideal and the attainable. And when individuals or groups fail to live up to this noble challenge, there are always the rules and the rulers to keep order—hence the three "realms" of human authority and hierarchy.

Even in his own lifetime Luther had reason to be disillusioned about human self-interestedness. The princes who protected him and his message plundered their lands; the magistrates who opened up the church then refused to pay the preachers. But Luther never abandoned the larger principle, that humans are called to live their lives and practice their livelihoods within an ethical framework defined by relationships and mutual responsibility. This vocational ideal is one that still inspires and motivates Lutherans and Lutheran institutions, not least of all our educational institutions. Meetings such as this recurring one and efforts on many of our campuses have helped redefine and revive ideas of vocation in relation both to our educational work and the professional lives of our students. One might even say that, now in the second decade of such a vocational revival, that our Lutheran colleges and universities have a clearer understanding of their vocation and its implications than at any earlier point in their history. This is now more than ever a clearly articulated part of our common calling as Lutheran educators, whether we are Lutherans or not or even religious believers.

> "His is an ethic of relationship."

There are two significant ways in which Luther's idea of vocation corresponds with and connects to his understanding of the importance of education: first, in Luther's firm belief that education for all people is an underpinning of stable, prosperous, Godly communities; and second, in the particular vocation of educators to be providers and conduits of learning, what Luther would call a most precious and essential good for society. Educators, second only to clergy, for Luther combine two goods: the conscientious performance of their duties is a good in itself, and the learning they transmit and inspire empowers others to live out their vocations more fully.

That Luther's attitude toward education in his own time has shaped our modern understanding, and that his development of a powerful and appealing doctrine of "vocation" as definitive of a Christian's life and work has had a deep impact on the way Lutherans and Lutheran institutions understand their meaning and their task, goes almost without saying. What is less obvious, however, is whether or to what degree these two perspectives from Luther are well and consistently understood. Luther's insights are of limited usefulness if there is not a clear, shared understanding of what they are and what they mean. Part of the purpose of a "Vocation of a Lutheran College" conference is to bring us back again to these basic issues, that

we may all fruitfully engage in reflection and conversation from a common starting point. Martin Luther himself was, both in self-understanding and effect, an educator. From his professor's chair, he articulated, developed and taught ideas both new and old, including many that profoundly changed the attitudes of his hearers, and which, relayed by retelling or by publications throughout Germany and Europe, permanently altered the world in which he lived. From the very beginning of Luther's career as a critic of church conditions and an advocate for a simpler, more direct, more honest teaching of the Christian faith, he understood the church's main duty to be to teach the faithful. That Christians are to be taught, and taught rightly—*docendi sunt Christiani*—was a foundational principle of Luther's entire reforming program, articulated already in his famous *Ninety-five Theses* of 1517, the first battle cry of the Reformation (Theses 42-43, 45-51: WA 6, 404-5; LW 44, 124).

Luther's personal experience led him to see the world in which he lived as a place of darkness and ignorance, into which the light of divine truth and revelation could break in and affect transformation. What he knew to be true, Luther believed, must also be taught if it is to be effective in the world.[1] This he saw not only as his own duty, but that of all preachers and teachers at every level of instruction from parish priests teaching catechism to illiterate children and adults on the one end of the spectrum, to (on the other end) university professors teaching doctoral students and preparing tomorrow's teachers. Luther believed—correctly—that the conventional authorities of church hierarchy and dogmatic theologians were arrayed against him, armed with systems of thought that could not be questioned and structures of power that would be difficult to overcome. But he even more firmly believed that the sources of truth upon which he relied: conscience, reason, and—most of all—Holy Scripture, were ones with which he could challenge the seemingly irresistible forces of reaction. (Heidelberg Disputation, 1518: WA 1, XXX; LW 31, 39-58)

In his earliest writings that refer to education, Luther calls for a complete reform of learning in every school and in every subject, replacing the neo-Aristotelianism that had become canonical in his time with a Scriptural perspective. From our modern perspective, this could seem like the simple replacement of one dogmatic system with another, but in sixteenth century context this was a great step forward, and opened the door to a more historically aware, more empirical, more genuinely reality-based approach to truth and learning than had been the case before. But Luther's contribution to modern education does not chiefly lie in his method or his hermeneutic, or (outside theology) even to his understanding of revelation, but in the broader area of the purposes and reach of education. Luther changed his world not just through the content of what he taught, but also in his firm belief that it was the right of each person to at least a rudimentary education, and his advocacy of public schools for both male and female children. In his famous 1530 sermon *On Keeping Children in School* (LW 46, 213-58), Luther argued that the welfare of society depended on widespread—if by modern standards rudimentary—public education.

Luther's approach was a pragmatic one, and motivated by both practical and religious impulses: first, to provide for a stable and prosperous society, in which each person is fully trained to a productive form of work; and, second, to give all people the ability to read the Bible for themselves. Luther was more confident at the beginning of his career that such widespread Bible reading would lead to a consensus on the basics of Christian faith and life than he was later, and we know now just how elusive such consensus is.

Of what usefulness is Luther's understanding of education to us as twenty-first century people? Not very much, if one considers it to be teaching Luther's curriculum or using Luther's pedagogy. We have come a long way in educational theory and practice in five hundred years. But what might be seen as enduringly valuable in Luther's experience are a few basic concepts: first, that literacy is basic to all other learning, and that the reading and comparison of texts and the ideas they contain is the beginning of critical thinking; second, that being able effectively to communicate what one has learned, both in spoken and written form, is essential to the advancement of knowledge; and third, that the education each person needs to exercise his or her vocation fully is a basic right and a prerequisite for a just society.

The Global Implications

> *Thesis Two: Love of neighbor, the heart of Luther's definition of vocation as living a life of usefulness and service, must be understood in the twenty-first century situation to have global dimensions.*

Luther's answer to the question "Who is my neighbor?" was firmly rooted in his sense of each individual's limited range of influence and agency. In pre- and early modern societies of a rigid hierarchical sort, the free movement and action of individuals was dependent on their wealth and social status, and the twin modern ideas of "upward mobility" and "freedom of action" were not yet strongly developed, even though signs of them can be seen already in the sixteenth century. The sense of individual opportunity and vocational autonomy that is so strongly expressed in the developed world today would not have been understood or recognized by Luther's contemporaries, who would have been astounded by the ease at which old social boundaries can now be crossed.

Today, a shrinking world has coupled this sense of individual agency with a wider acquaintance with the world and the global situation. The ease of travel, the luxury of surplus wealth, and the concept of recreational time in the developed world, and more universal education and pervasive media of communication everywhere on earth, enable most of the world's citizens to know more of places and peoples on the far side of the globe than most people in Luther's day would ever have known of what lay beyond their own geographical horizon a few miles away. And with knowledge comes responsibility; with familiarity comes community.

In yet another dimension, the increasingly interdependent global economic system also binds people together in a common network of needs and goods. "Globalism" is the basic concept describing this phenomenon, and deals with the reality of the world's interconnectedness. Globalism is not a value-neutral term to some who see the interconnectedness itself as inherently dangerous, but the term is not politically loaded to the same degree as "globalization," which has come for many to be seen as the negative outgrowth of globalism. Globalization, in its most neutral sense, describes the phenomenon of rapidly growing globalism, particularly in the area of economic development and resource exploitation. Globalization is often understood negatively; the belief among its ardent proponents that the free market alone should determine globalization's speed and dimensions has provoked fierce opposition among those who take a humanitarian perspective and understand the increasingly enmeshed global economy as an aggrandizement of the already rich developed world at the expense of the already disadvantaged developing world. For the purposes of this reflection, I will use "globalism" as a neutral term describing a commitment to seeing and understanding the interconnectedness of humans and their societies.

In the realities of an increasingly well-informed world population and an increasingly interconnected world economy, the question "Who is my neighbor?" quickly and convincingly requires a global answer. In the new "flat world" of globalism, mutual responsibility among humans (in Luther's sense of service to neighbor) and common responsibility for care of the earth become both realities and challenging duties. The answer to the question becomes "Everyone is my neighbor; the earth is our common responsibility."

Lutheran Colleges and Their Global Commitments

> *Thesis Three: A Lutheran college best fulfills its vocation when it fosters a global perspective in its community, its curriculum and its ethos, together with a respect for difference and a sense of the common humanity of all peoples.*

How do our Lutheran colleges and universities live out their vocations to serve the world and to educate students who understand their own vocations in a global sense? Part of what should come out of a conference devoted to "Engaging the World" is a sharing of some of our varied institutional understandings, commitments, and experiences—and information about how global issues are considered and global perspectives manifested on each of our campuses.

In considering how the ELCA's colleges and universities each reflect a commitment to global perspectives, it seemed useful to do a quick study of our institutions' level of public commitment to such perspectives and emphases. As one gauge of commitment in principle to globalist understandings in our Lutheran institutions, one might usefully begin by examining the mission statements of our twenty-eight ELCA colleges and universities for indications of their self-understanding in this regard. In doing so, one will be struck by the frequency and consistency with which ELCA institutions of higher learning have articulated a commitment to a globalist understanding of vocation, primarily as an outcome of the education they offer their students. My own institution's mission statement has as a key part of its mission the goal of educating "leaders for a global society."[2] Very often, our institutions claim to want to prepare their students "for a diverse and changing world."[3] The idea of preparation of students to face global challenges or to serve the world were widespread enough among our college and university missions as to be almost commonplace—about two-thirds of ELCA colleges and universities have some specific language about this in their mission statements. Mission statements being what they are, naturally very few go into specifics about how this is to be done.

To reach a higher level of detail as to the public commitment among ELCA institutions to globalist perspectives, a casual survey can reveal how these institutions communicate, explicitly or implicitly, a commitment to globalist goals or perspectives on what is now their most potent marketing and recruitment tool—their websites. California Lutheran is typical in this regard as having come to see its website as its principal "front door" for prospective students, their parents, alumni, and many other constituencies and audiences. How well do our schools' websites reflect a global perspective in the education our institutions promise? To gauge this, I looked on each homepage for any evidence in words or images that that particular college valued a globalist approach enough to make it part of their basic marketing.[4] Very few did, at least in terms of what appears on the "front

page"—the initial homepage. This is not of course any kind of indication of the institution's ultimate commitment to global perspectives or study abroad or anything else—just that for whatever reasons, this commitment is not often clear from the first and most immediate impression. The institutions that did have some global or international dimension to their homepages (five in total) showed study abroad programs, international studies majors or emphases, or a conspicuous welcome to prospective international students.[5] I did not include the study of foreign languages in and of themselves, nor did I consider "heritage programs" connecting the college to the nationality of its Swedish, Danish, Finnish or other European founders. A look at a few of these heritage links convinced me that they were mostly historical in nature and did not reflect a future-oriented globalist approach. I also counted two institutions which had no explicit mention of international or global emphases, but which adorned their homepages with images of students or alumni in obviously foreign settings.

Because so few of our institutions (only five out of twenty-eight) had a visible connection to the wider world on their homepages, I then decided to go a step deeper, and clicked on each of the available buttons or tabs on each of the ELCA college and university homepages. This tedious exercise revealed, as I expected, that most of our schools have study abroad programs of some kind, many expect or hope that international students will apply and enroll, and some have international studies or other interdisciplinary majors, programs, or institutes. Deeper than this I did not go, but from what I understand from expert colleagues about the patience of the average web-searcher, going to the third level of information is very unusual for a casual search. Those further treasures remain buried, except in the case of the very determined seeker.

The results of such a superficial survey cannot bear the weight of much analysis, but I did think that it was revealing that for whatever reasons, fairly few of our institutions have put global perspectives at the public center of what they do. This omission is set in higher relief by the two institutions that both do so and tell you about it on their website: Pacific Lutheran University and Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. Pacific Lutheran's website, in particular, is very internationalist and highly attractive. One other particular case worth mentioning is that of Waldorf College in Forest City, IA. Waldorf has the conventional commitment to global perspectives in its mission statement and on its webpage, but it also goes a very concrete step further by stressing its college goal to have at least fifteen percent of its enrollment be international students. Both in their mission statement and on their webpage this international commitment is made very clear. I don't know to what degree this is an aspiration or a reality, but Waldorf is unique among ELCA colleges in the emphasis it places on this goal.

In all of this I applied the charitable principle that the presence of something was more positively a sign of commitment than the absence of it was a sign of indifference. Nonetheless, it was interesting to me that a small number of our institutions (two to be precise, which I will not identify) had no apparent interest in communicating any international or global interests or commitments either in their mission statements or on the first two levels of their webpage.

The Challenge to Lutheran Colleges

It should be apparent by this point that an important future task for our ELCA colleges and universities in realizing their vocation as Lutheran institutions is the challenge of globalizing their perspectives, their communities, and their curricula. The benefits to our world, our society, and our students seem obvious. But how can this be done? What are the risks?

First, the colleges and universities of the ELCA have much to learn from each other. Several of our institutions have long been highly regarded for their internationalist emphasis, particularly in their study abroad programs and in their teaching of foreign languages. Both of these are essential aspects of a globalist emphasis in higher education, but where the first—study abroad—has grown in popularity among students and in institutional support, the second—the study of languages—is (at least anecdotally) threatened by the tendency on some campuses to allocate resources to disciplines with large numbers of "majors," thereby undermining departments with small enrollments but a disproportional role in maintaining the "liberal arts." How, in the Internet age of rapid communication, do we better engage our students in the slow discipline of foreign language acquisition? Educating globally without teaching every student basic competence in a second language is to expect the world to encounter the student on his or her own terms, in English, and seems (to this writer at least) less globalist than colonialist in effect.

Second, ELCA colleges and universities (to the degree that they take seriously their connection to the church) are already embedded in a global institutional network of churches through the ELCA's influential membership in the Lutheran World Federation, a communion of one-hundred forty Lutheran churches in seventy-eight countries, whose over sixty-eight million members include people of every race, almost every continent, and many languages and cultures. Every Synod of the ELCA maintains a "companion synod" relationship with at least one other LWF member church or a unit of one. If each ELCA

synod pledged to support one worthy student from its companion synod to study in the United States at an ELCA college or university, that would mean sixty-five additional international students each year, many from developing nations, able to avail themselves of an American college education under the auspices of the ELCA. Conversely, ELCA colleges and universities have resources to cooperate and assist in higher education around the world through partnerships with schools outside the United States, whether through exchange programs for students or by lending or borrowing faculty across national lines. Some Lutheran churches overseas have highly developed educational programs and colleges and universities of their own—the international network of such institutions could certainly become closer and more intentional.

The ELCA's colleges and universities clearly understand themselves (with very few exceptions) as institutions which prepare students for life in a globalist economy and in a shrinking world; some do so with great self-consciousness and skill. What they do not always know or acknowledge is that there are specifically Lutheran reasons for this mission to the world, reasons connected to Luther's idea of the human vocation of love of God and service to neighbor. In asserting and living their vocation as Lutheran colleges and universities, our institutions are clearly both called to such service, and challenged to intensify it further.

Endnotes

1. Luther connects theology and pedagogy repeatedly in his writings: the standard study is still Asheim 1961.

2. California Lutheran University's mission statement is typical: "The mission of the University is to educate leaders *for a global society* who are strong in character and judgment, confident in their identity and vocation, and committed to service and justice." (Emphasis mine.)

3. Our host institution, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL, uses this language: "Augustana College, rooted in the liberal arts and sciences and a Lutheran expression of the Christian faith, is committed to offering a challenging education that develops qualities of mind, spirit and body necessary for a rewarding life of leadership and service in *a diverse and changing world."* (Emphasis mine.)

4. This quick survey was carried out in July of 2007. Institutional websites change quickly and often, and current websites may no longer correspond to the findings of that time. A summary of the data from that snapshot in time may be obtained upon request from the author.

5. I should add that I included drop-down menus that made reference to such ideas as being part of the homepage, even though an action on the viewer's part is necessary to see them, and a further click would be required to reach the actual content.

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PETER MARTY

Who Said You Have Only One Calling?

My life is composed of a range of complexities, just like yours. If you have ever tried to describe yourself to another person, you know what I mean. It's very difficult to do. You either go too deep, or too shallow, in plotting the intricacies of your life for them. You may cut too professionally, or reveal far too much personally. It is not hard to come up with an unhelpful and incomplete sketch of what makes you who you are. Sometimes our self-portrait bears far too much detail.

The subject of this presentation is to think poly-dimensionally about your vocational lives. Notice: I did not say *life*, but *lives*. You do not do just one thing with your days. You are not merely equipped to operate in one exclusive fashion. God has not limited you to one expression or one gift for sharing with the world. No, you have many callings and many ways of being. My contention in this brief talk is to make the claim that our normal practice of thinking singularly with respect to the word *vocation* must be enlarged. The endowments of the Holy Spirit are far too ample to speak in such limiting ways about our precious lives. Martin Luther never talked, as far as we know, of individuals having only one calling. ELCA colleges and universities, for their part, foster a culture where students are challenged to live multi-faceted lives with any number of rich callings.

There is an exercise I helpfully, but playfully, engage from time to time. It is the imagining of alternative fields in which I could envision working. If I could not do what I presently do for daily work and fulfillment, what would I do in its stead? For example, if I was to suffer a physical or mental impairment, that would not allow me to do my current work well, how might I otherwise use the gifts God has given me for a new purpose? This is a constructive exercise, both for what it teaches about larger possibilities, but also for the way it challenges narrow or presumptive understandings of one's own vocations. We certainly would be dull and uninteresting creatures if we could only do one thing in the world, or see ourselves as doing only one thing, no matter how good we are at that "thing" or how fulfilling we find it to be.

A former traffic light installer in West Palm Beach, FL, who installed and maintained city traffic lights, was fired because he was colorblind and unable to distinguish the colors of red and green properly. Last year, he initiated a lawsuit against the county, hoping to retrieve lost wages. Beyond the instinct to sue, one would hope that this individual could also imagine other lines of work that he might undertake involving good meaning and valuable service to the world.

As much as we may love what we do, it is a powerful exercise to be able to imagine getting excited about other worlds as well. To close off other possibilities for meaning in our lives is to become closed to the wider imagination of God at work in us, and to disrespect God's capacity to think broadly on our behalf. If the very God we worship lives as three persons, or in three different expressions, we can imagine that same God rejoicing over lives that avoid narrow definition.

I sometimes speak of my current life's energies as bi-vocationally focused. To speak in this way is to be mindful of the complex terrain surrounding the world of vocation. The very concept of vocation is too expansive to be linked too closely to the concept of *profession*. But for the purposes of this conversation, where I want to dwell on how we locate meaning in our daily lives, there is good reason to speak of a connection between edifying work and vocation. (A bit later, I'll draw some distinctions between

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vocation and profession.) I send the bulk of my professional life between two principal fields: parish ministry and radio broadcasting. I love the work of the pastorate—its draw upon my heart, mind, soul, and strength. Where else can one enjoy quite the same contact with other people through all the stages of life? Yet I also find deep fulfillment in hosting a radio program. Sitting in a soundproof studio booth hardly constitutes the same experience as holding the hand of a leukemia patient, or sitting with a woman grieving over her son's tragic death. But it still bears extraordinary meaning and is hardly inconsequential ministry. The two worlds remain vastly different in scope and shape.

> "To close off other possibilities for meaning in our lives is to become closed to the wider imagination of God at work in us."

I say bi-vocational, but that is hardly correct. If my wife were present for this conversation, she might well say, "What do you mean bi-vocational? There is another lovely vocation, and it's called marriage. And there is another one, and it is called parenting. These could be explored more deeply as well, in case you should need a reminder of their presence." Oftentimes it is the vision of others that help us see beyond the myopia of our own sight. An outsider may well be the one to remind you of the multiple vocations you are called to navigate.

For thirty years, Max DePree was chairman and CEO of Herman Miller Inc., the second largest furniture maker in the world, at the time. Upon his retirement, he had these words to offer:

> My father is ninety-six years old. He is the founder of Herman Miller ... In the furniture industry of the 1920's the machines of most factories were not run by electric motors, but by pulleys from a central drive shaft. The central drive shaft was run by the steam engine. The steam engine got its steam from the boiler. The boiler, in our case, got its fuel from the sawdust and other waste coming out of the machine room—a beautiful cycle.
>
> The millwright was the person who oversaw that cycle and on whom the entire activity of the operation depended. He was a key person.
>
> One day the millwright died. My father, being a young manager at the time, did not particularly know what he should do when a key person died, but thought he ought to go visit the family. He went to the house and was invited to join the family in the living room. There was some awkward conversation —the kind with which many of us are familiar.
>
> The widow asked my father if it would be all right if she read aloud some poetry. Naturally, he agreed. She went into another room, came back with a bound book, and for many minutes read selected pieces of beautiful poetry. When she finished, my father commented on how beautiful the poetry was and asked who wrote it. She replied that her husband, the millwright, was the poet.
>
> It is now nearly sixty years since the millwright died, and my father and many of us at Herman Miller continue to wonder: Was he a poet who did millwright's work, or was he a millwright who wrote poetry? (Depree 7-9)

Who said you have only one calling in your life? Or in a single day? And if each of your multiple callings have a different shape, who says they must resemble one another?

The Biblical notion of one calling appears to have found concrete form in the writings of the Apostle Paul and the early church. "We have gifts that differ ... and they differ according to the grace given us," Paul said. He pronounced that some individuals would be teachers or prophets. Others would be poets or millwrights. The assumption was that a person was gifted in one specific way.

Jesus of Nazareth appears to have espoused a much broader concept of vocation. When instructing his disciples one day for their ambitious responsibilities ahead, he spoke of curing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, casting out demons, preaching, and teaching (Matt. 10:8). He did not say: "Bartholomew, you've got the demon work. Philip, you go and take care of AIDS patients. James, why don't you raise the dead and put funeral directors out of business." No, Jesus charged all of them to engage in a host of different projects. To say that "the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few" meant that a narrow or limited definition of calling would not suffice.

William May, professor emeritus of BioEthics at Southern Methodist University, gives an interesting etymology of the word *career*. The word *car* and *career*, he notes, come from the same root: *carrerra*, which is the Latin word for racetrack. Both a car and a career have us going in circles, often quite rapidly and

competitively. These circles are not always deeply meaningful in nature. (5)

A career demands learned skills and a certain kind of intelligence that help us find a way to get "from here to there." A vocation requires a critical intelligence that is capable of questioning whether "there" is even worth going to. ELCA colleges and universities are equipped to foster this second kind of intelligence, the critical variety that asks the deep vocational questions.

My son Jacob leaves for college in three weeks. He is a multitalented young man, perfectly equipped to prosper in a liberal arts setting. I have no idea what he might do with his life and how he might spend the bulk of his years. It has been interesting to listen in on many friends asking the same question of him: "What are you going to study?" The presumption, of course, is that he will study one thing. One discipline will lead him to one career so that he can spend his one precious life on one racetrack, going round and round in one predictable circle. In his own seventeen-year-old way, Jacob answers the question that others pose to him with increasing finesse and subtlety. He quietly wishes he could have departed for school weeks ago and be done with the irritating question.

Evelyn Underhill in her book, *The Spiritual Life*, contends that, "We mostly spend [our] lives conjugating three verbs: To Want, to Have, and to Do. Craving, clutching, fussing … we are kept in perpetual unrest, forgetting that none of these verbs have any ultimate significance, except so far as they are transcended by, and included in, the fundamental verb, to Be." (20) In today's landscape of higher education, many students approach college with most of their energies devoted to conjugating these three verbs: to Want, to Have, and to Do. There is a perpetual unrest about their pursuit. We teach a different kind of grammar at our ELCA colleges and universities. It is one that celebrates the most fundamental verb of all: To Be.

An errant form of Christianity has been widely practiced for a long time. It goes something like this: We pray for what we can get *from* Jesus instead of who we can become *with* Jesus. In the Gospel accounts, whenever crowds would gather around Jesus, they almost always wanted something from him. More specifically, they wanted him to do something for them, often in the way of performing a miracle. Jesus healed an astonishingly few number of people, bypassing all sorts of sick others. This may have been because his purpose for us is notably different than our purpose for him. It is not what we can get from Jesus, but who we can become with Jesus.

I have the sense that many people in this world are waiting to find out what their true purpose in life is. "What is God expecting me to do?" Many individuals arrive at an answer to this question by waiting for the circumstances in their lives to become just right. So, as logic would have it, once I get into the right college and graduate, and once I land a job that suits my major well, and once I get more experience, and once I get married and have the house paid off, then I will be living. Really living. By this way of thinking, the present life is essentially practice for the future. The present certainly cannot be what God has in mind for me. I would rather dream about the future and continually question the validity of the present.

Four years of life spent at an ELCA college is its own intrinsic joy. It is a wholistic experience. With good reason, students often speak of this experience as the best four years of their lives.

Jonathan Kozol, long-time critic of American education, railed against the travesty of sticking whole communities of inner city kids into career-centered magnet schools. When interviewed on the subject, Kozol argued persuasively that we are taking away the childhood of these youth. (541) We are treating them as commodities whose value will only become apparent once they have been trained up to do something particular, like perform a job requiring certain technical skills.

If we are going to get to the heart of an inquiry about vocation, we must probe some deep questions of identity. Our identity is always tethered to a history, a family, a tradition, a Lord. There is no such thing as an identity of its own making. The inquiry that captures the link between our human identity, and those zones and people to which our identity is anchored, is one of the distinctive responsibilities of our colleges and universities in the Lutheran tradition.

In the Gospel account of the Last Supper, John 13, the evangelist describes part of the dinner moment in this way: "During supper, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet." Notice what permitted Jesus to be able to serve in this "upside-down" way, a way that defied all conventions of the day. It was the reminding knowledge of his origin and destiny. He knew where he had come from and where he was going. His capacity to be available to his disciples in this servant capacity was directly related to his secure sense of identity.

Kunte Kinte in Alex Haley's *Roots* knows he is an African warrior and not a slave. That self-knowledge makes all the difference for how he lives his life. His daughter, Kizzy, explains why she cannot marry a man she has come to love: "He's not like us. Nobody ever told him where he came from, so he doesn't know where he is going." Origin and destiny are not insignificant coordinates on the map of vocational identity.

ELCA colleges and universities do more than help students claim a self, or pick a mask to wear through life. They help students

know themselves in connection with their environment. They grow a capacity in students for understanding crucial bonds that exist with family, tradition, and the world's people. The best forms of Lutheran learning in our colleges and universities allow students to retrieve and recognize their identity as creatures of the Lord.

We must be careful with the identity question lest it quickly become a self-focused question. Identity asks: "Who am I?" Vocation asks: "How shall I respond?" If one is constantly searching for an identity, that same individual will likely end up living a very self-focused life. Vocation embraces the identity we already have been given by an external other. Vocational pondering gives us the opportunity to deepen our knowledge and understanding of that identity. In their better moments, parents assume the responsibility of helping children know where their identity is most deeply anchored. Liberal arts learning does something similar, though of course on a different scale.

> "The best forms of Lutheran learning in our colleges and universities allow students to retrieve and recognize their identity as creatures of the Lord."

James VanOosting, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Seton Hall, writes about the difference between two distinct approaches to life—the professional and the vocational. They do not occupy the same fields of play. Instead, they are like two different languages that speak of entirely different priorities. (3)

The professional approach has such iconic power that it almost has a monopoly on our view of life's choices. It bears personal power, economic currency, and institutional legitimacy. We know the professional approach through the power, money, and institutional strength evidenced through many who embody it. Vocation does not rely on these same things. It is a radical alternative to things professional. Four features are common to every story of vocation told in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures.

First, vocation involves a commitment to fulfilling a special purpose. Moses had a vocation with a special purpose. One probably couldn't find a profession called "Liberator of Slaves" in those days, if one were to try. The disadvantages to such a career probably would have chased away any interested parties. Similarly, we don't find a profession in the New Testament called "Mother of God." There too, if this had been a career choice, who would have signed up? Yet it became the wonderful vocation of Mary.

To say that a vocation is linked to a special purpose is not to limit the number of vocations in one individual's life. We have no indication, for example, that Moses stopped herding sheep once he became a liberator of slaves. When Jesus called some fishermen to follow him, he did not speak of the relative worthlessness of fishing. He could have, but he did not. He could have said there is the "real work" of becoming a pastor to people that beats the useless work of being a fisherman. But he doesn't say this. He says instead, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4)—a clear indication that the disciples would not be forsaking their customary work for the addition of new expectations.

Second, a person with a calling has special gifts. These gifts may not be exactly the same as talents or skills. They may not be special aptitudes. A gift is something we receive, something we come to know, not something we make. For Martin Luther, this was a big deal. A calling is primarily a gift. It is not a duty. Nor is it a fabrication. It is something that calls out unique gifts in each of us—gifts that are often revealed in strange ways.

Twenty-five years ago, Charles Garfield told the story of a toll taker on the Oakland Bay Bridge. Driving up to a tollbooth one morning, Garfield heard loud music emanating from the tiny box. Inside was a dancing man. Without breaking rhythm to his dance, the tollbooth operator handed Garfield his change, and Garfield drove off.

Garfield was so fascinated by the joy-filled behavior of this one operator that he decided he was going to try and find this same man on another day. One day he did. Garfield pulled up to a booth on the bridge with loud music inside and the same individual dancing away. When asked what he was doing, this tollbooth operator indicated he was having a party. When asked why others weren't doing the same thing as he was, he offered that they weren't invited to the party. Further interviewing of the happy dancer revealed his happiness. "I have a corner office, glass on all sides, I can see the Golden Gate, San Francisco, the Berkeley Hills, half the Western world vacations here … and I just stroll in every day and practice dancing." He explained that he wanted to become a professional dancer, and was enjoying the fact that his bosses were paying for his training. (Crawford 113)

> "Four features are common to every story of vocation."

A person with a calling has special gifts that he or she comes to know. Sometimes the expression of that calling takes on an unconventional appearance.

Third, implicit in vocation is the notion of a caller who speaks from outside a person. In scripture, this caller is often God or Jesus. Sometimes this caller is hard to hear. God had to call out to Saul several times: "Saul. Saul." Moses had to be called a couple of times. God called Samuel three times before Samuel really made a move. Listening is important for people interested in honing in on their vocations. The Latin infinitive *vocare* means "to call." The related Latin word *vox* means voice. It takes great energy to quit listening only to ourselves and to begin listening to God. But this is the task of those who care about vocation.

Fourth, accepting a vocation means that some sacrifice, faith, and responsibility will be required. A giving back to others is a natural part of our responsiveness to being called. A spirit of generosity is often contained in our different callings.

Scot McKnight, author of the book *The Jesus Creed*, describes the credo that he believes guided Jesus' every day. "You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, and mind" was the Jewish Shema in the Hebrew Bible. Jesus took that Shema and added a neighborly component. "You shall also love your neighbor as yourself." This, says McKnight, is the Jesus Creed—both the love of God and the love of neighbor, always together, never separated. Balancing these two priorities is key. How we balance holiness to God and service to our neighbors is the challenge of Christian people who care about vocation. In their best moments, ELCA institutions of higher learning take this balance seriously as one of their chief commitments.

In Native American theology, the nature of a gift is that it be given away. It is not to be kept. If one keeps a gift, something else deserves to move on because of it, much like a billiard ball transfers momentum when it strikes another ball. Living out the balance of the Jesus Creed reminds us to keep on giving a part of ourselves away for the sake of others. People who live the Christian life in a vocationally fulfilling way strive to live generously, transferring the momentum of their giftedness to others.

Let me close with a story that was featured in the *New Yorker* magazine several years ago. It involves the actions of a rather remarkable highway patrol officer. Kevin Briggs is a motorcycle patrolman who has worked the Golden Gate Bridge for many years. The Golden Gate is a favorite local landmark for those who wish to jump to their death. Summertime is notorious for the count of jumpers rising.

Briggs won an Employee of the Year Award for the Highway Patrol for his excellent work in trying to coax suicide-inclined people from jumping. His strategy is fairly simple. He looks for an abandoned backpack, briefcase, or wallet—dead giveaways for an individual planning to leave a mark behind—and then for a jumper nearby. Once the troubled person is found somewhere on the bridge, Briggs seeks to start a conversation. "How are you feeling today?" Then, "What's your plan for tomorrow?" If the person cannot state a plan, the patrolman gets constructive: "Well, let's make one. If it doesn't work out, you can always come back here later." (Friend)

Through this brief conversation, Kevin Briggs has saved hundreds of lives. How would we describe his vocation? Is it riding a motorcycle for the purpose of law enforcement? Is it ensuring public safety? Any number of ideas might be proposed. It would appear, though, that he, like the rest of us, has a range of callings. One thing is clear: He has the gift of helping distressed people envision more than one way of being in the world. That is indeed a gift. It is also a reminder of what we might do purposefully with our lives. We can prompt others, even as we encourage ourselves, to discover the multiple ways that God calls us to be effective contributors to the life of the world.

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MARK C. MATTES

Reclaiming Grundtvig at Grand View College

Grand View College is the only institution of higher learning established by Danish emigrants to North America that is rooted in the Grundtvigian tradition. While specific social practices such as weekly lectures, folk dancing, gymnastics, and daily devotions fostered a Grundtvigian ethos in its early history, the college has been struggling over the last several decades to see how it will continue to be a school influenced by Grundtvig's cultural and religious teachings. In recent years, however, there has been a commitment on the part of the administration and many of Grand View's faculty members to reaffirm N. F. S. Grundtvig's thought in a variety of educational contexts and venues. Appropriate social practices that can support this renewed appreciation and appropriation of Grundtvig's thought, however, are still in the making.

The Interrelationship between Identity and Mission

A perennial question for thinkers to puzzle over is, "How is the self the same over time?" Clearly both our bodies and our inner landscapes change as we grow. What, if anything, is preserved in this change? Is there some core identity that makes one to be oneself and not another?

The celebrated illustration is that of a ship. If all the planks of a ship have been replaced, do we still have the same ship? Undoubtedly, the pattern of the ship has stayed the same, even if all the planks have been replaced. Is sameness based on the pattern then and not the constitutive parts? The concern for a core identity is central not only for individuals but also for social institutions. With respect to the latter, identity is important because it bears upon the goals or mission of the institution.

This paper seeks to look at the shape of the Grundtvigian heritage of Grand View College, the only collegiate institution to have been founded by Grundtvigian Danes in North America, and how attempts are being made to foster that heritage.

A Grundtvigian Heritage

Grand View College was born as a result of theological disagreement among Danish Lutheran immigrants in America. A majority of these Danish Lutherans in the late 1880s supported a seminary, a school for training ministers, in rural Luck, WS. The school was staffed by two professors, P. S. Vig, a man with loyalties to the pietistic "Inner Mission" movement in Denmark, and Thorvald Helveg, a Grundtvigian. The movements these two men represented lived together in tension in the folk church of Denmark, yet they were not able to coexist in one church body in the United States. The two seminary professors and their disciples were at odds, especially over the nature of the Bible. A radical Grundtvigian, Lorentz Henningsen, in a Danish-American newspaper, proclaimed that the Bible was *not* the Word of God, a position which led to uproar within the Danish-American community. Due to conflict over whether or not the Bible was literally the Word of God, the Danish-American church split, with the larger group supporting the stance of orthodoxy, that the Bible is literally the Word of God. As a result, the seminary in Luck, WS, was closed. Vig was called to Trinity Seminary and Dana College in Blair, NE, becoming the chief theologian of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (UELCA). Battle weary, Thorvald Helveg, the Grundtvigian professor, returned to Denmark.

With the majority of Danish congregations supporting the position of Vig, the resulting UELCA was eventually to number over 90,000 members before its merger with Norwegian-Americans and Midwest-based German-Americans into The

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American Lutheran Church in 1960. A minority of congregations supported the position of Helveg, for whom the Bible's status as the literal Word of God was an open question. They joined to form the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, later named the American Evangelical Lutheran Church (AELC), a smaller group with never more than 23,000 members. It should be noted that while the majority of AELC pastors and laity had a Grundtvigian background, the church in principle fostered a tolerant position that Grundtvigians and non-Grundtvigians could faithfully fulfill the mission of the church together in the same church. The AELC, in 1962, joined with Swedish-Americans, Finnish-Americans, and middle-Atlantic German-Americans to form the Lutheran Church in America. (Both TALC and the LCA joined in 1988 to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [ELCA].)

The impetus for establishing Grand View College in Des Moines, IA, came in the mid-1890s, primarily so that the AELC would have a school for training pastors and teachers for its congregations, and an academy to help its youth both retain Danish culture and to gain skills for useful employment. Grand View College, then, first of all existed to train pastors for Danish-American congregations. In order to help preserve Danish identity for youth of AELC congregations, however, Grand View College offered an American-style high school course, a business training course, and a preparatory course for those studying to be admitted to the seminary. All the earliest faculty, staff, and students of Grand View College were influenced by Grundtvigianism. Students came to Grand View from throughout the United States and Canada in order to be immersed in the Grundtvigian ethos of the AELC.

Although influenced by the tradition, Grand View was never a Grundtvigian folk school per se. Other Danish enclaves in North America like those at Tyler, MN; Dalum, Alberta, Can.; Nysted, NE; Elk Horn, IA; and Solvang, CA all had Grundtvigian folk schools. Like their counterparts in Scandinavia, these schools did not offer degrees and were not driven by examinations. But they did foster an awareness of "folk life," and helped young people find their own personal destinies in that of the destiny of their people. As an institution, Grand View's only foray into the folk school was "Winter School," an opportunity offered during many of the early decades of the College for Danish-American farm youth, primarily in the upper Midwest, to attend lectures and a course of study to help them gain enlightenment, personal growth, and assist them in achieving their human potential.

From day one Grand View College was an institution built on debate over how it would represent its Grundtvigian heritage. Some Grundtvigian-Americans wanted it to be a folk high school and were disappointed at its being designated a "college" by its first president, R. R. Verstergaard. Other Danes wanted it to be a Danish University, though not based on a Latin curriculum, but one in tune with Grundtvig's own ideals of a truly Scandinavian university. Eventually Grand View would develop into a junior or two-year college, similar to patterns of development of higher education throughout the twentieth century in the United States. While neither a folk high school nor a university, Grand View was thoroughly shaped by the social practices of Grundtvigianism. Specifically, these included folk dancing, Danish gymnastics, singing of hymns and folk songs, the public lecture as a medium of personal and social enlightenment, and an awareness of Scandinavian mythology and history, along with biblical history. These practices all shaped the character and identity of Grand View students.

"Grand View was thoroughly shaped by the social practices of Grundtvigianism."

It is hard to imagine a more idyllic social setting than Grand View College in its golden years of Danish identity. The student body, staff, and faculty shared a common ethos and loyalty to each other, deeply desiring, for the most part, mutual growth and enrichment among each other. This is not to say that the petty jealousies and quarrels that beset any human community did not exist at Grand View. But the College's constituencies shared a common identity that kept such negativity in check and provided a framework by which to adjudicate disagreements. Grand View's identity as a Grundtvigian institution was not due to being the sort of school that Grundtvig ever envisioned, but because its stakeholders honored and fostered specific Grundtvigian teachings and practices.

The kind of education offered at Grand View was not unique, at least among Scandinavian-Americans. For similar reasons—preserving cultural identity, training emissaries and guardians of culture, such as pastors and teachers, and helping emigrant families assimilate into wider American culture—other Lutheran groups established schools similar to Grand View, particularly in the upper Midwest of the United States where many Scandinavian-Americans had congregated. Dana College in Nebraska also sought to foster Danish culture, but along the lines of the Inner Mission movement (though eventually folk dancing, despite the scruples of the Pietists, would also become an important aspect of life there).

By the mid-1950's Danish-Americans were becoming integrated into wider American life and culture. This was inevitable as people migrated from farming communities to the large cities, with their many opportunities, and as families sought the best prospects for their children to prosper in the wider English-speaking culture. Over the decades, more and more non-Danish youth in Des Moines took advantage of the outstanding educational opportunities offered at Grand View and graduated from its two-year college program. By 1954, a majority of students matriculating at Grand View were not of Danish background. Some were Scandinavian Lutherans—the Swedes had a large immigrant presence in Iowa. But slowly the Grand View faculty, staff, and student body were being filled with neither Danes nor Lutherans. Additionally, with the opening of a public two-year college in the early 1970s in Des Moines, Grand View was forced to become a four-year college.

European readers need to keep in mind that private institutions of higher education in the United States, such as Grand View, are not publicly funded. Even in public colleges and universities, however, the student incurs the bulk of expense for higher education through tuition. Grundtvigian practices, such as the weekly lecture promoting enlightenment, the daily routine of coffee and evening devotions, and the singing of hymns and folk songs died out. Other practices, such as folk dancing and gymnastics, were to survive well into the 1980s. All this time, Grand View was slowly changing. While every year the student body included youth from the old Danish families that had chartered Grand View, the school was increasingly representing the neighborhood which had developed around it: blue-collar and somewhat rough-hewn. The College attracted young Americans and increasingly "adult learners" seeking upward mobility in an economic landscape offering fewer and fewer working-class jobs.

"Human first, then Christian."

Grand View survived lean and tough years during this period of transition, much of the 1980s and 1990s. When I was called to chair the Philosophy and Religion Departments at Grand View in 1995, the school was facing grave financial challenges and its institutional spirit was at a low point. Having an interest in history and possessed of some Scandinavian ethnicity, I was drawn into Grand View's great and proud heritage. That Grundtvigian heritage wanted to shape lives by helping people come to grips with their humanity. "Human first, then Christian" was the powerful mantra that guided Grand View's ancestors.

In its own way, this vision is counter-cultural in the American educational landscape. Protestant-related colleges have tended towards a "born-again" sectarianism that can sometimes downplay the significance of the human. By the same token, secular educational institutions have little regard for the insights one can gain from religious faith. Grand View fit neither mode. Ironically, it was also now serving a population from the lower middle class and even poor people, two audiences which Grundtvig was eager to build up.

New Initiatives in the ELCA

The character of church-related higher education in the 1990s witnessed a time of self-searching. Various grants, funded by private businesses, were given to church-related schools in order to help them assess their current sense of purpose and vocation. ELCA-related colleges were no different in this regard. While not all twenty-eight ELCA-related colleges engaged in this opportunity for self-assessment, a significant majority of them did. The focus of this work examined the question, "What, if anything, does a church-related education offer that cannot be received through public education?" At Grand View, strategies have been fostered by both administration and faculty to help the institution critically engage in its heritage.

The Division for Higher Education in the ELCA developed two initiatives to help these inquiries into vocation and identity. First, the ELCA began yearly summer convocations for faculty from every academic discipline to reflect on their sense of vocation as members of Lutheran institutions. This was an educational opportunity not only for theologians or clergy teaching in these schools but also included primarily faculty members from any academic major in order to reflect on their vocation and how their teaching translates into students' emotional, professional, and vocational maturation. Participants were asked to engage the question of how, as a professor, academic and educational calling affects daily life and ministry. Grand View College has been fortunate to have had a group of five faculty and/or staff invited to each of these yearly gatherings for well over a decade. There is no question that this has helped Grand View College faculty, as a religiously diverse group, to explore the impact of their work on society and the church. It has also given them the opportunity to explore Grand View's heritage and how that impacts their work.

Second, the ELCA, since 2000, has sponsored a "Lutheran Academy of Scholars in Higher Education," usually held at Harvard University. The format, similar to a National

Endowment for the Humanities seminar, has been directed by Ronald Thiemann, an ELCA theologian teaching at Harvard Divinity School. This seminar, for up to twelve participating scholars each year, has hosted one Grand View College faculty member each year. That too has helped faculty members explore Grand View's religious heritage.

Of course, the ELCA-sponsored opportunities for scholars is Lutheran-based, but not necessarily Grundtvigian. Many Grundtvigians might actually see themselves in opposition to a strictly confessional Lutheran theology. Indeed, there are significant points of difference between Lutheran confessionalism and Grundtvigianism. The importance of the ELCA-sponsored opportunities, however, has not been to undergird a Lutheran orthodoxy but to help scholars and teachers think about the religious context of their own particular school, in which the ELCA tolerates a wide range of religious identities, in relation to the needs of wider American and global societies. In this respect, these initiatives have had a salutary effect on the overall atmosphere for the school. While these ELCA-sponsored endeavors have not converted our faculty—many of whom are Roman Catholic or even "born-again" Christians—into full-fledged Grundtvigians, it has helped raise for them the question of Grand View's heritage and how that heritage might impact young people today.

Tangible Initiatives

Sensing that our Grundtvigian heritage, a beautiful but fragile legacy, would be lost at Grand View, particularly with the retirements of faculty of that last generation to be raised in it, specific, concrete, and collaborative ways have been developed to help foster an awareness of that heritage and how it might impact on students today. First, for some years, the administration had been hosting discussions for newer faculty on the nature of the religious heritage of the school. Such discussions always included the Grundtvigian background of the school. However, what we needed was a handbook to help connect the dots for both newer faculty and for students. Of course, many of our students come to Grand View not because of its heritage but because it is convenient, because they can play a sport here, or because it feels like home to them. Nevertheless, if the best is going to be offered to our students, it ought to include helping them think through our heritage—a heritage of which they, at some level, are themselves embracing by seeking a degree from our school.

In the Fall of 2005, I began developing a *Grand View College Reader*. The purpose of the *Reader* is to invite students into the ideas and practices of the Grundtvigian heritage of yore in order to provoke them to ask how that very specific heritage might engage their lives and their professions today.

This book, published in the summer of 2006, is a compilation of essays, drawing on the experience of current and retired faculty members, which helps students examine the foundations of the school, the interconnection of the various disciplines within the school to that heritage, and the calling that this legacy invites us to as we are engaged in the world. In all, twenty-five full-time faculty members and students were involved in the process of crafting these essays. [See *Intersections* Fall 2007: 31 for a review – RDH]

The opening section of the book, "Foundations," explores the Grundtvigian heritage of the school, presents Grundtvig's views of education, and offers selective texts from Grundtvig's corpus of writings. Also, Grundtvigian symbols on our campus, such as the god Hejmdal carved into the *talerstol* in the lecture hall (the "Rodholm Room") of the main building, the model ship hanging in that same room, and other artifacts on campus are explained for newer generations of students. A short history of Grand View College is given, but through the unique lens of student experiences. Even youth of Danish-American background, which Grand View still attracts, would find these essays informative and engaging.

A second section of the book examines education as it has historically been presented at Grand View. The nature of the liberal arts and why that heritage is fundamental to education here is offered. Similarly, the schools choral heritage and background in sport, including gymnastics, drama, and folk dancing, is given. Also, Art Department faculty members present images of chosen art works representing their current interests. A final section explores the college's vocation or calling in public life, focusing on our commitment to multiculturalism, and peace and justice.

It is still too early to assess the impact that the *Reader* will make on the college's life. Probably about a third of the current student body has been exposed to the book through professors who make the book either required or optional reading in their classes. There is no question that the making of this book—which took hundreds of voluntary hours on the combined efforts of all the authors and editors—helped forge those twenty-five authors around a common Grundtvigian core identity. Likewise, the ripple effect that the development of the book had on those external sources consulted for their expertise into each chapter, alumni and current students for instance, can still be felt.

In my experience in using this book in introductory courses in ethics and/or religion, I have found the students to be curious about the background of Grand View College and eager to begin to find their place in that heritage.

A second initiative is *Imaging the Journey*, a book of meditations, prayers, and photographic images. [See *Intersections* Fall

2007: 30 for a review—RDH] While not all the meditations are influenced by Grundtvigian thinking, several are, and they have been good venues by which to introduced students in introductory religion courses into the thinking of N. F. S. Grundtvig.

A third initiative can be found in the Report of the Strategic Planning Commissions of January, 2007, in which a specific section is devoted to "Faith Foundations." In that statement, written at the request of the College's administration, the College's affirmation of its commitment to "community" is grounded in its Grundtvigian heritage. The upshot of that specific mission is that the College will establish "policies and procedures to protect freedom, equality and dignity." Likewise, the College, hearkening to Grundtvig's quest for "the plain, active, and joyful life … defines success not by the mere accumulation of wealth or 'things,' but by finding meaning and happiness in our relationships with others and in what we are called to do." In that light, the College affirms its commitment to student success measured "by personal growth, by an ability to communicate, understand and critique ideas, by a deeper sense of service, and by an ability to form meaningful relationships with others." These goals have been implemented through the campus pastors and faculty members who offer various formats of service learning. It is also embodied in the activities promoted in the Wellness Center, a hub on campus for practices that help foster the well-being of mind, body, and spirit.

It should be clear, however, that the Strategic Planning Commission's Report builds on administrative commitments for education at Grand View College, already in place, which, even if not unique, are consistent with the school's Grundtvigian heritage. Specifically, the fact that in admissions the College is not highly selective, but committed to accessibility, both academically and financially, for the sake of student success, carries on the Grundtvigian commitment to a people's education. Thereby, the school continues to foster education for student populations not traditionally represented in higher education. Additionally, the administration is committed to building a strong and thriving residential program at Grand View, aiming to foster the sense of community so important to Grundtvig.

A Spirit Seeking Social Practices

That a Grundtvigian spirit remains at Grand View, I have no doubt. Its most tangible manifestation is most clearly seen in the attitude of the faculty towards teaching. Our faculty tend to be men and women committed to outstanding teaching—holding each other accountable to that standard of excellence and wanting the best for our students. It would be a rare faculty member indeed who would not support "human first and then Christian." That is, our faculty members want our students to develop their full humanity, not only for financial gain, but primarily for social responsibility in their families, communities, nation, and world. Neither secularist nor Bible-thumping, Grand View faculty members see the full development of human potential from within a spiritual horizon. And, that commitment is reaffirmed repeatedly across the curriculum.

This is not to say that Grand View College faculty members are beyond internal dispute or fractions. It is to say, however, that we have been forging an identity as a religious institution that profoundly respects our heritage and seeks to further it in contemporary life and society. The hardest obstacle in fulfilling that quest is that institutional identity at Grand View was, at one time, clearly found in social practices —such as folk dancing, gymnastics, and informal singing—that do not appear to be viable today. Technology enables people to live a disembodied life, free of hard physical labor, sport, or face to face social interaction with others. In our technology-driven culture —with its decisively Gnostic overtones and undertones—such deep socially embodied practices do not seem so fun, as they once did. In my own personal judgment, that is unfortunate. While I suspect that this secular variety of Gnosticism is as prevalent in Europe as the United States, it siphons off the social practices that would make Americans, for example, happier. An hour of folk dancing would do more for one's body and mood than an entire day spent playing video games. That said, it is not likely that these social practices will return soon. Hence, we are Grundtvigians looking for contemporary social practices to embody our movement.

So, to examine our Grundtvigian identity at Grand View, it is not only the case that all the planks of the ship have been replaced but that even the model of the ship is radically different. How, then, are we Grundtvigian? Here, at least, only in so far as we uphold the question of our genuine humanity in each course, in all our social transactions, and in our teaching, can we claim a measure of that spirit that so profoundly altered N. F. S. Grundtvig, and us through him. We have evolved greatly from our origins, but we also carry that "genetic code" of spiritual values that guided our educational ancestors.

It is hoped that the two writing projects, as well as the commitments in the Report of the Strategic Planning Commissions, will stimulate reflection about Grand View's Grundtvigian heritage across the campus and amongst alumni. Their impact is still, at this point, to be seen. Specific social practices, so crucial for the Grundtvigianism of a bygone era, that can serve to uphold the retrieval of our Grundtvigian heritage, are yet to be developed, however.

RICHARD W. PRIGGIE

John 3:16-17

For God so loved Israel, God's chosen people … well … no.

For God so loved the Church, the bride of Christ … but that's not how it reads.

For God so loved the world … the word in Greek is "cosmos"… For God so loved the whole cosmos, the universe—discovered and not yet discovered.… For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

It turns out that God was into globalism long before we were!

We are singing some evocative images in the two hymns we have sung thus far at this conference. Last evening we sang that "the peace of the Lord kept within cannot live." (*ELW* #646) God's peace withers and dies when confined to a single individual or nation. It wants out into the world, as an animal wants outdoors.

This morning we have sung of the big-heartedness of God. God's heart is so big, we sang, that it contains all of God's vast domain. And then the hymn becomes a prayer, "O Christ, create new hearts in us that beat in time with yours … that, joined by faith with your great heart, become love's open doors." (*ELW* #722) Imagine! To have a heart as big as God's heart, a heart that beats in time with the life and the love of Jesus.

In the early 1960s Anglican pastor and theologian J.B. Philipps wrote a book the title of which judges our hearts when left to their own devices. *Your God Is Too Small* (Macmillan: New York, 1961) is the title of his book, as telling an indictment today as in 1961. Too small our concept of God. Too tribal. Too personal. Too pinched.

Matthew Fox, by contrast, head of The Institute for Creation Spirituality, preaches what he calls "deep ecumenism." Ecumenism, says Matthew Fox, is well and good—to draw closer in understanding and relationship to the whole Christian family. Interfaith relations are the next step and are urgent in a world that is increasingly polarized over religion. And then beyond religion, to feel for all human beings, asserting their value simply because they are human, is a heart-enlarging instinct.

But Saint John did not say, For God so loved *Christians* … nor did he say, For God so loved *all religious people* … nor even *all people*. Instead, the word is "cosmos." For God so loved the cosmos that he gave his Son, and deep ecumenism is our response to that cosmic love of God; it is our embrace of and care for all created things, simply because all things have been created by God. Visit the website, <www.thecosmicmass.org>, and you can see how this plays itself out in worship. The Cosmic Mass draws upon visual art and music and nature and the breadth of sacred scripture and tradition. It begins in grieving and ends in dancing. It is different. It is long. There is nothing small, or tribal, or pinched, about it.

So how about at our colleges, instead of an Office of International Studies, we start an Office of Cosmic Relations… or perhaps that's another name for Campus Ministries! How about changing the title, "Ecumenical Officer"—we have one at churchwide and in most synods. Let's change the title to "Advocate for Deep Ecumenism"—people would really wonder what that means! And I hear there is an addendum to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* coming out—Setting #11, The Cosmic Mass (just kidding). All of this an attempted answer to our prayer this morning … remember? "O Christ, create new hearts in us that beat in time with yours, that, joined by faith with your great heart, become love's open doors."

RICHARD W. PRIGGIE *is Chaplain at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. This sermon was preached at the Vocation of the Lutheran College conference in August 2007.*

One of my all-time favorite movies is almost ten years old now. Called *Pleasantville*, the movie transports Jennifer and David, two millennial teenagers, back into a fictitious 1950s community, aptly named Pleasantville, the world of *Father Knows Best* and *Leave It to Beaver*, the world of *Your God Is Too Small*. In the movie the first high school class that Jennifer visits in her new hometown is geography, where the students are studying the differences between Main Street and Elm Street in Pleasantville. Profoundly bored, Jennifer raises her hand and asks, "Excuse me, but is there anything beyond Pleasantville?" At which point all the other students turn around and stare open-mouthed at Jennifer, as if she had just uttered an obscenity.

I want to claim that question as part of our vocation as Lutheran colleges. We exist here in Rock Island to encourage our students to ask, "Excuse me, but is there anything beyond Rock Island? ... anything beyond Lutheran, beyond Christian, beyond religion, beyond human?

After geography class in the movie, outside the school, Jennifer presses one other student she decides to trust. "Come on," she says, "What's outside Pleasantville? Tell me." And he says, "There *are* places where the roads don't go in a circle. They just keep going."

Now, we have colleges on Main Street and congregations on Elm, and they are fine communities on well-traveled roads. But as far as the life of the mind goes, or the life of the spirit, I want to find the places where the roads don't go in a circle, they just keep going. It's uncharted territory, to be sure.... Imagine! to come to Rock Island in order to leave Rock Island! to be Christian in order to be more than Christian! But there is a world out there—yes, there is—a world that God loves.

We come to the table now to feed on God's love, to take God's love into our hearts, so that, by God's grace, our hearts may beat in time with God's and we come to love even the whole cosmos in the name of Christ. Amen.

ELCA Colleges & Universities

Augsburg College | MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
Augustana College | ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS
Augustana College | SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA
Bethany College | LINDSBORG, KANSAS
California Lutheran University | THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA
Capital University | COLUMBUS, OHIO
Carthage College | KENOSHA, WISCONSIN
Concordia College | MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA
Dana College | BLAIR, NEBRASKA
Finlandia University | HANCOCK, MICHIGAN
Gettysburg College | GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
Grand View College | DES MOINES, IOWA
Gustavus Adolphus College | ST. PETER, MINNESOTA
Lenoir-Rhyne College | HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA
Luther College | DECORAH, IOWA
Midland Lutheran College | FREMONT, NEBRASKA
Muhlenberg College | ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
Newberry College | NEWBERRY, SOUTH CAROLINA
Pacific Lutheran University | TACOMA, WASHINGTON
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St. Olaf College | NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA
Susquehanna University | SELINSGROVE, PENNSYLVANIA
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