Lutheran Education

Published since 1865 by the Faculty of
Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois
Volume 139 - Number 4

Publisher: Dr. John F. Johnson, President
Concordia University, River Forest, Ill.

Editors: William Rietschel, Educational Foundations
O. John Zillman, Department of Psychology

Associate Editors: Gary Bertels, Department of Theology
William Duey, Department of Human Performance

Business/Editorial Assistant: JoAnn P.F. Kiefer

Design/Production Assistant: Krisst L. Paulson

Regular Departments:
Administrative Talk
DCE Expressions
Multiplying Ministries
Secondary Sequence
Teaching the Young
Today’s Lutheran Educator

Glen Kuck, St. Paul Lutheran School, Chicago, Ill.
William Cullen, Department of Leadership, CURF
Rich Bimler, President, Wheat Ridge Ministries
Craig Parrot, Lutheran High, Denver, Colo.
Shirley Morgenthaler, Early Childhood Education, CURF
Jon Laabs, Executive Director,
Lutheran Education Association

Cover Design: Del Klaustermeier

Lutheran Education (ISSN 002407488) is published four times per year: Fall; Winter; Spring and Summer. Subscriptions are $10 a year, and are available from Lutheran Education Journal, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499.

Periodical postage paid at Nappanee, IN.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Lutheran Education, 7400 Augusta St.,
River Forest, IL 60405-1499.

Lutheran Education is available on microfilm. Write to University Microfilms, North Zeeb Road,
Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Printed in USA.

Lutheran Education has been selected as the professional journal of the Lutheran Education Association (LEA). Members of the LEA receive the journal as part of membership benefits. Inquiries regarding membership may be addressed to LEA, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499. The journal and LEA remain independent entities.
In This Issue:
Focus on Parish Education—DCE, Family, Mission and Preparation for Ministry

165 The Employerization of the Teaching Ministry
Moulds argues that Christian teachers, particularly Lutheran educators, are now chiefly (though not only) identified according to the modern category of employee and that, while this characterization has some limited use, it should be minimized.

by Russell G. Moulds

175 Invisible Christian Educators: A Look at LCMS Practitioners of Parish-Based Christian Education
Schoepp chronicles the findings from his quantitative study of the demographics, ministry roles, and certification interest of paid lay congregational staff members that carry out Christian education ministry without having gone through a synodical certification program.

by Paul W. Schoepp

192 What Does Christian Education Have to Do With Missions?
Using information gleaned from social science, Rippstein assesses the directions the winds may be blowing in this new millennium regarding mission opportunities and encourages the reader toward an apostolic viewpoint using existing Christian educational venues to facilitate a missionary mindset.

by Timothy A. Rippstein

201 The State of Director of Christian Education (DCE) in the LCMS
Relying especially on over 14 years of experience in higher education, Blanke provides thought-provoking insight into the synodical dynamics associated with the current state of DCE ministry that will hopefully generate some lively discussion.

by Mark S. Blanke

209 Family Ministry in the 21st Century: A Perspective
While the culture is muting the religious beliefs and practices of present-day families, Bergman posits that this is an incredible period for congregations to launch family ministries utilizing a vast array of preventive and intervening resource programs.

by Shirley A. Bergman
Departments

161 From Where I Sit:...Integrity
   William Rietschel

222 Administrative Talk...Preparing Students – For What?
   Glen Kuck

224 Today's Lutheran Educator...To Be Heard
   Jon Laabs

226 Multiplying Ministries...C.A.R. Theology, or
   "I’m Rich Bimler and I Approved
   This Message"
   Rich Bimler

229 Secondary Sequence... Religious Education –
   "It’s Not the Program"
   Craig Parrott

231 A Final Word...Diversity in Religious Education
   Manfred Boos
Some years ago in a televised news conference, at which United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall announced his intent to retire, a member of the media asked him how he wanted to be remembered. Marshall’s response to the question was, “I did the best I could with what I had.” That simple epitaph has stuck with me over the years. My family understands my wish to consider its use as an inscription at the end of my earthly journey. Also, prior to each academic year as I’m asked in a document captioned, “Anticipated Faculty Service Load,” to list my professional goals for both teaching and service, I simply adapt Marshall’s words and write, “To do the best I can with what I’ve got.”

So what does all of this have to do with an editorial introducing an issue of Lutheran Education that has as its theme a “Focus on Parish Education”? Absolutely nothing! It does, however, have something to do with this being my final editorial and my own impending retirement from Concordia University, River Forest (CURF) and full-time ministry. Like Marshall, it also probably has to do with how I would like to be remembered. You see, I believe implicit in the epitaph, “I did the best I could with what I had,” is the attribute of integrity. It also has to do with recent discussions on our campus that have revolved around the institutional mission statement. That statement voices the following purpose: “As a distinctive, comprehensive university of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and based in the liberal arts, Concordia University equips men and women to serve and lead with integrity [emphasis mine], creativity, competence and compassion in a diverse, interconnected and increasingly urbanized church and world.” While those discussions seemed to be outwardly about our Missouri Synod "Lutheranliness," my sense of things was that intrinsically they were about institutional integrity.

There were other prompts nudging me to ruminate on that word “integrity” italicized above. My campus office is located in a building with the rather imposing moniker, The Walter and Maxine Christopher Center for Learning and Leadership. Not surprisingly, an abundant amount of rhetoric regarding the buzzword of leadership echoes throughout its hallways and meeting rooms. That rhetoric coupled with finally getting around to reading Stephen Ambrose's Band of Brothers (1992) and viewing the book’s televised production by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg on the History Channel several months ago, served as another prompt. I was very much taken by the integrity of the leadership displayed by Major Richard Winters in the book and
in its televised rendition. It brought to mind the old Scottish definition of leadership, "To show the way by going first," which captures the courage expressed in action which is essential to leadership. It is a definition that includes integrity by including public action.

Of course, leadership is grounded in more than just public action. In living out our lives, we exist in four basic spheres: the private, the personal, the professional, and the public. Some leaders think integrity is grounded in the professional realm and seek to perpetuate a strong ethical persona in front of those who only know them on a professional level.

Others build integrity before the watching public, or in non-intimate relationships. True integrity finds its root in a leaders' private world, where only the leader and God know his or her thoughts and deeds.

Integrity is rooted in the part of us that’s going to live as long as our Creator – in our private world. While integrity isn’t rooted in the public life; it is revealed there. While integrity is not rooted in the professional life, it is reinforced there. While integrity is not rooted in the personal world of interpersonal relationships, it is reflected there.

In the CURF Mission Statement, note the placement of the attribute of integrity in the subsequent litany of attributes representing servant leadership, i.e., creativity, competence, and compassion. It comes first! Seemingly, and I no longer am able to recall whether it was intended or not, what is being said is that integrity is the most important attribute of a Christian servant leader.

Regardless, I think you’ll agree, we could all use a lot more of that "integrity" stuff in the world today. We’d love to see more of it in our leaders, of course: in the halls of Congress, where poll-watching seems to have replaced independent thinking; in corporate board rooms, where theft from stockholders has become all but legalized in exorbitant executive salaries; in courts of law, where obscure technicalities seem so often to triumph over ethical principles. And let’s not just look to other people either. I’m sure there are plenty of areas where those of us in full-time ministry – including this pontificating university professor - could stand to show more integrity: filling out our tax returns, for example, or making sure the restaurant tip is truly adequate - not to mention the larger areas of our lives of service and the times we spend with our families. Perhaps Russ Moulds, in his final offering of this issue of Lutheran Education, is not so indirectly addressing theological integrity when he calls into question the practice of many Missouri Synod congregations that categorize those in the teaching ministry as employees.

Writers of all the various ages have commended integrity as a basic ingredient of character. In Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Polonius gives this advice to Laertes,

This above all, to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

---

1 Since we opted not to receive the premium channels from our cable provider, I was unable to view the earlier Home Box Office miniseries event. I do hope retirement will provide me the space to read books a bit sooner than a decade or more after they’re first published!
Whether one is a person of faith or not, tribute is paid to the idea of integrity. Marcus Aurelius, who lived from 121 to 180 A.D., and who was Emperor of the Roman Empire for the last nineteen of his fifty-nine years, had this to say:

“In the mind of him who is pure and good will be found neither corruption nor defilement or any malignant taint…. He is neither cowardly nor presuming; not enslaved to life nor indifferent to its duties; and in him is found nothing worthy of condemnation nor that which putteth to shame. Test by trial how excellent is the life of the good man – the man who rejoiceth with the portion given him in the universal lot, and abides therein content; just in all his ways and kindly minded toward all men. This is moral perfection: to live each day as though it were the last; to be tranquil, sincere, yet not indifferent to one’s fate.”

Integrity is a quality appreciated by all, whether they are anchored in faith traditions or simply thoughtful men and women of the world.

But what does integrity mean? I typically approach such questions etymologically at first. Linguistically, integrity comes from one of those very basic concrete Indo-European roots with a large number of fanciful metaphoric derivatives. "Tag" means to touch, as in tag, tangible, tactile, contact, etc. "In-tag," or "untouched means "whole" as in integer, a whole number, and by extension pure, unsullied, whole. That’s a good start, but what does it mean in everyday life?

Few authors occupy more shelf space in my family room than Yale Law Professor, Stephen L. Carter. My first exposure to Carter was through his book The Culture of Disbelief (1993) and the most recent via God’s Name In Vain (2000). There were several other books written by Carter and read by me during the intervening period. One, titled simply, Integrity (1996).

Of the four aforementioned spheres of existence, i.e., the private, the personal, the professional, and the public, Carter’s chief focus is on the public. There has been a loss of integrity in public life, he argues. People have become so single-mindedly intent on winning that we have swept aside anything that gets in the way, including integrity.

Carter’s view of integrity is true to the root meaning of the word, wholeness. He writes that a person of integrity is a whole person, a person somehow undivided. The word, poises Carter, conveys not so much a single-mindedness as a completeness; not the frenzy of a fanatic who wants to remake all the world in a single mold, but the serenity of a person who is confident in the knowledge that he or she is living rightly. The person of integrity need not be a Gandhi, but also cannot be a person who blows up buildings to make a point. A person of integrity lurks somewhere inside each of us: a person we feel we can trust to do right, to play by the rules, to keep commitments. Perhaps it is because we all sense the capacity for integrity within ourselves that we are able to notice and admire it even in people with whom, on many issues, we may sharply disagree.
Integrity, says Carter, is in some sense prior to everything else. It is a kind of foundational virtue, one that makes it possible for the other virtues to be expressed. Carter’s idea of integrity goes far beyond consistency or even simple honesty. He says that to be a person of integrity, three steps are required.

First, you have to discern what is right and wrong. You have to judge what you believe and discover the nature of those convictions. For Carter, an Episcopalian, those convictions are religious in nature. Integrity has to do with acting in conformity to divine will. But Carter offers a secular version as well, quoting a professor W. S. Taylor: “Integrity implies implicit obedience to the dictates of conscience – in other words, a heart and life habitually controlled by a sense of duty” (p. 9).

Second, you have to act on those convictions, even if there is a cost involved. Here Carter cites some of the great heroes of non-violent resistance: Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Aung San Suu Kyi. They risked everything, even their own lives, and the lives of their followers, to create justice for oppressed peoples.

And third, you must say openly that you are acting on your values. The person of integrity is unashamed of acting out of principle, and says so openly. To say forthrightly that we are acting out of principle is to promote integrity in our public life as citizens.

Those are the three foundations of integrity. And don’t misunderstand; they entail so many other virtues. A person of integrity has to be honest and self-aware. You have to be consistent and dependable. You have to be a promise-keeper and trustworthy. You have to be selfless and not selfish. But the discerning, the acting, and the saying are the foundations. Each one is dependent on the other. There is no integrity without all three.

As I retire from full-time ministry, I want to take this opportunity to thank all persons of integrity. I am grateful for the heroes who have gone before. I am grateful for those who have risked their lives, e.g., the men of Easy Company whose stories are recounted by Ambrose in Band of Brothers, or their freedom to stand up against every form of tyranny, and so enabled me to live unconstrained by the fetters of oppression. I am grateful for every small act of integrity by ordinary people, acts that chip away at the mountain of hatred and intolerance that threatens our whole culture. I am grateful for lives of quiet resistance and moments of great courage in the face of abuse of power both within and without the Church. I am grateful for the people of integrity yet to come. May all people of integrity inspire us. May we live lives of fuller integrity. May we take that extra step to promote integrity around us. For the sake of the Church and the world. — LEJ

References
Today's teacher in the Lutheran elementary school hardly thinks of herself or himself as an independent teacher of the church. She typically sees herself as a congregation member. Today’s teacher in the Lutheran elementary school hardly thinks of herself or himself as an independent teacher of the church. She typically sees herself as a congregation member whose vocation includes teaching students in a Christian environment. So, too, the DCE, the professor in the Lutheran university, and the instructor in the Lutheran high school—these Christians perceive their teaching as being, in some sense, agents of an educational effort sponsored by or related to a congregation or a larger church body. But in the early church, being an independent church teacher was a common practice. This early church practice prompts certain questions about the vocational status of today’s teachers and whether they are employees, self-employed, professionals, ministers, independent contractors, guild members, or yet some other sort of worker.

The most famous such independent church teacher was Origen (c.185–c. 254), a highly respected though not uncontroversial Bible teacher who conducted his classes in Alexandria, Egypt, and later in Caesarea, Palestine. Origen was the son of Christian parents. His mother was an Egyptian, and his father was a Roman centurion. His father was martyred in the imperial persecution in 202 but not before instructing Origen carefully in Scripture and doctrine. Because all the other Christian teachers had fled the persecution in Alexandria, young Origen was among the few remaining educated believers and stepped in to teach Christianity and Greek to adult catechumens.

Origen’s teaching skills were evident from the start, and he attracted large numbers of students to Christianity as the persecution ebbed. In a few years he was well known in and out of the church, even instructing governors and members of the emperor’s family, yet choosing to live a simple, ascetic life without need of much teaching income. Despite his growing fame and the success of his books, he continued to teach beginners in the Christian faith. Eventually Bishop Demetrius of Alexandria, envious of his teaching stature and spurred by petty jealousy, made Origen no longer welcome in Alexandria. Origen, always a lay teacher, then affiliated himself with the church at Caesarea, accepted ordination, and finished his teaching ministry there, dying of prolonged injuries from torture in another persecution that raged from 249 to 251 (McKechnie, 2001, p. 184).

**Employer / Employee**

Why this story about an ancient teacher for readers today? Clearly we are not independent teachers of the church as Origen was. What sort of teachers we are, however, is not so clear, and Origen’s story helps us reflect on this ambiguous status. The thesis of this
article is that Christian teachers, particularly Lutheran educators, are now chiefly (though not only) identified according to the modern category of employee and that, while this characterization has some limited use, it should be minimized. Let’s look first at the evidence for this category of teacher-as-employee along with reasons for concern. Next I’ll make a case for why we should avoid characterizing the church teacher as an employee. Finally, I’ll close with some suggestions for maintaining teacher identity without being too strident about the need for remedy.

The employer / employee relationship refers to a modern labor model in which a person sells her or his labor to another under conditions determined by the other with those conditions constrained at least minimally by laws and interests of the state. The model understands that the employee owns his labor and the employer owns the conditions and resources for how the worker’s labor is employed (or, from the original Latin word, involved). While not perfect, the model is a largely successful approach to labor relations in a market economy. Despite its practicality, it’s a model we should not use for the church worker. Yet we cast the church teacher as an employee in a number of conspicuous and subtle ways.

The Teacher as Employee

One way by which congregations, their schools, and their synodical institutions increasingly regard church teachers as employees is through the use of contracts rather than calls. The recent history of this practice is mixed and complex. Call practice is the prerogative of the congregation, and they may exercise this practice, including contracts, in any way that is not clearly contrary to Scripture. Synodical institutions such as districts and colleges have regarded their workers’ positions as contingent and not defined by the enduring call conditions of a congregation. However, a contract characterizes the worker’s relationship in terms of Law rather than Gospel. It gives an institution the latitude to eliminate positions when the budget shrinks, and does so in a way that regards the teacher as a commodity rather than partner in the Gospel (Phil. 1:5). What’s more, it creates a culture in which the church worker can be dismissed by non-renewal of a contract rather than a process of mutual Christian conversation and consolation to assist and perhaps re-direct that person’s ministry. Contracts are efficient, expedient, and legal. Calls are sloppy, personal, and evangelical. As we see the proliferation of search committees rather than call committees, we see the contract culture grow among us.

1 The LC-MS Council of Presidents of the synodical districts has encouraged use of the call rather than contracts for rostered church workers in its document, “Rubrics Governing Call” (April, 2002). Copies are available from district offices that can be located through links from www.lcms.org or in the Lutheran Annual.

2 Search committees are common in business, higher education and nonprofit organizations seeking to fill professional positions. In this practice, the conditions of employment are negotiated and often defined by a contract. Many church bodies today use a search-and-contract approach to secure workers. It is instructive to recall that Jesus did not issue contracts to his disciples (though such arrangements did exist in Biblical times). For a Biblically informed discussion of the divine call see Koehneke (1946).
The business and benefit offices that assist the material welfare of church workers now customarily refer to teachers as employees. These offices must manage the paperwork of outside agencies such as insurance companies that operate with corporate and business worldviews and terminology. Trying to function with two sets of terms, i.e., employee and minister, is confusing, and referring to teachers as employees is a reasonable simplification in working with these organizations. In fact, one constant source of confusion is the IRS that simultaneously treats church teachers as self-employed workers, employees with W-2 forms, and ministers of the Gospel. The point here is not to argue for consistency and clarity among the powers and principalities of the world. The point is that we in the church, though also in the world, should be cautious about subscribing blithely to the world’s models and terms (Eph. 5:15) even as we must make use of them.

Another considerable influence on employerization of the teaching ministry is our necessary attention to school law and tort law. In our litigious society, every church, church agency, and church school must now be prepared to face legal challenges, civil and criminal. We are a nation of laws, these laws are written to address our society and economy, and we are a society and economy of employers and employees. Just as dealing with business and government agencies outside the church has its impact on our identity, so dealing with criminal claims and law suits takes its toll on how we are perceived, our self-perception, and the Biblical terms and models with which we describe ourselves.

The teaching ministry also shares some degrees of relationship with the government’s interest in public education, and this contributes to our employee culture. Some of these relationships are formal while others are superficial. Within the doctrine of the two kingdoms (or two realms), we recognize the state’s compelling interest in health standards and criminal conduct in the church’s affairs. We share a relative though not absolute interest in standards regarding any temporal curriculum we may convey in the classroom. More superficially, some of our pedagogical conduct is like some of the behaviors of teachers in public (and private) schools and universities, just as some of a pastor’s actions look like the behavior of a motivational speaker, politician, sales representative, or office manager. But a teacher of the church can no more be compared to public school teachers than a pastor of the church can be compared to a public health administrator. Similar as some of their features may be, the natures and purposes of their activities are two different worlds or kingdoms apart. However, the frequent public school teacher comparison reinforces the employee perception.

This limited relationship and intersection with some of society’s involvement in education includes attention to present-day interests in accreditation and accreditation agencies.
The concepts and practices of accreditation are of value in some ways for the church’s use of education as a vehicle for outreach. Accreditation is one means for alerting those outside our circles that we pursue excellence in our service (since, of course, we would do no less for our King; see Phil. 4:8, 1 Pet. 2:12). Accreditation, however, can take on an excessive and even defining influence for the teaching ministry of our schools. The agencies themselves are generally accommodating toward a church school or university’s religious nature. More disconcerting is the school’s preoccupation with and devotion of time and resources to the subsidiary task of accreditation rather than our primary mission in the Gospel. This preoccupation with an interest that belongs to the public domain further identifies teaching in the church with employment rather than ministry.³

Offices and titles comprise another preoccupation that inclines the teaching ministry toward employerization. Like the poor, offices and titles will always be with us. They’re part of our being in the world. They do, in fact, serve the limited purpose of identifying a person with a certain role in some aspect of one’s calling, and this is an organizational convenience for those seeking or in need of service. But, after Eden, just as money is not merely a means of exchange, and grades are not merely a measure of learning, offices and titles have taken on superfluous significance, signifying more than mere function for the well-being of one’s neighbor. Teaching in the church is rank with titles, but this evidence for employerization is subtle and will require some scrutiny.

Titles and offices have been part of the church from the beginning, and Scripture contains several roles and offices such as deacon (table waiter), pastor (shepherd), and presbyter (elder), some of them established by God (Eph 4:11) and others invented by the church (Acts 6:1ff).⁴ The Biblical context of these and other roles indicate clearly the foot-washing posture of the office-holder.

Here again, the point is not to dismiss or even denigrate titles. If we eliminated one set of titles, we would eventually replace it with another out of need for communicating about our vocations. And, not to overstate the point, titles are not universally a matter of superiority and lording it over others. In many of our settings, we serve effectively and mutually within a flexible organizational chart. The point is that we now seem more and more to attach to titles and offices an importance of human custom and esteem not found in a context of the Gospel.

My observation about title and office is not an empirical research claim, but neither is it mere idiosyncrasy. Consider some of the titles in use within the teaching ministry today and whether they communicate that posture of foot-washing: headmaster, director of min-

---

³ The National Lutheran Schools Accreditation program seeks to assist Lutheran schools with an accreditation process that both sustains the school’s primary integrity and meets the criteria of regional accrediting agencies. See the NLSA website at http://dcs.lcms.org.

⁴ At this writing, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of the LCMS has released a new study on the office of the ministry and the divine call that addresses issues and practices. See CTCR (2003); or see the CTCR web page at www.lcms.org.
istries, executive director, CEO, department chair, provost, principal, and the assistant, associate, and full ranks of professor. The local reality, of course, depends on the Christian character of whoever occupies the office. But our language is now characterized more by notions of careerism and professionalism than by taking up a cross and being the servant and slave (Mk. 10:35-45). The assumption, now often spoken rather than unspoken, is that we ought to aspire to certain offices and positions, an assumption out of keeping with Lk. 14:1-24, Cor 7:17-24, and the Biblical doctrine of vocation. As we orient more toward this language of careerism and professionalism rather than the language of the cross, our theology of the cross shifts toward a theology of glory, and we re-orient to employerization rather than calling and vocation.⁵

Consider one more set of evidence with both some subtle and conspicuous elements. The current proliferation of literature, conferences, and buzzwords about leadership is now very much part of the Christian education scene. The leadership theme within the church is provoked in part by the shortage of both pastors and administrators for church education. While the need and concern for filling these offices is genuine, emphasis on this leadership theme is over-pronounced and tends to eclipse the Biblical role of the didaskalos, the teacher of the church (I Cor. 12:28-29, Eph. 4:11, James 3:1)⁶. The concept of leadership may in some sense be implicit in any Biblical role (or any role or office we as a church may fashion) but is not, like didaskalos, itself an explicit vocational theme in Scripture. And an explicit emphasis on leadership, largely drawn from business and management literature, tends to project employerization into the teaching ministry. This emphasis on leadership also tends to create a climate of hierarchy common in employment contexts but inappropriate in the work of the church. Two indications of this climate include some applications of policy-based governance and some curious anomalies in salary.

Policy-based governance refers to focusing the work of the board of directors on mission, goals, and policies rather than their micro-managing the organization’s operations. In Christian education, this approach is feasible and desirable provided the board understands itself as a steward of the church’s mission and servant to the teachers of the church (who are servants to those they teach). Misapplication of this governance model happens when the board isolates itself from the ministration of the church’s teachers and invents of some new teaching mission for which teachers are then deputized as subordinate agents.⁷

---

⁵ A recent illustration in my own ministry appears in a memo from a dean’s office regarding a possible contract to a Lutheran high school educator: “He has worked his way up through the system, having come to _____ Lutheran High School as a teacher.”

⁶ The New Testament Greek word for teacher is didaskalos. Its use and meaning has been the subject of much discussion about church offices and functions. Treatments of the word can be found in Biblical lexicons and word books. See Richardson (1950, p. 148).

⁷ I am not sounding an anti-administration charge, though some may so misread my meaning. I am noticing that the way we communicate about the significance of various roles and offices will take on a certain frame of reference, and we need to consider how harmonious this frame of reference is with scripture. The aim is not to come up with pure and perfect expressions but to select words and themes that are approximately congruent with our convictions regarding teachers of the church as employees lacks this congruence.
A second indication of a shift toward leadership as hierarchy, rather than the inverted and emptying pattern Paul preached (and practiced) in Phil. 2:1-11, is the disproportionate executive-style salary not uncommon in the church today. Synodical officers, university administrators, and some high school and elementary school administrators receive compensation for their activities on behalf of the Gospel disturbingly out of proportion to their fellow slaves of Christ. The point here is not to invoke some sort of egalitarian reform, which would soon collapse in our condition of simul iustus et peccator (as the same time justified and sinful). Besides, individual office holders can always practice humble stewardship with however few or many temporal blessings are entrusted to them. The point is that our practice and pattern in this ministry to which we are yoked in common (Mt. 11:28-30) looks conspicuously hierarchical and worldly in the cases of some very conspicuous offices. This corporate executive modeling contributes to a culture of employerization and does so in an era of Enron, American Airlines, and other corporate abuses of stakeholders. What’s more, it emulates and ratifies the sort of worldly conduct in the church that the Reformation repudiated five centuries ago.

Does It Matter?

No single point above makes the case that we have subverted or displaced the ministry of teaching by turning that ministry into the occupation of a commercial, civil, or nonprofit organization. Cumulatively, however, these several conditions for teaching in the church now make for a climate, culture, and context of market economy employment rather than the Biblical tradition of a calling to ministry. Does it matter?

It does matter because how we regard and portray the ministry of the church is one tangible way that God has given us to communicate the distinctiveness of the Gospel. Maintaining that distinction matters because God has spoken a Word of grace and promise into this world which abides and works in this world but remains apart from it. That Word must remain both in yet apart from the world so that its Good News of our being reconciled with God through Christ can be present and lively among us but not confused with any message or news contrived within this fallen creation. Our ministry of this Word is no sort of employment of education, information, or news invented by this world. For this reason, the Reformers insisted that the Word we share is a Word "external" to the institutions, orders, realms, powers, and principalities of this world. It is even external to the church itself (Lk. 1:35; Mt.16:17; Acts 2:2, 17) and is not the creation or possession of its offices (Jn. 3:5-8). Employment is activity in the temporal labor of the kingdom of this world. Ministry is activity in the eternal Word of the kingdom of heaven.

8 The rationale for these disproportionate salaries is not obvious. Perspectives include the belief that we would never get anyone to accept these positions and their tasks without such salaries; that those with the skills to hold these positions deserve these salaries; and that these offices are commensurate with similar positions in the domains of public education, business, government, and nonprofit organizations, and we ought to stay competitive with them.
Yet we need to be careful about how we say that this distinction from employment matters. If we say it in a way that denigrates the temporal employment and occupation of our fellow Christians, we imply that the earthly labors of their jobs and professions are not part of their vocation as Christians. And that is false. The honest labor of every Christian is part of the way God sustains the world he so loves "that he sent his only begotten Son." The first article of the Apostles’ Creed reminds us that through these employments, God provides "food and clothing, home and family, and all I need from day to day." Distinguishing the ministry of teaching from employment does not create first- and second-class Christians. It serves to keep the Gospel God’s Good News for the world rather than just another notion about God from the world.

We also need to be careful not to imply that a teacher of the church is somehow more sanctified or valued by God than those employed in occupations and professions in the world. Earlier I contrasted church teachers and pastors with public educators and public health administrators. The contrast is not between the eternal value of the persons in different offices and the honor of their activities. The contrast is between the temporal affairs of this world and the eternal promises of God’s kingdom that Christians in all vocations have and share. We distinguish the temporal and eternal in the two kingdoms doctrine, remembering that both realms, i.e., the "left" and the "right," are God’s.

Teaching in the church, then, belongs to the Biblical tradition of the calling to ministry. We have affirmed this by seeing how distinguishing it from employment preserves and accentuates the Gospel but doesn’t create special status for the person who is teaching. The distinction then, for the sake of the Gospel, implies these sorts of relationship principles, principles that are well established in the New Testament and already worked out in previous discussions:

- Teaching in the church portrays a different kingdom than does employment in our market economy, and we seek to distinguish and not confuse those two kingdoms (Jn. 17:13-20).

- The teacher of the church does not sell her or his ministry of the Gospel in the labor market, but does receive a living from those who benefit by that teaching (Mt. 10:10, I Cor. 9:14).

- The relationship of the teacher to the Christian community, while informed by the Law, is characterized by the Gospel and not regulated by the Law and manifestations of the Law such as contracts (Rom. 6-8, Gal. 2-4, I Cor. 9).9

---

9 For a helpful brief discussion on the two kingdoms doctrine, see Veith (1999, pp. 91-106).

10 Walther (187/1852) elaborates several theses about the ministry of the church and addresses several principles and concepts that can inform a Biblical outlook in the Lutheran tradition about employment and ministry.

11 See “Rubrics Governing Call” (April, 2002).
• The teacher of the church does not participate in a hierarchy (from the Greek, hiero + arche, sacred rulers, referring to some organization of ascending holy ranks and offices). Rather, the teacher is one among sisters and brothers in Christ who conducts the office of teacher on behalf of these other Christians.  

• The teacher of the church is not a hireling. The office of the teacher is an office of the Gospel itself, and it reflects the nature and character of the Good Shepherd who is also called Rabbi. (See Jn. 10:7-18)

Changing Direction
Life, including life in the church, is sloppy. However precisely we write our doctrines and interpretations, our applications are rarely very precise. Nevertheless, the kingdom of God will still come, it will come for us, and that's a relief. So rather than summing up our discussion with several strident correctives, a few suggestions will do better. Better to be headed in the right direction, however erratic, than to remain stuck in place trying to fix everything first.

I think our current tendency toward employerization is the wrong direction. We could change that direction by avoiding contracts for teachers whenever possible. Congregation pastors and district officials could speak out about this a bit more. They could help school boards and personnel committees consider whether they are motivated more by fear of "getting stuck with a lemon" than by a spirit of trust and hope, and under what unusual conditions a contract might be appropriate.

We could change direction by providing some instruction about the two kingdoms. We who teach may be remiss in not helping Christians to better understand how the kingdoms are different, how they are related, and how the Christian must live simultaneously in both. Helping them to understand this can help them appreciate their congregation's ministry and their own priestly ministry. We could also avoid the public school teacher comparison while endorsing the vocation of public educators in God's kingdom of the left.

We could change direction by occasionally reminding ourselves and our business offices that, though we must sometimes use the language of business, our ministers are not employees. A gentle word, an insertion in a bulletin, or a brief and pleasant memo from time to time would probably be enough. Similarly, we could recognize that we must and should interact with the institutions of this world but be careful not to grant them peremptory status. Accreditation agencies, state departments of education, legal claimants, and other entities of the left-handed kingdom have an ancillary role in some of our activities. Our identity and priorities, established by God's Word, are already located in other larger concerns. Again, a gentle reminder from time to time would help.

And we could change direction by emphasizing the didaskalos commitments of the teaching ministry rather than offices, titles, and leadership. Those we entrust with our operational activities such as budgets, supplies, schedules, and planning perform essential duties that are critical to our ministry in today’s world and for whom we give thanks to God. Yet these fellow servants are not our leaders—for we have only one Master and Teacher (Mt. 23:8-12). While this re-emphasis may at first sound peculiar, iconoclastic, and unrealistic, any cursory review of how the Lutheran tradition has hammered out these ideas over the last five hundred years will confirm a healthy caution toward officialdom.13

Conclusion

Origen, that independent teacher of the early church, cannot be our model for today. Neither can the sixteenth-century Lutheran schoolteachers and professors in Wittenberg who functioned both as civil servants and as ministers of the church. We learn from them that they were shaped by their times but also by deliberately engaging their theology with those times, and this yielded effective teaching for the church then.

We in our time will have to work out our salvation with our share of fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12). Meanwhile, I have not here worked out a definition and explication of the teacher of the church for today. I haven’t addressed the terminology and nomenclature questions about teachers and the office of the ministry. I have only said that if we today are not working out what it means to be didaskalos, i.e., a teacher of the church, we will continue to be shaped only by our times and not also by our faith and theological tradition. Meanwhile, teachers are not employees. We can take that one off the list. Now we can consider other possibilities.—LEJ

---

13 In his colorful way, Luther (1959/1537) speaks out against any forms of superiority in the ministry in the Lutheran confession that makes most people nervous, “The Treatise on the Power of the Pope” (p. 320ff). Walther (1887/1852) elaborates on this theme of no ranking within the church or ministry in his thesis IV concerning the holy ministry (p. 198ff).
References

Risa Moulds taught religion at Baltimore Lutheran High School for twelve years. He currently teaches The Christian Teacher’s Ministry at Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska, and is writing and presenting on Christian spiritual traditions. He may be contacted at rmoulds@seward.cune.edu.
Invisible Christian Educators: 
A Look at LCMS Lay Practitioners of 
Parish-Based Christian Education.

Paul W. Schoepp

It has always been the task of people of faith to pass on their beliefs to succeeding generations. Scripture commands it. (Deut 6:4-9). At its most basic level this task will always belong to families but, as people of like mind have gathered together, other teachers of the faith have figured prominently. Since its inception in 1847 the LCMS has assigned this role to pastors, and then to teachers (Schmidt, 1972), and more recently to directors of Christian education.

Schroeder (1974), Giles (1983), Griffin (1995), and Keyne (1995) traced the development of the DCE profession within the LCMS. DCE ministry first began in the second decade of the 20th century when a few Lutheran teachers moved from the classrooms of the parochial school setting into the congregational setting. Rather than teaching a narrow age range of students multiple subject areas, they began to serve people of all ages with a singular Christian education focus. Growth of the profession was initially slow but in 1959 the DCE position was approved by synodical convention (Proceedings, 1959) and over the next four decades six synodical institutions of higher education were approved to train and certify DCEs. Keyne (1995) reported that DCE ministry had gained acceptance and visibility in the LCMS and was on its way to becoming an established profession.

Yet, there remains another group of parish-based Christian educators who are largely invisible to the institutionalized church. In addition to certified DCEs some congregations also identify and select lay people to join the paid staff and direct the congregation's Christian education ministry. These individuals have varying degrees of education and training for their ministry and are given various different titles by the congregations they serve.

While they carry out valuable ministry tasks for the local congregations they serve, these "lay practitioners" are invisible to the larger institutional church because it takes no formal responsibility for their education or oversight. Decisions regarding engaging them in ministry are made at the congregational level—often without the larger institutional church’s awareness. While the LCMS maintains a roster of certified workers and publishes it annually (e.g. The Lutheran Annual, 2001), there is no such listing for lay practitioners. Further, while DCEs have been relatively well studied (Schaeffer, 1972; Davison, 1978; Karpenko, 1978; Giles, 1983; and Keyne, 1995) lay practitioners have not been studied.

Prior to the work of Schoepp (2003) there was no empirical research published regarding the work of lay practitioners in the LCMS. The time had come for a closer look. Schoepp’s quantitative study focused on full-time lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education ministry in LCMS congregations and explored variables in three broad areas. First, demographic variables
were explored to develop a clear picture of the lay practitioner population in comparison to the DCE population. Second, the amount of time that they spent in ten major parish ministry roles was measured and compared to similar data for certified DCEs. Lay practitioners were also asked to assess their perceived need for additional training in each of the ten ministry roles. Finally, since some have moved to formal certification, a last set of variables explored their interest in pursuing DCE certification as well as restraints and enhancements to that certification process. This article chronicles Schoepf's findings and the work of lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education—paid staff members of a congregation carrying out Christian education ministry without having gone through a synodical certification program.

**Method of the Study**

The target population for the study was identified through the use of an annual district survey that attempted to identify and enumerate both certified DCEs and lay practitioners. This survey was started first by Karpenko (2002) in the mid 1970's and continued by Cullen (2001). Another listing of both DCEs and lay practitioners from DCEnet (Broten, 2002) was used to supplement the aforementioned list as was the participant list for the LCMS-sponsored "Youth Ministry 2002 Conference". The resulting list was checked against official records of DCEs (Concordia University System, 2002; The Lutheran Annual, 2001) to remove certified DCEs from it.

The accessible population of 513 lay practitioners was then invited to take part in the survey through a five contact protocol (Dillman, 2000). Participants were sent a pre-notice letter, a survey and contact letter and a follow-up postcard. Then, as necessary, participants were contacted by additional follow up mail and telephone.

These rigorous implementation and follow-up procedures, as well as a wave analysis (Creswell, 2002) comparing early and late respondent groupings, resulted in no significant difference (alpha=.01) on several key variables, reducing concerns about early/late response bias and respondent/non-respondent bias.

**Findings**

Of the 513 surveys administered, 474 surveys were returned either through mail or telephone follow-up for an overall response rate of 92.4%. Of these surveys, 362 (70.6%) had usable data. There were 112 surveys returned that were unusable (102 individuals had left their ministry position, six were duplicate surveys, and four surveys were returned blank). Thirty-nine surveys (7.6%) were not returned.

The first four items on the survey were screening questions to determine that participants were, in fact, full-time lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education. (It is noteworthy to acknowledge that 117 certified teachers were included in the identified population of lay practitioners. Though this group was not included in the research results, their presence in the data bears out the historical reality that DCE ministry initially grew from a small number of classroom teachers who began to do full time parish-based Christian education. Classroom teacher certification and DCE certification are now distinct from one another but there is still some
overlap in the roles. There are still some classroom-trained teachers serving as parish-based Christian educators.)

After certified workers, volunteers, and individuals who served in areas other than Christian education were winnowed from the responses, 158 respondents met the criteria of serving as lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education but only 112 of these were full-time. This represented an eligible response rate of 21.8% from the original survey administration but supported the largely "invisible" nature of the population and the difficulty in identifying them since no official rosters were kept.

**Lay Practitioner Demographics**

Results for both Parts I and II of the survey were calculated on a sample of 112 full time lay practitioners. Part I of the survey (the demographic portion) studied 26 different factors, summarized as follows:

Lay practitioners came to their ministry positions from a widely divergent set of former careers ranging from homemaker to student to teacher to tractor-trailer driver.

Most lay practitioners served a congregation where they had previously been members and all full-time lay practitioners had Lutheran background (almost all from the LCMS).

The ministry positions in which lay practitioners served were developed in a variety of different ways from initiating a new area of ministry, to covering ministry formerly done by volunteers, to replacing existing lay practitioners or certified workers. There was no dominant method of developing the position.

The vast majority of lay practitioners had only served in one congregation and had a mean tenure there of 5.84 years. Mean total years of service for lay practitioners was 6.89 years and mean anticipated years of future service in the lay practitioner role was 10.80 years.

The congregations where lay practitioners served had an average attendance of 567.51 and an average of 9.61 full-time and 5.07 part-time staff. These relatively large staff sizes were accounted for by the fact that almost two-thirds of the congregations where lay practitioners serve operated a parochial school.

Twenty-seven of the 35 districts of the LC-MS had lay practitioners serving in them with a disproportionately high percentage of them serving in Michigan and Minnesota-South districts. Lay practitioners had mixed levels of contact with certified DCEs.

About one-third of lay practitioners had a high school or associate degree as their highest educational level while two-thirds had a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. Major areas of study for undergraduate degrees covered the spectrum with about one quarter of them falling in the area of education.

There were slightly more female lay practitioners than male, and the average age was 40-years-old.

The vast majority of lay practitioners were married and most lived in households of three or more.
Very few lay practitioners serve in rural areas or in cities with a population under 10,000. The majority of lay practitioners served in cities with a population of over 50,000.

Over three quarter of lay practitioners were satisfied or very satisfied with both their ministry positions and their relationships with other staff.

Lay practitioners earned an average salary of $32,831.05, worked an average of 49.6 hours per week and were an average of 6.38 hours of driving time to the nearest DCE certifying institution.

Statistical testing (Mann Whitney U; Chi Square, and Independent-Measures t at the .01 level of significance) was also undertoken to compare lay practitioners and certified DCEs on several of the demographic variables where DCE data was available (Karpenko, 1997).

In summary the demographic comparisons indicated no significant difference in regard to tenure at their current congregation with lay practitioners serving an average of 5.84 yrs and certified DCEs serving an average of 5.36 yrs. The average total length of service was significantly shorter for lay practitioners at 6.89 yrs compared to 10.18 yrs for DCEs—probably due to the fact that most lay practitioners do not move on to serve another congregation.

Though congregational worship attendance was larger for lay practitioners (567.51) than for DCEs (466.34) the difference was not statistically significant.

On average lay practitioners (40.00 yrs) were significantly older than DCEs (36.67 yrs) but both lay practitioners (49.60 hrs) and DCEs (51.22 hrs) work about the same number of hours per week.

As might be expected because of certification requirements, lay practitioners had significantly less post secondary education than DCEs with about one third of lay practitioners not having completed a bachelor’s degree.

The ratio of female to male lay practitioners (53.2% to 46.8%) was significantly higher than the ratio of female to male DCEs 31.0% to 69.0%)

Marital status between lay practitioners and DCEs appeared to be similar though it could not be tested statistically.

By percentage, lay practitioners and DCEs worked in similar sized communities. Lay practitioners and DCEs expressed similar levels of satisfaction with their positions but lay practitioners ($32,831.05/yr) were paid significantly less than DCEs ($37,131.54).

**Lay Practitioner Ministry Roles**

Part II of the survey addressed lay practitioner ministry roles. Multiple frameworks existed for defining the roles or functions of parish-based Christian educators (Beal, 1976; Brantsch, 2001; Elmsheuser, 2001; Emler, 1989; Furnish, 1968, 1976, 1984; Giles, 1983; Harris, 1976; Karpenko, 1986, 1990, 1997; Kraft, 1957; Lawson & Choun, 1992; Lines, 1992; and Stubblefield, 1993). Schoepp (2003) used Karpenko’s (1986, 1990, 1997) framework since it was developed within the LCMS context and was used to define critical ministry roles for the parish based Christian educators known as DCEs. The role definitions that follow were transferred verbatim from Karpenko’s 1997 research with only one exception: the term "DCE" was...
replaced with the term "lay practitioner" since these were the subject of this study.

LEADER is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in bringing direction and
derministering change to various ministry areas by influencing individuals, groups, committees, boards, and
assemblies to take action to realize the congregation's vision, mission, and goals.

ADMINISTRATOR is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in the day-to-day
managing, coordinating/directing, promoting and evaluating the various parish ministry areas
(e.g., education, youth, music, etc.) activities, projects, programs, and agencies.

AGE GROUP RESOURCE is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in spending
time with, leading, or speaking on behalf of, a person of a particular age, either individually,
in small and/or large same-age groups or in intergenerational groups.

CARE ACTION MINISTER is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in min-
istering to a person, family or group through nurturing and/or crisis visitation activities (e.g.,
home, hospital, etc.), community organization efforts, or counseling experiences.

CHURCH PROFESSIONAL is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in develop-
ing and maintaining of their sense of identity, purpose, devotional life, code of ethics, staff rela-
tionships, church-at-large commitments, peer support, and continuing education activities.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM RESOURCE is defined as that role which involves lay prac-
titioners in providing the educational resources, or being the educational resource for the boards,
committees, etc. in one's congregational-assigned ministry areas.

MUSIC FACILITATOR is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in facilitating
individual and group use of music (soloist, Sunday School music, etc.) and/or performing within
the formal music ministry of the congregation (choir directing, organ playing, etc.).

PASTORAL AND STAFF SUPPORT is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners
in working with the pastor(s) and/or other staff in other parish ministry areas such as evangelism,
stewardship and congregational worship

PARISH TEACHER is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in serving the
congregation as a teacher of the faith and a theological resource in classes, courses and/or pro-
grams in the day school and/or the parish.

VOLUNTEER SPECIALIST is defined as that role which involves lay practitioners in iden-
tifying talents/gifts of individuals, as well as recruiting, training, supervising, sustaining, and evalu-
ing volunteers who may assume various roles within areas of ministry such as education,
youth, music (i.e., Sunday school teacher, youth counselor, etc.).

Lay practitioners were asked to indicate the number of hours they spent in each of the ten
ministry roles and were also given an opportunity to identify new roles. The number of hours in
each ministry role was converted to a percentage of their total hours and then averaged across the
112 full-time lay practitioner respondents. The rank order of time spent in each ministry role
from largest amount of time to smallest was: 1) administrator; 2) leader; 3) age group resource;
4) church professional; 5) educational program resource; 6) volunteer specialist; 7) parish teacher;
8) care action minister; 9) pastoral & staff support; 10) self-identified role; 11) music facilitator.

Clearly administrative tasks appeared to consume the largest amount of lay practitioners'
time. Every lay practitioner but one spent some time in the area of administration and, overall, they spent about one-fourth (25.1%) of their time on administratively related tasks. The role of leader was next in terms of the time invested by lay practitioners and, without exception, every respondent spent some time in this area with an overall investment of nearly a fifth (18.3%) of their time. Third on the list was the role of age group resource. Only nine respondents did not spend any time in the role of age group resource and overall lay practitioners spent about one-tenth (10.8%) of their time in this ministry area. Taken together, the first three items (administration, leadership, and age group resource) comprised over half (54.2%) of the time invested.

The role of church professional was invested in by all but two respondents: overall lay practitioners spent 9.2% of their time in this ministry area. The role of educational program resource was invested in by all but seven respondents and overall lay practitioners spent 6.7% of their time in this ministry area. The role of volunteer specialist was invested in by all but seven respondents: overall lay practitioners spent 6.6% of their time in this ministry area. The role of parish teacher was invested in by all but twelve respondents with respondents indicating that about 6.3% of their time was spent in this ministry area. The role of care action minister was invested in by all but nine respondents and overall lay practitioners spent 6.1% of their time in this ministry area. Taken together these last five items comprised about one-third (34.9%) of the time invested by lay practitioners.

The role of pastoral and staff support was left blank by 27 respondents, or they indicated that they spent no time in that role: overall lay practitioners spent only 4.1% of their time in this ministry area.

The role of music facilitator had 62 respondents leave it blank or indicate that they spent no time in that role and overall lay practitioners spent only 2.8% of their time in this ministry area. Self-identified roles were left blank by 89 respondents. Overall lay practitioners spent only 4.1% of their time in specifically defined ministry areas.

Taken together the last three items (pastoral & staff support, self-identified roles, and music facilitator) only comprised about one-tenth (11.0%) of the time invested by lay practitioners.

A Mann Whitney U-Test comparison of time spent by lay practitioners in ministry roles to time spent by DCEs in ministry roles revealed five significant differences (p < .01). Lay practitioners spent a significantly larger percentage of their time (18.3%) in the leader role than did DCEs (12.8%). Lay practitioners spent a significantly larger percentage of their time (25.1%) in the administrator role than did DCEs (18.9%). Lay practitioners spent a significantly smaller percentage of their time (6.7%) in the educational program resource role than did DCEs (8.4%). Lay practitioners spent a significantly smaller percentage of their time (6.3%) in the parish teacher role than did DCEs (13.4%). Lay practitioners spent a significantly smaller percentage of their time (6.7%) in the volunteer specialist role than did DCEs (9.7%).

In terms of need for training, no areas stood out in which lay practitioners expressed a consistently high perceived need. Every ministry role but one (music facilitator) fell into the defined midrange indicating that overall, lay practitioners expressed a moderate perceived need for additional training in nine of the ten ministry areas. Lay practitioners expressed a low level of need
for training in the area of music—an area where they spent little of their time.

It was worthy of note that the three areas with the strongest perceived need for training were in roles where there was a significant difference in the time invested between lay practitioners and DCEs. The strongest perceived need for training was in the volunteer specialist role. Lay practitioners spent less of their time (6.7%) in the volunteer specialist role in comparison to DCEs (9.7%). The second strongest perceived need for training was in the leader role. Lay practitioners spent more of their time (18.3%) in the leader role than did DCEs (12.8%). The third strongest perceived need for training was in the parish teacher role. Lay practitioners spent less of their time (6.3%) in the parish teacher role than did DCEs (13.4%).

Lay Practitioner Certification Interest

Part III of the survey addressed lay practitioner interest in DCE certification as well as constraints on and enhancers to certification. One item on the survey specifically asked "How much interest do you have in pursuing coursework through one of the Concordias that would lead to certification as a rostered Director of Christian Education?" Twenty-nine respondents (25.9%) indicated no interest in pursuing certification while 83 respondents (74.1%) indicated some level of interest in pursuing certification. Twenty-one respondents (18.8%) indicated a slight interest, 29 respondents (25.9%) indicated a moderate interest, 22 respondents (19.6%) indicated a strong interest, and 11 respondents (9.8%) indicated that they were already pursuing DCE certification. Responses to the remainder of the questions for the survey were based on the number of lay practitioners expressing some level of interest in DCE certification (n=83).

Use of a Spearman correlation to find relationships between certification interest and other demographic variables indicated only two significant relationships. Increased lay practitioner interest in DCE certification was related at the .01 level of significance to regular contact with DCEs ($r=+.246$) and to higher overall perceived needs for training by lay practitioners ($r=+.440$).

Of those interested in pursuing DCE certification the vast majority (91.6%) would pursue DCE certification on a part-time basis. Part-time coursework appeared to be the only way lay practitioners would consider pursuit of certification. This made sense when one took into account several of the demographic variables in the survey. These individuals were working full-time as parish-based Christian educators and putting in an average of 49.6 hours a week, 76.8% were married and 55.4% had household sizes of three or more family members. Clearly, there was insufficient time for lay practitioners to pursue DCE certification as full-time students due to other responsibilities in life.

When asked how they would pay for the tuition costs of certification 23 respondents (28.0%) indicated that the full amount of their tuition would be covered by outside support. Twenty respondents (24.4%) indicated that outside support would cover 75% of their tuition costs. Nineteen respondents (23.2%) indicated that their tuition costs would be split evenly between themselves and outside support. Six respondents (7.3%) indicated that they would be covering 75% of their tuition costs on their own, and eleven respondents (13.4%) indicated that they would have to bear the entire cost of their tuition.
Lay practitioners were asked to indicate restraints to certification. From greatest to least, the restraints to certification were: 1) inability to relocate due to family/child concerns; 2) inability to relocate due to spouse's job; 3) high financial cost of certification; 4) length of time for certification; 5) distance from a DCE certifying institution; 6) lack of a favorable impact on salary; 7) little certification encouragement from congregation; 8) little certification encouragement from staff; 9) the demanding nature of Christian education ministry; 10) a perception that no new competencies would be gained; 11) a perception that certification was unnecessary since the lay practitioner was already involved in Christian education ministry; 12) different career goals from Christian education ministry; 13) the perceived difficulty of certification coursework.

The first three items were considered strong restraints to certification. Lay practitioners appeared to be geographically immobile and unable to relocate to pursue certification even if interested in that course of action. This fit well with the demographic that showed most have only served one congregation. Finances were also strong restraint to certification.

The next eight ranked items were considered moderate restraints to certification. Of interest were the items ranked ten and eleven—both had a bi-modal distribution. For rank number ten, it appeared that one group of lay practitioners tended towards the belief that they had all the necessary competencies for parish-based Christian education ministry while another group tended toward the belief that they could still learn new competencies or grow in their existing competencies. For rank number eleven it appeared that a group of lay practitioners saw DCE certification only as a door to enter parish-based Christian education ministry. Since these individuals were already involved in parish-based Christian education ministry, certification held little value. It appeared that the other group valued DCE certification for more than its ability to provide an access point to serving in parish-based Christian education ministry.

The last two items were viewed as weak restraints to certification. This paralleled the responses in the demographic section of the survey where lay practitioners indicated a mean of 10.80 years of additional anticipated service—most lay practitioners anticipated serving as Christian educators for an extended period. With regard to the difficulty of certification coursework, lay practitioners were clearly not daunted by the academic rigors necessary for certification as DCEs.

Finally, lay practitioners were asked what types of course delivery would enhance pursuit of certification. In rank order of preference from highest agreement to lowest they were: 1) internet-based courses; 2) independent study courses via regular mail; 3) television courses via cable TV; 4) compressed multi-weekend courses via extension in the lay practitioner's geographic area; 5) on campus courses in a compressed one week format; 6) television courses via satellite TV; 7) semester long courses via extension in the lay practitioner's geographic area; 8) on campus courses in a regular semester format.

"With regard to the difficulty of certification coursework, lay practitioners were clearly not daunted by the academic rigors necessary for certification as DCEs."
The first four ranked items were considered strong enhancers to certification. What each of these delivery methods shared in common was that instruction was taken to the lay practitioner rather than asking them to come to the instruction. A feature that was shared by the top three preferred methods of course delivery (internet-based courses, mail correspondence courses, and television course via cable TV) was the asynchronous nature of the interaction that could occur with those instructional formats. That is to say that the instructor and students could still interact with one another but would not need to do it in real time.

Items ranked five through seven were considered moderate enhancers to certification while the item ranked eight was not considered an enhancer. It was clear that regular on campus course delivery did not meet the needs of lay practitioners.

There were no significant correlations between method of course delivery and certification interest. Stated another way, lay practitioners with low levels of interest in certification were likely to be as favorably disposed to any given type of course delivery method as lay practitioners with high levels of interest in certification.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Despite their "invisibility" to the institutionalized church, considerable numbers of lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education are engaged in ministry in congregations of the LCMS. In many ways their roles as Christian educators parallel the roles undertaken by certified DCEs yet there are some significant differences. Lay practitioners spend significantly more time than certified DCEs in the areas of leader and administrator. They also spend significantly less time than certified DCEs in the areas of educational program resource, parish teacher, and volunteer specialist. This research also indicated that lay practitioners have the strongest perceived need for training in the roles of volunteer specialist, leader, and parish teacher.

DCE undergraduate training in the LCMS has been guided by Karpenko's (1986, 1990, 1997) work on ministry roles and sub-roles and the LCMS national DCE definition (Lutheran Education Association, 2002). An area worthy of further exploration would be to study whether the specific training received by DCEs contributed to the significant differences in the amount of time invested in particular ministry roles. It could be that since two of the main areas of preparation for DCEs have been in the enabling and equipping of volunteers and in providing educational resources that DCEs had less need to spend time in the leader and administrator role—congregational volunteers may have been picking up some of the leadership and administrative tasks for DCEs while lay practitioners may have been carrying out these tasks on their own.

A stated value among DCEs is "lead to equip leaders" (Lutheran Education Association, 2002, p. 3). DCEs may have spent more time in the role of parish teacher because of the greater amount of formal training they received in that area during their undergraduate education in comparison to lay practitioners. Further study is needed to verify these suppositions about the training received by DCEs and its impact on expenditures of time in ministry roles.

This research identified that half of lay practitioners were not encouraged by their congregation or their staff to pursue certification. This raises the question of what value congregations
and other certified workers in synod (pastors, teachers, DCEs, district presidents and district education executives) place on DCE certification for the parish-based Christian education role. Why did congregations choose lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education rather than certified DCEs? Was it related to the significant differences in salary between lay practitioners and certified DCEs? Was it related to the current and impending shortage of certified church workers (Barry, 2000; Klaas & Klaas, 1999)? Was it related to congregational or staff dissatisfaction with certified DCEs? Or, were there other factors at work?

This study confirmed the ministry of lay practitioners within congregations of the LCMS and as such also confirmed the discrepancy between the synod’s normative structure, "the way things should be," and its behavioral structure, "the way things are" (Scott, 1998). The constitution of the LCMS constitution (1998) notes that only certified workers should serve congregations. It may be important for the LCMS to address the discrepancy between normative and behavioral structure as related to parish-based Christian education ministry.

To do this, the LCMS needs to become more intentional about identifying and tracking its lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education. Official accountability to the normative structure can only be monitored and encouraged when there is information available about how closely individuals and congregations are abiding by the normative structure. The LCMS needs to develop and maintain a list of lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education ministry. This is not a recommendation to make lay practitioners members of synod as ordained or commissioned ministers—only a recommendation to be aware of who lay practitioners are and where they are serving. Once the LCMS has an official awareness of how closely its congregations conform to its normative structure, several options exist to address the discrepancy.

One option that exists to address the discrepancy between normative and behavioral structure for parish-based Christian educators is for the LCMS to enforce conformity to its normative structure and remove from synodical membership congregations which persistently violate the requirement to use only certified workers (The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 1998). Censure of congregations by synod is NOT a recommendation of the researcher based on the results of this study. The data from this study showed that lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education ministry have served many congregations for many years. The current and impending shortage of certified church workers (Barry, 2000; Klaas & Klaas, 1999) has put many congregations into the situation where they have had to augment their staff with uncertified workers that have not been trained via the traditional college, university, or seminary route.

Further, Article VII of the LCMS Constitution (1998) notes that the synod may not exercise "legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation's right of self-gov-
ernment it is but an advisory body” (p. 11). Given LCMS polity, censure would likely do more to fracture rather than to unite practice.

A second option for addressing discrepancy between normative and behavioral structure regarding parish-based Christian educators is for the LCMS to recognize the discrepancy as inevitable and perhaps even desirable. Theological reasons exist for the tension (Carter, 2002; Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 1981; Janzow, 2002; Koehler, 1952; Kolb, 1993). On the one hand, the LCMS recognizes the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers as expressed in 1 Peter 2:9ff and the reality that all of God’s gifts of grace (the Office of the Keys) are available to all Christians anywhere and at any time. All Christians are engaged in ministry (sometimes called service or vocation) in the broad sense of the term. On the other hand, the LCMS recognizes the office of the public ministry and the right and obligation of congregations to call certain people to carry out a distinct public ministry by order of and on behalf of the congregation. Public ministers of the gospel preach, and teach, and administer the sacraments, but their task does not end there. The task of public ministers is also to “prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” Ephesians 4:11 (New International Version).

“There may be multiple paths to service in public ministry in the church. What is needed are ways to acknowledge that possibility.”

When the local congregation and its public minister(s) are effectively doing their job, it follows that lay people will be equipped to carry out their volunteer ministry more effectively. In some cases, based on their fitness and competency, these volunteer lay people may be identified by their congregation and requested to join the paid staff and serve in public ministry. One respondent shared an example of this in a write-in section of the survey, “I did not choose this career but the Lord and the pastors in the parishes I served saw something in me and put me to work.”

As stated previously, lay practitioner ministry does not conform to the current practice of preparing individuals for the office of public ministry. The normative structure for the LCMS has been that individuals leave their home congregations and go to a centralized college, university, or seminary to receive their training and then are called into a different congregation to fill an office in the public ministry. However, such practice has not always been the case for the Christian church. In early church practice, the apostle Paul was quick to identify natural leaders within the congregations he established and put them into official positions of ministry (Allen, 1956; Titus 1:5). He then went on to start other new congregations but as he was doing so, he kept in contact with the already established churches by providing training in written form. Much of the New Testament consists of Paul’s epistles of instruction and encouragement to these congregations and the leaders who served them.

The reality that most lay practitioners joined the staff of the congregation to which they already belonged suggests there is still something to be said for the early church model of moving people into public ministry directly from within the local congregation. There may be multiple
paths to service in public ministry in the church. What is needed are ways to acknowledge that possibility. Perhaps some lay practitioners will never desire certification but will continue to minister effectively in the congregations they serve. Perhaps some lay practitioners who are interested in certification need an alternative form of equipping and training that does not rely on a geographically centralized institution. Perhaps, since lay practitioners are already involved in public ministry, they need an in-service route to certification rather than the traditional pre-service route followed by public ministry.

This leads to the last, and best, option that exists to address the discrepancy between normative and behavioral structure. The LCMS should lower the restraints (but not the requirements) to certification; to make it easier for lay practitioners to obtain professional credentials for their role in public ministry. This option implicitly values certification because of the theological and theoretical knowledge and the practical training that go along with it. Such an education is one of the marks of a profession. Parish-based Christian education is more than a craft. It is a public ministry of service; but it is also a profession. "A craft is something which can be observed, imitated, learned by experience. The craftsman's knowledge has been developed through trial and error. A profession has skills and theory that must be taught" (Keyne, 1995, p. 80).

The LCMS holds that professional training is necessary in order to serve in public ministry as a pastor or a teacher. That same standard is becoming more prominent for parish-based Christian educators and is the story of the development of the DCE as a profession. Generally speaking lay practitioners had a desire to serve in parish-based Christian education ministry for the foreseeable future and had some level of interest in certification. Lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education were not opposed to certification or concerned about the difficulty of coursework for certification—they were simply unable to access certification because of multiple restraints. Many of the restraints can be addressed via distance education methods of course delivery.

The two strongest restraints to certification for lay practitioners were family or spousal job concerns that prevented relocation. These may be combined into a single issue of geographic immobility. A quote from one of the lay practitioners stated succinctly how the issue of geographic immobility could be overcome: "The internet has reduced the need for the university as an institutional ‘place’—start using congregations as the training ground!"

As Willis (2003) noted in an online definition, distance education addresses the restraint of geographic immobility: "At its most basic level, distance education takes place when a teacher and student(s) are separated by physical distance, and technology (i.e., voice, video, data, and print)...is used to bridge the instructional gap." The LCMS, and its DCE certifying institutions, need to affirm distance DCE certification options. Such distance education options already exist for teachers to be certified within the LCMS (CUENet, 2003) and for some pastors in special situations through a program called Distance Education Leading to Ordination or DELTO (DELTO, 2003; Isenhower, 2002). A similar option for distance DCE certification of lay practitioners has been established at Concordia, St. Paul (Brons, 2002) and has demonstrated modest success. Distance DCE certification for lay practitioners should be supported throughout synod and enhanced through the cooperative work of all DCE certifying institutions.
Another strong restraint to DCE certification was cost. Distance education already begins to address the issue of making DCE certification more affordable since lay practitioners need not quit their paid ministry positions and relocate their families. Distance education also reduces the cost of certification by requiring less travel for education. While those cost savings are true and realizable through the efficiencies of distance education, more congregations should support the certification process for lay practitioners by providing financial incentives. Such financial incentives might be in the form of paying all or part of tuition costs for certification (addressing a strong restraint), it might be in the form of increased salaries after certification (addressing a moderate restraint), or both.

Other moderate restraints to certification can also be addressed by distance education. Distance education addresses the moderate restraint of length of time for certification by allowing lay practitioners to work at certification at the same time they are carrying out ministry. Distance education also allows lay practitioners to work over extended time periods towards certification. Distance education nullifies the restraint of distance from a DCE certifying institution.

There is no panacea to address the needs of congregations who request lay practitioners to minister among them; to address the needs of lay practitioners who minister in those capacities, and/or to address the needs of the larger synod for uniformity of practice and professional credentialing. Yet, there is no doubt that lay practitioners of parish-based Christian education are meeting ministry needs within the congregations of the LCMS. Though they are invisible to the larger institutionalized church, lay practitioners are very visible to the congregations they serve and are engaged in important ministry roles that further the expansion of God’s church. Lowering the restraints to certification and providing them with the opportunity to further build their knowledge and skills for ministry can only enhance their already valuable ministry.—LEJ

References
http://www.lcms.org/president/statements/shortage.asp.
Commission on Theology & Church Relations. (1981). The ministry: Offices, procedures and nomenclature. Retrieved July 8, 2002 from LCMS website:

Lutheran Education Journal • Volume 139, No. 4—Page 187


Karpenko, W. O. II. (1986). A brief summary of the pertinent findings from phase I and II of the DCE curricular development and validation project involving directors of Christian education (DCES) of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Unpublished manuscript, Concordia College, Seward, NE.

Karpenko, W. O. II. (1990). A brief summary of the pertinent findings from phase III of the DCE curricular development and validation project involving directors of Christian education (DCES) of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Unpublished manuscript, Concordia College, Seward, NE.


**Discussion questions for DCEs**

1. How many lay practitioners are there within your circuit or local ministry area?
2. What efforts do you make to support lay practitioners and include them in ministry dialog and development?
3. Schoepp's study noted a correlation between lay practitioner contact with DCEs and lay practitioner increased interest in DCE certification. What role(s) might you play to encourage lay practitioners towards a certification process?
4. What things can you learn from lay practitioners?
5. What things can you teach to lay practitioners?
6. It is reasonable to expect that if you are carrying out the equipping role effectively in your congregation gifted individuals will be identified for ministry and some of them may transition into full-time ministry as lay practitioners or certified workers? How are you working towards this?
7. Schoepp states that continuing education in the form of DCE certification could enhance the valuable work already being done by lay practitioners. How could your ministry as a certified DCE be enhanced by further education? What are your continuing education plans?
8. What additional question would you like to ask?

Discussion questions for lay practitioners
1. How do the findings of Schoepp’s study match your own demographics, your time spent in ministry roles, and your certification interest?
2. At what level do you value continuing education to carry out your ministry role in the congregation? Could/should DCE certification be a part of that continuing education plan?
3. How strongly do you agree that distance education is a viable option for achieving DCE certification?
4. Based on where lay practitioners reported spending their time, do you agree with Schoepp’s assertion that DCEs may play more of an equipping role than you do as a lay practitioner? Stated another way, do you find yourself doing the upfront ministry more often than you find yourself identifying equipping and supporting others in ministry?
5. What things can you learn from certified DCEs?
6. What things can you teach certified DCEs?
7. What additional question would you like to ask?

Discussion questions for congregations engaging lay practitioners in paid ministry roles
1. What are the benefits and drawbacks of calling certified workers for ministry in your congregation?
2. What are the benefits and drawbacks of identifying and growing workers (lay practitioners) from within the congregation?
3. A lack of both congregational and staff support encouraging lay practitioners to seek certification were identified as moderate restraints to certification. Has your congregation considered encouraging, supporting, and perhaps requiring DCE certification for your lay practitioners? Does your pastor encourage certification of staff? Why or why not?
4. What might support and encouragement for certification look like in your parish in terms of dialog, finances, and study time?
5. What additional question would you like to ask?
What Does Christian Education Have to Do With Missions?

Timothy A. Rippstein

I have a large, poster-size, color diagram of the liturgical church year (compliments of Lutheran Brotherhood). On this oval diagram, the year is divided into two hemispheres, The Life of Christ and the Life of the Church. As this is written, we have just recently wrapped up one half, i.e., The Life of Christ, and are now into the Life of the Church (the many Sundays after Pentecost). It is during this season that the appointed scripture lessons help us to focus on what it means to be the redeemed body of Christ on earth. It means to be in mission together. So that "all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen.12: 3). It is the same purpose that was given to Abraham centuries ago and is still the purpose of the children of Abraham today!

In one sense this mission is well defined and narrow, i.e., to witness to the world about the loving grace found only in Jesus Christ alone. In another sense this mission is as broad and varied as our own nation, "from sea to shining sea". We gain a sense of the breadth of the mission when we ask questions that begin with "How?", "Where?", "With whom?" and "To whom?". The narrow sense of this mission is revealed in The Scriptures with such passages as Matt. 28:19-20, Mk. 16:15-16, Lk. 24:46-49, and Acts 1:8, "Going... baptizing... teaching" this is as much a Christian education mission as VBS or 5th grade religion class.

The broader sense of mission is open to the local body of believers, using the gifts God has gathered together and the resources available. It is in this broader sense that we are free in the gospel to prayerfully observe the winds of opportunity to actively be in mission and lead the way for God's people. In this liberty we have, we also accept the responsibility to use the resources available as we assess the winds of opportunity swirling around us and at the same time remain firmly anchored in the apostolic confession. We then step out in faith taking the risks necessary to reach new people, even people of other cultures, with the genuine love of the Lord. And we get to do all this in the context of Christian education!

Assessing the Winds of Opportunity

Sociology has emerged as a valuable instrument in the hands of wise and faithful Christians during the 20th century. It is through social science that we can gain useful information helping us to assess the directions the winds may be blowing, opening our eyes to mission opportunities.

Through the close monitoring of our own nation, shifting populations and ethnic cultures have been identified. Recent numbers (Pollard, 2001) indicate that a 40-year trend continues. This is the population shifting from the Great Plains (Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma,

1 Remember that the word for wind in both Greek (pneuma) and Hebrew (ruach) also mean spirit and breath.
and some areas of Texas), the lower Mississippi Delta, and the Northern and Central Appalachian region towards the south, southwest and west. This has been most dramatic in Nevada, Arizona, and Colorado through the 1990's, but Florida, Georgia, Texas and Idaho have also outpaced the rest of the nation in 2001. In fact, the fastest growing county is Douglas County, Colorado which has given rise to new term "exurban", the outer county area surrounding Denver. As these exurban areas (such as Denver, Washington D.C., Austin, and Atlanta) continue to expand out from major metropolitan centers, the rural and sparsely populated areas continue to depopulate.

In addition to this population shift, another trend has been observed, an ethnic shifting (The Changing American Pie, 2000). In 1999 about 72% of the US population was white, the largest group. Another 12.1% were African American, the largest minority group, and Hispanics came in at 11.5%. The trend projections for 2025 are Whites dropping to 62% and Hispanics passing African Americans for the largest minority position growing to 18.2% and 12.9% respectively. The combined ethnic groups of Hispanics, African American and Asian/Other will account for about 40% of our population.

These minority groups will be highly concentrated in the south, southwest and west. Currently about 51% of our minority groups reside in 5 states (California, New York, Texas, Florida, and Illinois) and half of the Hispanic population is in California and Texas. Such cities as Los Angeles, New York City, and Miami (as well as others throughout the south) act as gateway cities through which many immigrants enter our nation and have been populating smaller cities and rural areas since the 90's, especially in North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, and South Carolina.

It was not so long ago that many of our own immigrant ancestors traveled to this blessed land of opportunity bringing their Lutheran heritage and faith with them. One would hope that our immigration history would help us to recognize opportunities for Christian mission in the midst of the current trend.

Many modern-culture observers have pointed out that cultural diversity is not reflected only in ethnicity. Sweet (2003) observes a "psycho-graphic" difference rather than a demographic difference among us. Many social scientists have also been observing and defining with interest the postmodern era as it has been emerging. Sweet goes back to 1962 and the onset of the computer age. He labels those who are logical, sequential and linear in thinking, performance and word based, focusing on the individuality as immigrants. It seems that quite probably our beloved Synod as a whole fits into this category. Society has changed enough for this group that they find they are no longer at home but actually experiencing a new and foreign culture. He calls these the BC group or Before Computers. Out of this culture has emerged the AC or After Computer people who, circular in thinking, tend towards more experiential, participatory, and image based focusing on being connected to others in relationships. These are the natives living and thriving in the current U.S. culture.

Miller (2003) helps us to understand the young culture in a positive light. Millennials are those born between about 1982 and 2002. They are expected to reach 100 million, one third
larger than the Baby Boomers. These are the people born in this AC and postmodern era. Miller says, "Millenials are team-oriented and achievers who seek a meaningful career. They feel more connected to other people, believe substantial change is needed, and are eager to make a positive difference" (p. 13). She has a healthy view of this huge, young generation seeking to identify their strengths and weaknesses. "Every generation has its strengths and weaknesses, and subsequent generations often react and respond to previous ones" (p. 14). And for the Millennials, we may have to train them, turn them loose and then get out of their way! "Generation X and Millennials are highly relational. Both love being bombarded with mass media images and information. They tend to have short attention spans and have integrated digital technology into to the foundations of their operational lives" (p. 15). Although the Gen Xers and Millennials are defined by their chronological birthdates, Sweet (2003) has pointed out that the cultural differences between the BC/Immigrant and AC/Native culture seems to be as much a "psycho-graphic" distinction as a demographic or chronological difference. In other words, it is true that there are young people who are more of an immigrant and feel they are in a foreign culture when in the presence of their peers. And the opposite may also be true, that the Native who may be in the Baby Boomer age range, but feels right at home in the modern technological, image-rich, highly connected society.

Some Observations and Implications

In attempting to learn from the trends and discern the shifting winds, trying to understand opportunities, let me begin our list of observations and their implications. I'm sure you will see more.

- Many of our Lutheran churches are in the Great Plains region and in rural areas that are declining in population.
- As the population continues to shift towards the south, southwest and west we can pray for our churches and schools in these areas and encourage them as they seek ways to reach those coming into their midst.
- Support, encourage and learn from our churches and schools as they take the risks to find meaningful ways to reach the growing minority groups and possibly develop collaborative relationships with them.
- Observe, listen to and learn from our brothers and sisters in these growing and changing regions as they faithfully try ways of crossing cultural barriers from our predominantly white, European/German, "BC" church body to other ethnically different people with the love of Christ.
- Learn from our own immigrant struggles of the last 150 years. As we adapted to the American culture and English language, the Lord richly blessed the proliferation of the gospel through the Lutheran church.
- Ministry to immigrating cultures in gateway cities could be the initial introduction to the gospel for people entering this new land.
• Advocate or serve these uprooted immigrants or shifting minority groups as they try to assimilate into new neighborhoods and towns.
• We are not only living in an increasingly more diverse society ethnically, but we are also in a diverse "psycho-graphic" culture. Find ways to identify those most at home in the "AC" culture and empower them to reach out to their peers.
• Explore methods to 'package' the gospel in ways that are friendly and understandable to these cultures.

An Apostolic Church

"And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church." We confess these words together as we prepare for Holy Communion. Another confession used in worship across this globe and over the centuries is The Apostles Creed. As you can tell the apostrophe is missing. Without looking it up where would you put the apostrophe in Apostles? It is plural possessive: We confess the faith of those first Apostles, and every faith-filled and grace-filled apostle since! We confess it, but just what does it mean to be an apostolic church? As Scudieri (1996) indicates in quoting George Forrell, "This means that Christianity is based on the witness of the apostles as we find it in the Bible" (p. 110). There were the original 12 Apostles, these were the ones Jesus 'sent out' (Greek apostellein – to send out, Latin mittere – mission). But as the original twelve Apostles began to die off, the early church used this term to describe other believers.

Scudieri very adeptly demonstrates that the early church fathers (such as Eusebius, Origen, Gregory of Antioch, Didymus of Alexandria and Gregory Naziansus) used the term apostle in a broader sense to describe many believers, both male and female (p. 17ff). "Early Christians understood themselves to be the covenant people of God – charged with the task of witnessing to all nations.... In other words, early Christians knew they were a missionary people" (p. 1). "The middle and later part of the first century were times ripe for Christian mission efforts" (p. 23). The Greek language was widely learned and used, even though many also used a local language, i.e., Aramaic. There was a sense of political unity as the entire Roman Empire was brought under one polity. The famous Roman roads, extensive enough to facilitate efficient transportation, also facilitated a better mailing system. Widespread Roman law promoted the Pax Romana. An openness and even desire for various philosophies (Acts 17:20ff.) and even religious tolerance. The social situation sounds very similar to our own modern setting in the U.S.

As believers witnessed to those around them, the church grew rapidly. The Apostles founded churches and a process or sense of priority seemed to unfold. Scudieri (1996) has an insightful understanding of Paul’s list of offices or gifted workers in 1 Cor. 12:28, "And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues". He sees these roles as a progression of positions needed in the development of these new churches. "...Paul was giving us a chronological order

---

2 It goes at the end of Apostles'. Thank you Dr. Robert Weise for making this point so clearly in class years ago!
in the establishment of new congregations". This is a "list of different categories of workers… not the order of importance, but priority" (p. 25).

The apostles were missionaries, whose strategy was largely itinerant preaching. As people responded and believed, they needed proclaimers of the gospel, some would remain among them to be pastors or prophets. As these believers grew, also needed were teachers (today we call these Sunday school teachers, confirmation teachers, VBS teachers, DCE’s, parochial school teachers, etc.) to help them learn the teachings of Christ more fully and gain a greater depth in the faithfulness of God. "After having been attracted to the faith, potential adherents were invited to begin preparation for complete membership; it was then that teachers and preachers presented a forceful argument for the doctrine of Christ" (Scudieri, 1996, p. 43). This system of organizing individuals in the local church eventually "won the soul of the Roman Empire". Christianity was organized to win converts, and creeds were developed at the local level to provide an outline for instruction and to lead many to baptism.

In these very early years the Christians were motivated by a sense of urgency, to witness to as many as possible and instruct them before Jesus’ return. As time moved on and the return didn’t happen right away, this urgent sense diminished.

About the turn of the first century another motivation for missions was a Christian exclusiveness, that is, that salvation is only in or through the church. As time passed and the Christian message was carried by believers across the empire and beyond, the need for the written word grew. This progression seemed to be effective enough (itinerants carried the message of Christ, as Christian communities developed they called from among themselves presbyters who took on the Apostle’s original roles) and the localized persecutions of these early centuries caused Christians to take this message out as they fled for their lives. "It was in the second and third centuries that the church became truly apostolic, that is, missionary" (Scudieri, 1996, p. 49). Then in A.D. 312, Constantine became emperor. He was a Christian and began to share his wealth with the Christians and even saw himself as the bishop. He proclaimed freedom from all religions, all property that had been confiscated was returned to the churches and Christians. The support from the emperor was a new and welcomed change for the Christian church that grew in these early centuries under persecution and struggle. Changes in the apostolic church began to develop in the Constantine glow; ecumenical councils met (on the emperor’s dime!) to hammer out universal creeds. These creeds were subsequently used to measure doctrines and church leaders as well as to defend the faith. The unity of the church, forged through persecution, was beginning to show cracks. The need to manage the new Christian masses rushing to get into the Emperor’s church drove the need to develop large administrative machines to organize and supervise the church. Clergy became the chief evangelists who brought people in through preaching and teaching. Creeds still retained a teaching purpose as well as their expanded use.
The Leadership Network (The New Apostolic Paradigm, 1995) has identified shifts between the Apostolic Paradigm (1st-3rd centuries) and the Christendom Paradigm (4th-20th centuries). Leadership Network then identifies a needed shift towards a new paradigm – The New Apostolic Paradigm (late 20th-21st centuries). Interestingly these are very similar to the Apostolic Paradigm of the first three centuries, yet they also reflect advances in technology and communication and knowledge of contemporary organizational models and systems. The skill sets useful to lead in this New Apostolic era also reflect what is different in the modern U.S. society. The 21st century Christian:

- Leads by vision and values, not simply by virtue of position.
- Clarifies and articulates purpose and mission.
- Is committed to a process of developing people.
- Acknowledges the importance of their role as teacher/equipper/coach.
- Practices life long learning and encourages others to do the same.
- Communicates effectively using narrative story.
- Possesses skills in leading people and organizations through transition.
- Understands the necessity of both internal and external information.
- Fosters a sense of community and connectedness.
- Recognizes new opportunities in unbounded systems and is open to establishing new alliances, partnerships and networks.

Of the above, most if not all can and should be encouraged and enhanced through effective Christian education as we prepare believers of all ages to be faithful, apostolic Christians in their communities.

**Christian Education**

As we observe and assess the mission opportunities available, and as we continue to uphold and teach that to be apostolic means to be in mission, we use our educational venues to encourage a mission mindset and equip our children, youth and adults to be active missionaries. A useful tool for assessing some basic cultural values is available in Chapter 2 of Lingenfelter’s and Mayers’s (1986) book Ministering Cross-Culturally. They have identified 6 basic values that vary in many cultures: Time/Event Orientation, Dichotomistic/Holistic Thinking, Crisis/Noncrisis Orientation, Task/Person Orientation, Status/Achievement Focus, and Concealment of vulnerability/Willingness to expose vulnerability. Cultures will vary along these six continuums. By leading groups through an exploration of these basic values and taking the 48-question inventory you can help assess your own congregation’s cultural values. This education process can also help to understand other cultures and the potential tension areas as you seek to take the gospel across cultural lines. Working through some of the important and interesting points in this book will also facilitate the development of a missionary mindset. Note that work with people younger than high school will necessitate a revision of the questionnaire to fit a younger audience. Just as
Luke and Paul were useful instruments in the Lord's hands in bringing the gospel to new cultures, we pray to be prepared, available, and willing to take risks in bringing the Good News to those of other ethnic cultures and "psycho-graphics" in our midst. Silva (2003) helps us do just that. Seeming to echo Lingenfelter and Mayers (1986), she says "...African American, Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans, and Native Americans, in general, have different value orientations from middle-class white Americans... The key...is to acknowledge and respect differences while at the same time making our expectations explicit and giving students and congregation members the tools to function in different cultures" (p. 5). As with all areas of mission work, relationships are key. "You must expend time and energy to establish a relationship with each person if you truly want to address their needs and reach them effectively" (p. 6). Silva draws upon current research to identify four approaches to integrating multicultural education into our education curriculum. (Although she is focusing on the school setting, these approaches can be adapted for the church educational setting as well.)

**Level 1 – Contributions Approach.** The most frequently used approach in which diverse ethnic content "is limited primarily to special days, weeks, and months related to ethnic events and celebrations" (p. 7). A suggestion is to incorporate holidays and ethnic events of those to whom you are reaching out, paying attention to the meanings and importance of these celebrations within the ethnic community.

**Level 2 – Additive Approach.** "Content, themes, concepts, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure" (p. 8). Consider adding a book or video/DVD or a unit to your confirmation training focusing on a cultural group to which your congregation is reaching out.
Level 3 – Transformational Approach. This approach enables "students to view issues, themes, and problems from ethnic perspectives and points of view" (p. 8). We do this when we approach a biblical story such as The Prodigal Son in Luke 15. We attempt to see this parable as a 1st century Jewish person. Consider looking at an issue from the perspective of the culture with whom you want to work. Currently there is a lot of attention on marriage and family: What is marriage exactly? Who can get married? What about same-sex marriages? What is the role and influence of the extended family? Consider viewing these from the Hispanic cultural perspective. How might this Transformational Approach help you to reach out to Hispanic families?

Level 4 – Social Action Approach. This approach includes the elements of the Transformational Approach, but adds components requiring students to make decisions and take actions related to concepts, issues, or problems studied. This is educating people to act. To carry the marriage and family issue further, once congregation members or school students understand marriage and its related issues from an Hispanic perspective, consider acting on that understanding. For example, since there is considerable increase in Hispanic immigration, quite probably many are separated from spouses or family. What might some people in your parish or school do to support and encourage them? This Social Action Approach can be addressed as a whole congregation, a youth group, an 8th grade class, a Sunday school, a small group, etc.

Understanding and teaching these four approaches in your school, adult education classes, confirmation program and Sunday school classes can help develop the missionary mindset and also focus mission efforts in your own unique community.

Priming the Idea Pump
To begin the process of getting ideas flowing and priming the missionary mindset pump allow me to offer a few suggestions:

• Read the resources referenced at the end of this article.
• Seek out ethnic “consultants” who are from the culture to which you want to reach.
• Develop a task force or team to assess the local cultural demographics in your area, seek opportunities that are blowing your way and develop educational venues in your school or congregation.
• Network with those congregations and schools on the front lines of these culturally diverse areas. How are they effectively taking risks and trying new ways to reach out? Learn from their mistakes and applaud them for risking and making the mistakes.
• Prepare and lead studies on the early church and how they "did it". What obstacles did they face? What are the similarities to our own 21st century setting?
• Use language in your school or congregation that helps people identify themselves as missionaries.
• Celebrate the current postmodern culture and its characteristics that lend themselves to a mission mindset.

3 See Kenneth E. Bailey’s (1973) treatment of the 15th chapter of Luke seen through the eyes of Middle Eastern peasants.
As you are assessing the cultural opportunities don't overlook the "psycho-graphic" cultures.

Seek ways to encourage the Millennial generation to use their unique characteristics to be significantly engaged in reaching out.

Make "mission" or "cross-culture" a component of each small group.

Develop an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to reach out to non-English speaking people.

While hardly an exhaustive list, this is place to start the visioning process. Matthew 25:14-30 is the Parable of the Talents in which three servants were given money (talents). Two servants went out, using the intelligence and resources available to them, stepping out in faith, taking the risks to multiply what was entrusted to them. Their faithfulness pleased the master. The one who did not even take the risk with what was given him was reprimanded. Not only that, but some of the Lord's harshest words are used here, "You wicked, lazy servant!" As redeemed children of a most loving and gracious Master, we are encouraged and expected to take the risk! Let us observe the winds of opportunity blowing our way. Then let us encourage one another to be apostolic in this new millennium, using the Christian educational venues at our disposal to facilitate the missionary mindset and mobilize the Lord's modern apostles to take the risks necessary to reach other cultures in His name who are living in our backyards.—LEJ

References


Tim Rippstein has served 16 years as a DCE in Niigata, Japan, Reno, Nevada, and Portland, Oregon. He also served the DCE program at Concordia, River Forest as an Assistant Professor of Education for three years and currently holds the same rank at Concordia, Seward as Internship Site Coordinator for the DCE program on that campus.
The State of Director of Christian Education (DCE) in the LCMS
Mark S. Blanke

Let me begin this article by clearly stating that I do not believe that I am capable of giving the definitive picture of DCE ministry today. I can think of many others whom I believe have a firmer grasp on the overall picture of the synodical dynamics associated with DCE ministry. It is difficult to find much hard data dealing with LCMS DCE ministry, but I feel that my experiences, especially over the last 14 years in higher education, has provided me with insights that might prove thought-provoking and may even generate some lively discussion.

Historical Considerations

Because of the relative newness of the DCE profession within the LCMS, I feel that a brief review of the history of the profession may shed some light on where we are at today. I believe that DCE ministry has experienced various "eras" relative to its development. It amazes me how God has lifted up just the right people and circumstances throughout the years to facilitate processing through these eras. Here are the eras that I believe the DCE profession has been through thus far (for a more detailed review please see Griffin, 1995):

• Pre-certification – Prior to the synodical approval of a certification process, there were many individuals serving in DCE-related roles. These individuals helped to formulate the picture of what a DCE ministry is today. Many were synodically trained as teachers who were called to roles that focused primarily on congregational education programs. The growth of the Baby Boomer generation increased congregational interests primarily in the area of youth ministry, and congregations without day schools were looking to enhance their educational ministries to children. Many other denominations had individuals active in DCE-type roles that helped to serve as a model for where DCEs were to focus their energies. Pastors and Education Directors Association (PEDA) was formed in the late 50s as a professional organization for religious educators.

• Early certification – The years immediately following the 1962 synodical recommendation that Concordia, River Forest and Concordia, Seward begin training for directors of Christian education were years involving much innovation and little standardization. Both schools had programs that evolved from the teacher education programs that were already in place. During these early years we also saw the emergence of other hybrid programs, most notably the Parish Assistant program at Ann Arbor and the Parish Worker program at St. John in Winfield. PEDA merged with Lutheran Education Association (LEA) to become the Department of Pastors and DCEs (DPDCE).
• *Advocacy years* – Beginning in the early 1970s, a more focused era of enhanced clarity and advocacy emerged. Individuals such as Luther Mueller, Bill Karpenko, Dale Griffin, LeRoy Wilke, and others served major roles in the refinement of the profession and in gaining additional synodical recognition. During the 70’s and 80’s there was much effort to clarify roles and responsibilities. A definition was published in 1981. The DCE profession was approved for rostering. The demand for DCEs from congregations increased dramatically. DCE service became known as more independent from classroom teaching ministry – particularly with the approval of Concordia Saint Paul’s program (approved in 1969) which evolved separate from teacher certification. Concordia Portland and Concordia Irvine started certification programs during this era. DPDCE changed its name to Theological Educators in Associated Ministries (TEAM).

• *The search for identity* – With the expansion of ministry options within congregations, DCEs found themselves in the exciting position of having multiple ministry capabilities and the blessing and curse of a level of ambiguity regarding the "necessary" roles that they needed to fill. There was a proliferation of new titles for DCEs – Minister for Youth, Family Minister, Assistant to the Pastor – Youth, Director of Youth and Education, Director of Assimilation, Children’s Ministries Coordinator, etc. Many DCEs now found themselves focusing energies on areas distinct from the traditional youth-focused ministries of the past. Folks were stepping into roles that had been uniquely pastoral in the past – especially in the area of worship design and delivery.

Also during this time, there were discussions underway to reshape the base constituency of LEA-TEAM. Where the previous years had led to a narrowing of the primary targeted audience (from pastors and DCEs to more of a DCE-specific focus) the 90’s saw an effort to expand the base to other rostered and non-rostered professions, both parish education related and not. Following much discussion, LEA-TEAM changed its name again to DCENet, which portrayed, at least by the name, a more specific focus on DCEs.

A "new" definition for DCE ministry was accepted at the 1999 DCE Summit in St. Louis. This definition had been field-tested for a few years and many DCEs throughout the country had a chance to provide feedback. The definition was "A DCE is a called and commissioned lifespan educational leader prepared for team ministry in a congregational setting." I believe that this rewriting of the existing definition served to provide enhanced clarity for DCEs, at least in the area of DCE preparation.

Concordia – Austin added a DCE program, becoming the sixth Concordia granting DCE certificates.

**Our Present "State"**

I don’t yet have a name for this new "era", partly because I don’t know how long it will last or what the major influences will be. I’d like to suggest it be called "enhanced identity", but perhaps I am seeking to influence toward a hoped-for goal. Perhaps we can all have some sense of where the next era will take us by looking at the blessings and threats that are affecting DCEs now.
Blessings:

- **Kindle** – The Karpenko Institute for Nurturing and Developing Leadership Excellence serves as a major milestone in the DCE profession in the LCMS. The institute seeks to focus on moving DCEs to a higher level of professionalism and ministry effectiveness through a wholistic approach. Those who have completed this experience speak highly of the impact on their lives and ministry.

- **Quality** – I believe that there exists today a better quality of DCE preparation than existed in days past. Perhaps this is because of the qualities of the generation of students we are seeing, perhaps because of enhanced resources and an overall better understanding of DCE ministry than existed in the past, or maybe because we have more DCE-prepared individuals who are raising up the next generation of DCEs. Whatever the reason, I believe that the DCE graduates coming from the six training institutions today have a greater skills base and potential for ministry effectiveness than did their predecessors.

- **Reputation** – Thanks be to God, in the past 40 years we have developed a history of ministry successes both in the congregation and synod-wide. I believe that those congregations that see themselves as innovative and growing are at least aware of the DCE profession and how congregations have benefited from having a DCE.

- **Definition** – Revisiting the DCE definition was a beneficial exercise for the profession as a whole. The definition that was approved by the 1999 DCE Summit has been widely circulated in synod and has provided clarity for individuals, congregations, and for the DCE certifying institutions. The 2000 LEA/TEAM - sponsored research into DCE job descriptions that helped to paint a clearer picture of the "typical" DCE job description, and the description matched well with the newly formed definition. DCEs were asked to identify their major ministry areas. The data indicated that the vast majority of DCEs spent their time specifically in religious educational ministry areas. The largest non-educational ministry area was "music ministry" and only 8.7% of all DCEs indicated that this was an area for which they had responsibilities.

- **Demand** – Demand for DCEs remains high. We need to be sensitive to the fact that, as an auxiliary ministry, there will likely be some decrease in demand along with the state of national and regional economic health. Having said that, the demand has remained high for at least the past 15 years despite the economic conditions.

- **Need** – More and more research exists that shows the importance of competent religious educational efforts in congregations. Several of the more significant studies show that it is not just the presence of educational opportunities, but also the quality of those opportunities. Rainer (1999) states that churches effectively assimilating members were three times more likely to cite the need for strong organization of the educational programs than those churches that were inef-
fective in their assimilation efforts. The Search Institute study Effective Christian Education that studied 12,000 people in six denominations found that Christian education "done well [emphasis mine]...has the potential beyond any other congregational influence to deepen faith and commitment." It also found that "those adolescents and adults who choose to participate [in religious educational experiences] are not often exposed to particularly effective programming." (Benson, 1990, p. 2)

A trained religious education professional increases the potential (but doesn't guarantee it) that the programming will be done effectively – that is the distinct niche that the DCE seeks to fill.

**Threats:**

- **Lack of research** – LCMS DCEs have not contributed to the quality and quantity of research into religious education as is warranted by our numbers, our specific calling, and the competencies that exist within our ranks. Much of the blame needs to rest on our DCE preparation institutions, which have often focused energy on researching DCEs specifically, but not contributing to the data available on the importance of religious education in the congregation. Field DCEs also need to seek out ways to complete research, if for no other reason than to inform their own congregation of the benefits of effective religious education.

- **Non-education related job descriptions** – In 1995 I wrote an article in Lutheran Education and expressed some concern for those folks who claim "DCE" as their rostered designation, but who have congregational responsibilities in areas unrelated to religious education. I have been surprised to observe the speed at which some DCEs abandon the focus of religious education within their job description. The most recent trend seems to be towards the role of coordination of the worship experiences – especially contemporary worship. I believe that individuals prepared to do religious education, who properly understand the complexity of doing religious education well in a congregation and the importance of doing so, would never actually seek an expansion of their ministry into areas which are unrelated to religious education or for which they have not been prepared. Perhaps they are being encouraged by their congregations to cover these areas and their sense of service to the congregation compels them to do so. Whatever the reason, this trend increases the ambiguity that many people have about the role of the DCE and I believe it diminishes the importance that congregations place on their own religious educational ministries.

History has shown that these hybrids can eventually harm the profession. In The DRE Reader, Kasperek states the result of expanded job descriptions is that, religious educators are unable to fulfill their essential task: developing in believers a faith that is more living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction. Stubblefield (1993) calls the years of 1930-1945 as the era of "disillusionment and despair" for religious educators in protestant churches. One of the reasons for this decline for religious educators was that congregations "expected the director to be involved in areas of the church that did not relate to educational training or specialization. Potential church staff conflicts magnified the problems encountered by religious educators as jeal-
ousies and other issues arose." (p. 28) He goes on to state that religious educators have always struggled with being assigned other duties outside of education, and that once these were added, it became difficult to escape from them. In the words of Furnish (1976), this combination of jobs was one of the things that had "whittled away at the status of the profession." (p. 40)

• **Aging DCEs** – The fact that we now have people who are retiring from DCE ministry is a blessing, but there is a subtle bias associated with the graying population among us. Many DCEs over 40 are finding themselves battling a stereotype. Congregations see DCEs as targeting their efforts primarily at youth – and, they either feel that one must be young to be effective with youth, or that youth ministry is an easy enough task that experience isn’t necessary. Both stereotypes are false, but they persist. The growth of the Baby Boomer generation helped to develop the DCE ministry within the LCMS (Griffin, 1995), but the move of those same Baby Boomers into middle age has not had the subsequent effect of expanding religious educational needs to adults. As long as congregations see religious education as something for the young or if they fail to see the complexity and experience necessary to implement a successful program, we will continue to have some competent but older DCEs who feel that their ministry opportunities are limited.

• **Attrition** – As of April of 2004, 1441 people have been certified as DCEs within our synod. Currently, 496 are serving in full-time, parish DCE ministry. Thirty-three of the 1441 are retired. That means that 912 individuals (63%) have left parish DCE ministry for reasons other than retirement (7% of the total left to go into pastoral ministry and another 7% left to go into teaching ministry.) I do not have enough experience with other professions to know whether or not a 63% attrition rate is unusual or not, but I do know that the departure of so many has contributed to the unusually high demand for DCEs within our synod. We need to better understand the factors contributing to this attrition. Perhaps DCEs are just making career changes for the same reasons that people do in other professions. Or, perhaps there are stressors related to DCE ministry that lead to an enhanced attrition. We should know how to answer the question.

• **Advocacy** – In the past, advocacy for DCE ministry in our synod was effectively carried out through informal and formal networks. Formally, LEA-TEAM served as a broad-based advocacy group that was sensitive to issues related to DCE ministry and made efforts to direct resources towards those areas that warranted the most need. Informally, DCE ministry was promoted at a synodical level through particular individuals who held sway in policy making and had unique insights into the decision-making process that happened in our church body. While one would be hard-pressed to find direct systems that existed for promotion and nurturing of DCE ministry outside of what was happening at the synodical schools, there is no doubt that these things were happening in ways that benefited DCE ministry. My guess is that there were individuals who had a passion for DCE ministry who were either in power positions or who had relationships
with people who were in positions to make changes and those relationships were intentionally nurtured. That informal network exists at a much-reduced level in this current era, and DCENet has not yet demonstrated the ability to influence DCE-specific issues in a way that was done in the past. The long-term implications of this loss of advocacy are hard to determine, but I feel that there has been some negative impact on the profession thus far and it will likely continue.

**Future Issues**

What are the issues that may shape the future of the DCE profession? At just over 40 years old, the DCE profession is relatively new, yet old enough to see the trends and influences that will likely impact the profession in the years to come. Here are a few of the things that those in the profession may want to keep in mind.

- **We need religious education as the profession's centerpiece** – Any student of the history of DCEs within the LCMS should quickly come to the conclusion that the reason DCE ministry has grown to the degree it has is primarily because we have addressed a niche within the church that was not receiving adequate focus. The Parish Worker and Parish Assistant programs had people who were as competent, gifted and dedicated as any within DCE ministry, but those programs no longer exist within the LCMS. Why? I believe one of the reasons is because those positions sought to do a bit of everything – pastoral assistance, education, business administration, to assist the church in whatever ways necessary. I have often heard that a DCE is a "Jack-of-all-trades." What always bothered me was that when I heard that descriptor used I would always sense the tag-on piece that often follows "...and master of none."

DCEs are not Jacks (or Jills) of all trades, we are specialists in the area of religious education in the church. We may work with different age groups, work towards diverse short term goals, use a plethora of venues to carry out our task, but we do education. We would do well to celebrate this distinctive calling. The role of educator is well represented in the Scriptures. The need for religious education in the church is strongly advocated by the Reformers. It is well represented by an operational theory base. The need for effective educational experiences in the life of a congregation is well supported through the research. No existing ministry preparation program other than DCE addresses religious education to the degree that is needed to adequately facilitate a competent and effective educational program.

In the future, DCEs need to more fully embrace the role of religious educator. They need to advocate for the enhancement of religious education in the church, conduct pertinent research, hold the church to a higher standard regarding in how it implements a religious educational program, and continue in their own efforts to become more proficient.

- **Adult ministry needs to be a focus** – The rise of demand for DCEs within the LCMS was closely tied to the need to develop youth ministry programming for the Baby Boomers when they were in their pre-teen and teen years. Since the Boomer generation has driven many socie-
tal, governmental and churchly agendas over the years, I fully expected the ministry of the DCE to a focus on adult educational ministry as the Boomers aged – this has not proven to be the case. Perhaps it is because pastors feel that adult education is an area that they can direct, or maybe it is just because adults in the Lutheran Church (and most other denominations) don't make education a personal priority, whatever the reason, there does not seem to be a strong demand for DCEs to enhance the area of adult education in the congregation.

Be that as it may, I do believe that it would behoove DCEs to serve as advocates for an enhanced focus on adult education in the church. Statistics show that only between ten and 17% of all confirmed adults participate in a weekly learning experience in the LCMS. As long as that percentage stays as low as it is, there is little chance that we will ever be able to significantly impact the faith maturation process of the church as a whole. The lack of involvement of adults in religious educational experiences definitely has negative impact in our children and youth ministries as well.

- Target educational efforts towards lay mobilization – The LCMS is uniquely positioned to be at the forefront of effective lay mobilization ministry. The place of the Priesthood of All Believers in the theology of the Reformation is highly significant. The LCMS was founded amid a debate on how much the laity should be involved in the ministry of the church. C. F. W Walther stated that for people to interpret "ministry" as referring only to the pastoral office "indicates great ignorance." Despite this historic tradition and doctrinal impetus, there are many other protestant denominations that are much further ahead than us in the process of mobilizing their members for ministry.

The 1999 DCE definition also included a mission statement. It says, "empowered by the Holy Spirit, the DCE plans, administers and assesses ministry that nurtures and equips people as the Body of Christ for spiritual maturity, service and witness in home, job, congregation, community and the world." [emphasis added] It seems as if this mission clearly puts the DCE in the position of interpreting his/her ministry based upon the degree to which members are mobilized for ministry in home, job, congregation and world. The role of educator fits extremely well with the task of equipping people to more effectively live out their faith. If the LCMS is to enhance the work it is doing in the area of lay mobilization, I believe that DCEs are the best prepared and positioned for making the process work most effectively.

In summary, the role of DCE has had a significant history already within the LCMS. God has blessed the church greatly through the work of past and present DCEs. While we face some challenges, we have much for which to look forward. The need remains high. The quality of the individuals presently seeking certification is exceptional. The biblical mandate to teach is clear. The greatest challenge DCEs face is to retain clarity about their unique mission and to strive for excellence.

I have a quote on my office wall that is attributed to Chaucer, it says, "The life so short, the craft so long to learn." It is my hope that the DCEs of the LCMS will seek to better learn their craft – parish religious education – and be assured that our efforts will be blessed by the Holy Spirit for the building up of Christ's people and His church. —LEJ
References


Dr. Mark Blanke has served as a DCE at two congregations in California and from 1990-1995 as DCE Program Director at Concordia University, River Forest. He presently serves as the DCE Program Director at Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. Mark has written for Lutheran Education, Issues in Christian Education, DCE Directions, and tblESource for LCMS Youth Ministry.
As a church professional, it doesn't matter where you go. You will always have families entrusted to you. It is important to understand the needs of people and where they are coming from. I always wanted to be trained in family ministry, to be better equipped to minister to the families of my congregation. It is important to me that I grow in an understanding of family needs. I feel that the Lord is training me to equip these couples and families for the many challenges that face them in the 21st century (Wheeler, 1999, p. 8).

What is Family Ministry?

Family ministry is defined as everything that a church and its representative do which has an impact on the founding, development, and ministry of families (Garland, 1999, p. 374). Family ministry is a way of holistic thinking, an "attitude" which supports, encourages and strengthens families and individuals to serve Christ through all ages and stages of the life course. Or, as Garland states simply, family life ministry is "families-in-ministry" who carry out the mission of the church. This is contrasted with the oft-held view of family ministry being a collection of programs coupled with pastoral counseling.

Historically, congregations have made significant investments in and contributions to the nurturing of the faith of children, youth and adults. Today, congregations are seeking to meet this challenge with greater intensity by sponsoring schools, nurturing families and becoming more intentional about family ministry. This is occurring at a time when church professionals notice that fewer families are reinforcing faith values taught by congregations because of general disinterest, multiple family challenges and lack of time. One often hears stories from church professionals who lament the lack of biblical knowledge in families. Congregational leaders, schools and congregations are recognizing that this historical time period presents unique opportunities for family ministry.

Clapp (1993, p. 5) asks if the culture is muting the religious beliefs and practices of present-day families. He notes that in previous years lifelong monogamy was the norm, pre-marital sex was discouraged, heterosexuality was the unquestioned standard, moms stayed at home, and children were protected by the popular culture. Today, not one of these expectations is uncontroversial in the culture. Clapp suggests that Christians must "go public" and use the home as a mission base while living their faith in society.
Unique Opportunities for Family Ministry in the Congregation

Congregations today are given unique opportunities to engage in ministry involving families.

- No other social institution has more lifelong contacts with families and individuals than the church. Throughout the life course, the church supports families in their nurture of a spiritual foundation.

- No other institution is present during the family milestones of childbirth, baptism, confirmation, Holy Communion, death and the many crises, celebrative and faith-building periods during the life course of individuals and their families (Baker, 1994, p. 11).

- No other institution is moved by a richer or more powerful vision of human community than the church. A congregation can be the leaven that raises the consciousness of the whole community about needs and vulnerabilities of families” (Garland, 1999, p. 380).

- No other institution is granted the right to be in touch with every generation of a family simultaneously. It is the only place of safety for every family member. Regardless of what type of danger was created within the family, the message to them is that there is forgiveness. The church becomes an advocate for the whole family (Barbour, 1994, p. 9).

In responding to these unique opportunities, family ministers who are motivated by the Gospel and who are theologically grounded can tap the family sciences in their ministry in a day of rapidly changing family structures.

God’s Design and Purposes for Families

A. God’s design for families

1. We are created by God in his own image, male and female (Gen 1:27). After the Fall, He gave us eternal life through the saving power of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. The Old and New Testaments depict God’s relationship with Israel as a husband-wife relationship and Christ’s relationship with the church as a groom and a bride. These relationships point to a transcendent dimension of marriage and the family.

2. God instituted marriage and the family through the creation of both male and female. He blessed Adam and Eve and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply as caretakers of the earth (Gen. 1:28). The significance of these relationships and callings is seen, for example, in the Fourth Commandment that exhorts children to honor their fathers and mothers, promising blessings for all members of a family who nurture one another.

3. God’s design for families consists of a father and mother with children. Living in a day of multiple different family structures, we must accept the fact that family situations that are less than ideal are realities (Sell, 1981, p. 77). Today, God wants us to recognize our call to a ministry that engages all family structures in our congregations, schools, and communities.
B. God's Purposes For Families

The church is God's most important institution on earth. The church is the social agent that most significantly shapes and forms the faith and character of families. And the church is the primary vehicle of God's grace and salvation for a waiting, desperate world (Clapp, 1993, p. 67).

Gangel and Wilhoit (1996) suggest that God designed families as his agency to be the building blocks of society's structures through which he fulfills five purposes (pp. 22-28).

1. A soteriological purpose is found in the biblical genealogies that reflect an emphasis on family blood lines for identifying the family background of Jesus. The family becomes the primary agency for salvation.

2. A procreational purpose sees the family as the agency for populating and tending the earth. "God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it'" (Gen. 1:28).

3. The demonstrative purpose is seen in the family as the agency of God's establishing a covenant relationship with his people. Two biblical metaphors demonstrate the loving relationship between Yahweh and his people, the husband-wife relationship and the household of faith.

4. The family is seen as the educational agency for the transmission of spiritual truth. An admonition to parents is given in Deuteronomy:

   *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your heart. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbol on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframe of your houses and on your gates* (6:4-9)

5. The family is also the agency for nourishing the healthy development of children. Family dysfunctions of physical, psychological and sexual abuse, for example, endanger the entire life course of children and frustrate God's design for nurturing children in a loving family.

Family Ministry Connections with the Home and Congregation

A. Family Ministry Begins in the Home

Family ministry begins in the home with parents who nurture, teach and model Christian beliefs and values, and who are supported by the congregation which cradles infants and adults over the life course through Holy Baptism and a Word and Sacrament ministry. Freudenburg (1998) posits, "Parents are the primary Christian educators in the church, and the family is the God-ordained institution for building faith in young people and for passing faith on from one generation to the next" (p. 28). He believes that the program-centered church culture in which parents find themselves on the sidelines instead of in the game must be reconfigured, with parents having as their primary mission the faith formation of their children. He urges churches to shift their programming and structure to a
home-centered, church-supported model for nurturing faith. Tooley (2004), an educational psychologist who works with abused children, passionately agrees with Freudenburg that the family is the primary agency for faith formation, and that the church ought to establish and maintain a "standard of support" for families, equipping them for their called ministry of teaching their sons and daughters as seen in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (p. 2).

B. Family Ministry And Congregational Connections

Family ministry is a "goodness of fit" with the congregational ministries of Word and Sacraments, education and support of parents as the primary faith teachers, the Christian nurture-educational ministries of day schools, mid-week classes, confirmation ministry, Bible classes, mission outreach, fellowship, stewardship, and healing ministries. All ministries seek to strengthen and nourish God's families to cope with work-life challenges and foster family and individual opportunities to carry out their unique mission in the home, at work, in schools and communities.

Family Structure and Functions In Schools and Congregations

A. Family Structures and Relationships

Historically God worked through various family structures and relationships. Examples in the Old Testament include: The traditional family of Adam and Eve; the polygamous family of Jacob and his wives Leah and Rachel; the interracial/intercultural marriage of Samson and his Philistine wife; the long distance marriage of the Apostle Peter and his spouse who were separated during his missionary travels; the second marriage of the widow Ruth to Obed; the single-mother adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter; the incestuous family of Lot and his daughters; and the never-married singles family of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

The New Testament frequently encourages the church to strengthen the God-given family structure (e.g., 1 Cor. 7:11; 14, Eph. 5; Col. 3; I Tim. 2: 1 Pet. 3). "In the first century there were various winds blowing throughout societies, such as asceticism, licentiousness, proto-gnosticism, and over-realized eschatology. The upshot of it all was the temptation to devalue the institutions of marriage and family" (Commission on Theology & Church Relations [CTCR], 2004, p. 3).

Today, God would have us live in a loving relationship with Him and others. One function of a family is to observe its own family behaviors. For example, is there a firm foundation of love and commitment in the family to offset dysfunctional behaviors which generally appear when families and individuals experience changes in family structure or roles through the loss of loved ones, health problems, financial challenges, divorce and a host of other life related issues?

B. A Mercurial Family Portrait at the Turn of the 21st Century

Wiest (1994) writes that while the Lutheran Church, especially the Missouri Synod, historically has invested significant resources in Christian education, it is now time to rethink and expand our roles in a society of many dysfunctional families. For example, in 1994, there were three to four million cases of spousal abuse, one million reports of elderly abuse, and two million abused children. Family and child-care workers agree that all three numbers are greatly underestimated. In addition, depression and suicide areas are rising, with addictive disorders increasing. These are only symptoms
of underlying issues in a society struggling to find meaning in an entertainment, media-driven, compulsively active culture (p. 4).

Family structures and relationships also are always changing across the life course through various ages and stages. The following portraits provide brief descriptive data about some present-day families and individuals in households, schools, congregations and communities. The intent is to accent the vast ministry relationship implications and opportunities for the church and school in 2004, with portraits waxing and waning over historical time periods being recognized.

**Traditional Families**

While breadwinner fathers, homemaker mothers and their dependent children often are seen as the ideal family structure, traditional families (nuclear) of married couples who are raising children makeup less than 25 percent of all households in the United States (AmeriStat, 2004). By the year 2010, married couples with children will constitute 20 percent of the married population due to the aging Baby Boomers and Empty Nesters.

**Divorce and Post-Divorce Family Relationships**

In 2001, the marriage rate was 7.8 per 1000 total population while the rate of divorce was 4.0 per 1,000 population (National Center for Health Statistics [NCHS], 2002). How much the church mirrors society may be seen in the divorce rate for Protestant clergy that matches the general population. One out of every two marriages in a given year will end in divorce, with 60 percent of second marriages failing (Fundamental Baptist Information Service [FBNS], 1997)).

**Cohabitation**

Cohabitation muddies the rates of divorce and marriage in terms of when families form and dissolve. For example, in 1987-1988 almost one-half of Americans in their thirties have lived together outside of marriage. If this trend continues, the majority of Americans will have experienced cohabitation during their lifetimes. It appears that cohabitation has become another step in the process of family formation, with 60 percent ending in marriage (Garland, 1999, p. 520).

**Stepfamilies**

Approximately half of all Americans are currently involved in some form of step-relationship. Nearly half of all women, not just mothers, are likely to live in a stepfamily relationship, which includes "living-together families" in the definition of the stepfamily. By the year 2010, according to the Census Bureau, more Americans will be living in stepfamilies than in nuclear families. As one observer noted, our culture, unfortunately, provides few guidelines for stepfamilies. "It is our experience that this is one of the most difficult transitions for families to negotiate. Our cultural forms, rituals and assumptions still relate chiefly to the intact, first marriage family, and the most ordinary event, such as filling out a form or celebrating a holiday, can become a source of acute embarrassment or discomfort for members of remarried families" (Bliss, 2004).

Most graduate schools of psychiatry, psychology and social work provide no specific training in dealing with the particular dynamics of stepfamilies. Often, the methods and information
appropriate in the nuclear family can be destructive if applied to the highly specific dynamics of the stepfamily system (Bliss, 2004).

Step-parenting ministry is sorely needed in homes, schools and congregations. Teachers are often cast into the role of surrogate parents. DCEs and youth directors cite stories of children and adolescents "acting out" their frustrations in self-destructive manners because of transitional difficulties experienced in "blending" with parenting styles and personalities, changes in routine configurations, while experiencing grief, anger, aloneness and loneliness. Church professionals complain about the lack of training to work with angry, non-custodial parents or depressed and angry children who are caught in the middle of formerly intact families transitioning to single parents. More than one million children per year are involved with families of divorce. Half of the 60 million children under the age of thirteen in this country are currently living with one biological parent and that parent’s current partner. We are a nation of step-relating individuals (Bliss, 2004).

How Family Ministry Can Help

Such new realities provide congregations, schools and communities with mission opportunities to "be there," to listen, and to share the hope of the Gospel. Often, stepfamilies that desire help attend workshops such as C-PREP or PREPARE-ENRICH that teach fidelity, love and permanence in reconstituted families. The desire to encourage stepfamilies is seen, for example, in the practices of some family ministers who greet preschoolers and listen to the many daily challenges facing their mothers, fathers or grandparents that can lead to seeing opportunities for ministry.

Single Parents

There are seven and one-half million women whose median age is the late 20's, most of whom are Caucasians, who bore one-third of all babies in the nineties and are seen as one of the fastest growing societal families. Forty percent of single moms are living with men who may or may not be the fathers of the children. In addition, cohabiting single parents often bring children from previous relationships. According to the 2000 Census, 27 percent of children live in single-parent homes (American Association for Single People [AASP], 2000).

Single dads are the primary parent in 2.1 million families. In 1960, 7 million children were fatherless; currently there are 23 million who do not live with their fathers, making up 40 percent of all American children. "If this trend continues, fatherlessness in American culture will soon become the norm" (Ream, 1997, p. 5). Almost 75 percent of American children who grow up in single-parent homes will experience poverty before they turn eleven year old compared with 20 percent of two-parent families who live in poverty (Warren, 2003).

One of the most important societal challenges in the early 21st century involves single parents. Only 5 percent regularly attend church, yet they represent nearly 30 percent of our nation's population. For them, the church is seen largely as irrelevant. Congregations, which are interested in outreach, cannot afford to ignore the huge mission field comprised of singles and their children. Nelson (2004), points out that there are many opportunities for congregations to engage
in evangelism by working with single parents and their children. For example, a heart-felt welcome of a single person and one's family into the church family and a recognition of their unique needs, such as a Bible class for single parents, child care, support groups, and counseling will make an impact. Respect for the single-parent family is of the utmost importance in a day when most programming is designed for intact families.

**Singles**

Garland (1999) points out that 80 million adults ages 18 and older are single, divorced or widowed. In 2012, singles will outnumber married families, with 25 percent of single adult households nearly equaling the number (28%) of traditional households. In many congregations, singles and couples without children are few in number. On the other hand, church family composition generally includes married couples with children, empty nest couples, and widows (pp. 23 & 518).

**Young Single Women**

Whitehead (2003) found that thirty-something single women have few good prospects for marrying soon because the mating culture has changed from the marrying system to that of a relationship system (p. 13). Dating has become a lifelong activity because of the work demands, cohabitation, the disappearance of courtship and the exacting standards of educated women in their search for love and commitment that have serious implications for the childbearing years.

**Young Single Men**

There is a dramatic rise of both men and women born between 1970 and 2000. During this time, the number of never married single men ages 20-24 increased from 55 percent to 84 percent, while never-married men ages 30-34 increased from 9 percent to 30 percent (Whitehead, 2003, p. 10). Many men are slow to commit to marriage because they are enjoying single life and are having plenty of sex outside marriage while also facing fewer social pressures to marry. Men who marry later may be more financially stable and emotionally mature but also more inflexible and less able to make compromises needed in marriage and family life according to Popenoe and Whitehead (2003) of the National Marriage Project.

**Family Ministry with Singles**

When Pastor Greg Mech counsels cohabiting couples that "play house" and who believe that this is the first stage prior to marriage, he asks them to visit the Rutgers site and find out how destructive cohabitation can be to a relationship. Unfortunately, reasons cited by couples such as saving money, "We don't want to make a mistake", "No one has the right to tell me what to do", "We are not ready for marriage", and "We love each other" often prevail despite the recognition that such expressions reflect the absence of commitment, which is no love at all. Such creative ways of engaging cohabitators can plant "seeds of dis-case" which can lead to more mature behaviors (Mech, 2002, p. 5). Some congregations are partnering with community religious groups and are offering activities for engaging singles of various ages and stages, such as those who have never married, being single again, widows-widowers, those involved in divorce recovery as well as inclusive and intergenerational opportunities for all members.
This admittedly brief review of descriptors and statistics coupled with a few suggestions for family seems to substantiate Clapp’s (1993) observation that while the culture is muting the religious beliefs and practices of present-day families, opportunities for those with a family ministry lens which is permeated by care and compassion demonstrated in schools, congregations, and homes are multiple.

Building Competencies for Family Ministry Professionals and Lay Leaders

A. Developing a Knowledge Base.

This is an incredible period for congregations to launch family ministries that utilize an array of resources available for assisting families through programs that focus on prevention and intervention. Bredehoft, an early contributor to the field of family life education, developed a Family Life Framework and Curriculum for family life educators which addresses family life education at each developmental stage for children, adolescence, adulthood and later adulthood across the lifespan which integrates eight components: Understanding families in society; internal dynamics of families; human sexuality; interpersonal relationships; family resource management; parent education and guidance; family law and public policy; and ethics (Bredehoft & Walcheski, 2003, p. vii). These components are the foundation pieces of the Concordia University, Seward, Family Life Master’s Program for church professionals. This program integrates theological perspectives and Christian resources that serve as the foundation. Many family ministry practitioners and specialists are engaged in teaching the courses. A non-traditional methodology serves to build a life-span knowledge and skills base for church professionals and lay leaders.

B. Community Knowledge Base

Church professionals and lay leaders also visit their community court rooms, listen to professionals in legal and community services (judges, attorneys, social services) who are able to refer or "be there with family members" in various contexts. Students in the program also engage in a community "hands on experience" connected to support groups for those who are addicted, expanding their knowledge base of human resources who can connect with those requiring care during the latter years or those in hospice care, long-term care communities, special needs groups as well as those seeking parental support.

C. Intentional Family Ministry Skills: Levels of Family Ministry Involvement

William Doherty (Powell & Cassidy, 2001, pp. 37-41) developed a levels-of-care model for professionals that helps to clarify their roles and involvement with families. Such a model intends to help one distinguish between one’s particular roles and the roles of specialists. Here is an adaptation of the model that may provide guidance for one engaged in ministry to and with families in the church and school.

Level One: Family Engagement in a Congregation

Here, families are seen as an integral part of the church community who participate in Word and Sacrament ministries and in some or all of the functions of a congregation. This level is seen as the foundation for all of the following levels of the family ministry model.
Level Two: Information and Advice

This level adds a strong supportive role of families and individuals seen, for example in empathetic listening to life challenges. Important is recognition of the need to build and identify God-given family strengths to bolster the normative family system’s responses to stressors through intentional education of parents, marriage enrichment, studies of sexuality, family resources, family law, and family communication. Both family and individual relationships in the church and community are viewed as important. Needed skills include active listening, engaging people in the learning process, clear communicating and making practical recommendations and providing information of community resources.

Level Three: Interventions in Family Crises

This level involves more extensive and systematic changes for individuals or families with special needs, such as spousal or child abuse, pornographic, drug, alcohol, and gambling addictions, troubled marriages, stressful adolescent development, work losses, or financial difficulties. In responding to such crises, it is imperative that church professionals understand family system dynamics and the skill boundaries of assessment and intervention (who, when, where, and how to reach appropriate community human resources). Essential skills include a knowledge base of family systems theory, empathic listening, normalizing feelings and reactions, creating an open and supportive climate, protecting one from too much self-disclosure in groups, engaging people in collaborative problem-solving discussion, listening to concerns and acknowledging feelings, identification of individual and family dysfunctions, and tailoring a referral to the unique situations of individuals and families.

Level Four: A Brief Focused Intervention

Level Three is typically the most appropriate level of involvement for family life educators and church professionals. When Doherty taught a parenting class on the Concordia University, Seward, campus, participants asked about becoming trained for Level Four interventions when working with a host of family challenges. Acknowledging that family crises are increasingly occurring in congregations and schools, he suggested that professionals develop a working knowledge of Level Four interventions that target families with special needs and/or issues that call for specialized counselors. Thus, teachers, pastors, and other church professionals can connect with a referral bank of professionals who have the skills to work with special populations. Common mistakes for family life professionals are unintentionally move from Level Three to Level Four and then becoming overwhelmed; engaging in deeper problem-solving discussions without the permission or agreement of the person involved; moving too quickly from Level Three discussion into assessment and intervention; remaining at Level Four when doing so is not effective.

Level Five: Family Therapy

This level engages family therapists. Church professionals need to know how to choose family therapists for referral. There are many who have specialized skills in helping troubled families.
D. Critical Family Ministry Leadership Qualities

Twenty years of research involving middle-class families throughout the world identified commonalities in family strengths seen in the internal functioning of strong single parent families, strong stepfamilies, strong nuclear families, strong extended families, and strong two-parent families. Researchers found major strengths consisting of commitment to each other, appreciation and affection, positive communication, intentional time together, the ability to cope with stress and crisis, and a strong sense of spiritual well-being (Olson & DeFrain, 2002, p. 6). However, Garland (1999) cautions that middle-class families may not endure the same intensity level of challenges as poorer families, whose strengths may even be greater (p. 234). Skills needed in building on family strengths include: An understanding of family developmental theory which recognizes that families grow and change in ages and stages through the life course just as individuals change their lifespan perspectives; effective communication; group process, the teaching-learning process; problem-solving and accessing resources. All families have strengths as well as challenges and room for growth opportunities. If families focus on problems, they will find them. If they search for their internal strengths, they will discover resources and be able to cope with the daily stressors.

Family ministry leaders need a good working knowledge of the families in their congregations and communities. They also need an understanding of family types and relationships, strengths, resources, challenges, stressors, and how families are living their faith.

McIntosh (1998) provides an excellent resource for family ministers and all congregational leaders that assists church professionals in better understanding their own leadership strengths and limitations. Powell and Cassidy (2001, p. 32) provide a professional leadership framework which focuses on an acknowledgement of differences in oneself and in other people, an understanding of leadership tendencies which reflect strengths and limitations (such as caretaker, controller, placater, or as the dominant authority), emotional stability, ability to work with crises or confrontations, maturity level, acknowledgment of one's own mistakes and weaknesses, moving past grievances, effective social and communication skills, relating well to cultural diversity, recognizing socio-economic differences, gender sensitivities, and an appreciation of cultural and family diversity. It is important to add to this list of desired leadership characteristics the practice of daily meditation on the Scriptures and prayer, participation in the Word and Sacrament ministries of a congregation, Christian values, seeing self and others as God's people, and living one's faith in all spheres of influences in the home, schools, community and congregations.

E. Planning Family Life Education in Congregations and Schools

Family ministry philosophy statements and goals are necessary for both short and long-term planning which integrates evaluation and tools that provide necessary information for program development related to marriage, parenting, children, and special family needs. There are numerous family ministry resources and curricula that address family challenges and seek to strengthen, through prevention applications, family and individual skills. Program development often focuses on marriage, parenting, children, special family needs, men's and women's opportunities and challenges. Wheeler (1999) cites this example:
I remember one class where we learned to identify warning signs of family violence. Shortly after I had returned to my parish, I dealt with a situation where family violence was tearing a family apart. I could see signs of abuse but would not have recognized the subtle warning signs, and intervention would not have taken place had I not recently taken the class. This is but one example of how family ministry constantly impacts the lives of the people God has entrusted to me. As a result of responding to this abuse, I began a caregiver workshop open to the congregation and community and also formed a marriage enrichment class (p. 8).

Family Life Ministry provides a healing and care giving ministry to families and individuals who experience divorce, abuse, job loss, death, crisis intervention and referral counseling as well as providing support in recognizing and increasing family strengths. All of family ministry in congregations is to occur within a theological framework and a commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A lifespan knowledge base coupled with family systems, family strengths and family developmental theory can serve to shape Christian values and provides a skill base that strengthens families. Congregations can provide valuable support to families by: 1) Helping them to visualize and experience their God-given mission which is to be reflected in the bond which expresses Christ’s relationship to the church; 2) Expanding family ministry to include the home, the congregation and the community; 3) Expanding the Caucasian-middle-class lens to include all people by challenging biases and stereotypes and providing hands-on experience in service, nurture and education in our communities.

Congregations provide ideal settings for: Developing family life education curricula which can be delivered through various strategies, such as the internet and other technology; offering inter-generational family life education throughout the lifespan; doing research and surveys in evaluating family life ministry. Today, unique opportunities for family ministry abound in our homes, schools, congregations and communities. At this time, we, families and individuals, are called to serve and live our calling as members of God’s family who are to invest gifts and resources in the service of families. As Martin Luther pointed out, our highest social calling engages us in living in families. A pastor who caught this vision remarked, “The opportunity to study family life from the Christian and Lutheran perspective is dynamite, absolutely necessary for my service to Jesus as a pastor. The opportunities to learn from and with fellow servants of Christ are so refreshing” (Hansen, 1999, p. 9). —LEJ

References


Commission on Theology & Church Relations. (2004). The service of women in congregational offices of executive director/president or assistant director/vice-president. The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.


Dr. Shirley Bergman is the Founder and Director of the Institute on Aging and the Family located on the campus of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska.
As principals consider all the things their schools should be doing for their students, it's hard not to be confused by curricular issues, worried about achievement test results, threatened by possible governmental legislation, overwhelmed by state learning standards, and uneasy about accreditation.

A re-reading of the story of the final judgment as recorded in Matthew 25 offers a fresh perspective on what is ultimately important for students.

In it, the Son of Man invites the faithful to take the inheritance prepared for them. He reminds them that when He was hungry, they fed Him; when thirsty, they gave Him something to drink; when He was a stranger, they invited Him in; when in need of clothes, they clothed Him; when sick, they cared for Him; and when imprisoned, they visited Him. Incredulous, the people respond by asking when they did those things. The Son of Man replies, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

It becomes imperative, therefore, for schools to do everything they can to prepare students to help other people.

Jesus didn’t say, “I needed to be taught in compliance with state standards, and you taught me.” He didn’t say, “I needed to score in the 80th percentile on my achievement tests, and you helped me.” He didn’t say, “I needed my school to receive accreditation, and you made it happen.”

Jesus’ message has more to do with the heart than with the mind. Principals need to understand this reality as they weigh what their schools’ greatest responsibilities toward their students are. So, what makes for a good school – a school that prepares its students well for a future of service?

A school isn’t good because many of its students make the honor roll. It’s good because its students use their God-given intellectual gifts as they voluntarily tutor younger siblings and other students.

A school isn’t good because it teaches the students about the seven petitions within the Lord’s Prayer. It’s good because its students pray ferociously for the needs of their classmates and loved ones.

A school isn’t good because it has people who use their time efficiently. It’s good because it has people who sacrifice their time to provide assistance for those who need it.

A school isn’t good because its students contribute money to charities through their weekly chapel offerings. It’s good because its students understand that it’s their measure of giving that is important, not their measure of wealth - and then give accordingly.

A school isn’t good because it is staffed by Golden Apple Award winners. It’s good because its teachers choose to spend long hours before and after
school helping the students who need extra help.

A school isn’t good because it teaches the stories of Jesus’ compassion for the helpless. It’s good because its students routinely visit nursing homes and hospitals and do what they can to establish relationships with the residents.

A school isn’t good because its older students can write well-organized research papers on issues such as world hunger or poverty. It’s good because its students do practical things to improve the plight of people, even if it’s only in their own small corner of the world.

A school isn’t good because some of its students eventually become famous. It’d good because its students realize the importance of simple goodness, not seeming greatness.

A school’s teacher isn’t good because he teaches the parable of the unforgiving servant in a pedagogically correct manner. A teacher is good because he consistently models forgiveness.

A school isn’t good because it produces students who are good public speakers. It’s good because its students use their speaking ability to counsel friends in need. They live out the apostle Paul’s words, “I may be able to speak the languages of men and even of angels, but if I have no love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell.”

A school isn’t good because it turns out students with outstanding physical abilities. It’d good because those students willingly participate in servant events that improve the quality of life for others.

A school isn’t good because it produces fine choirs. It’s good because its singers use their voices to edify the faith life of listeners.

A school isn’t good because it infuses its students with knowledge about God. It’s good because its students share their faith in God with those around them through their words and actions.

A school isn’t good because it can organize a fundraiser for a needy person. It’s good because its students give privately without thought of being noticed for their generosity.

A school isn’t good because its students have good mathematical problem solving skills. It’s good because its students demonstrate their willingness to help classmates solve their personal problems.

A school isn’t good because it teaches students about famous leaders from the past. It’s good because its students provide leadership in ways that help people.

A school isn’t good because the teachers have up-to-date technology and new textbooks in their classrooms. It’s good because the teachers create an environment in which the students know they are being taught by humble, caring servants of God.

Principals continue to be confused by curricular issues, worried about achievement test results, threatened by possible governmental legislation, overwhelmed by state learning standards, and uneasy about accreditation. But they know that those are all secondary to the importance of equipping students to serve the Lord as His hands here on earth.

Schools in which the faculty and students care for the needs of others are blessed – blessed by God and blessed by each other. —LEJ

Lutheran Education Journal • Volume 139, No. 4—Page 223
Things are heating up in Washington, D.C. ... and around the country. The presidential candidates have been chosen through an intentional, detailed and totally inclusive process by which voices in both parties are heard. Debates draw out divergent views, but eventually lead to a form of reconciliation and unity that draws together individuals toward a common theme and purpose, and to support a leader whom they believe will make a difference. The American system of selecting its leaders concludes on the basis of a logical and essential principle that has been preserved since its founding: every member has a right to vote. All citizens who have committed to upholding the core values of our country will be given the opportunity once again this November to exercise their ultimate responsibility as members of the giant organization called the U.S.A. Being heard in an active way through casting a ballot is a privilege and a right of belonging.

Church bodies – in order to organize for the most effective means of carrying out their charge of leading and supporting mission and ministry – have, like the United States, established a system of decision-making that involves the active participation of its members. From their early beginnings in the middle of the 19th century, congregations have been represented at conventions and in leadership capacities through their called workers and lay members. Such representation has been critical to good order in the Church and has been structurally modified as needs and priorities have dictated through the years.

Generally speaking, the system for "being heard" in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has served it well for over 150 years. Districts conduct their business through the representation of member congregations. At the Synodical level, circuit representatives are chosen. One lay and one clergy vote from each represented group have been the norm and would appear to address the parity issue first surfaced by LCMS founding fathers. However, there is one significant group of LCMS members who, by definition, are not allowed to fully exercise their rights and privileges through voting: Commissioned Ministers.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the LCMS define only three groups that are eligible to be identified as "members" of Synod: Congregations, Ministers of Religion – Ordained, and Ministers of Religion – Commissioned. All have agreed through their charters or words on commitment to the Scriptural and doctrinal position of the LCMS. Those who have been duly trained, placed on the Synodical roster, and called to ministry positions of the Church have committed to serving that church body as members and leaders, remaining faithful
to their obligations and promise. Yet, some 7000 of those professional church workers have been disenfranchised from full participation as members. While lay people and ordained ministers are eligible to be selected as voting delegates at both the district and Synodical levels, commissioned ministers are not.

In today's world, full inclusion and representation in the process of decision-making is valued and supported. For the Church, it is no less significant. There are many reasons why the parity that once served the LCMS well is no longer present and those reasons do not necessarily pertain only to the disenfranchisement of Commissioned Ministers. The point to be made is that thousands of individuals are currently removed from the ultimate right of full organizational participation of its members: the right to vote. Like in the United States of America at presidential election time, the need for every member to be heard is more important than ever. A new system of allowing for representation of all members of the LCMS needs to be developed and implemented.

**Among the most important reason for a change:**

1. Being a member of the Synod is a privilege. Opportunities to serve as voting delegates should be a member benefit made available to all who are privileged to serve.

2. Attracting and retaining individuals to professional church work as Commissioned Ministers – including teachers, DCEs, DCOs, deaconesses, and Directors of Parish Music – is more challenging than ever. Uplifting and supporting these ministers as full participant members of the Church is critical to growing a healthy churchworker base.

3. Commissioned ministers are significant resources for the Church. They received Synodical training and serve in a number of essential ministry capacities. They need to be heard have a voice by every available means.

4. The LCMS has changed. The ability for Commissioned Ministers to vote has not. Despite the topic being raised through overtures to several recent conventions, discussion has never reached the convention floor. No official action has been taken to investigate options for resolving this matter.

At the 2004 national Convention, LCMS delegates chose not to initiate the process of addressing the issue of alternate delegate representation through the work of a task force. Commissioned Ministers were the only LCMS member group who were not allowed to vote on the question. Now would be a good time to pick up where the Convention left off. In the spirit of the United States national election, it is important to identify means by which all who have a part in the mission of the Church organization also have a voice. As full members of the LCMS, Commissioned Ministers need and deserve an opportunity to fully carry out their roles. Voting participation must become a reality. —LEJ
With thanks and credit to the myriad of political ads going on through T.V. and radio, I am very pleased to approve the following article and its message!

Religious education, and for that matter our daily faith walk in the Lord, is all about C.A.R. Theology. As we travel the highways of life, three components of our faith continue to be the fuel that keeps our lives moving:

C – Content
A – Attitude
R – Relationships

C is for CONTENT!

We need to continue to teach and tell that our life journey is all about faith and knowing through faith that our Lord came to live, suffer, die and be raised so that we can live eternal life in the Lord! We need to continue to tell the story of Jesus and His love! We need to continue to teach and tell through every method available that Scripture is the absolute Truth for our life through all of our Good Fridays and Easters.

That is what Lutheran Education is all about. And educators continue to be strongly challenged to continue to tell these faith stories through the Scriptures and through our own lives about what the Lord has done and continues to do for us. We live in a society that is illiterate in terms of the Christian faith. The content of our Christ message continues to be absolutely critical for faith to develop and the message to be heard and lived.

In too many cases, our message and words are misunderstood. It is like the story of a priest and a pastor, from two local churches, who are standing by the side of the road, pounding a sign into the ground. The sign reads: "The end is near! Turn yourself around now! Before it is too late!"

As a car speeds past them, the driver yells, "Leave us alone, you religious nuts!"

From the curb they hear screeching tires and a big splash. The pastor turns to the priest and asks, "Do you think the sign should just say 'bridge out'?"
Content of faith is a given by our Lord. We need to continue to be clear on knowing and telling the absolute Truth that we confess daily through the Apostle's Creed and our lives in the Lord.

**A is for ATTITUDE!**

"It is all about attitude" We have all heard that statement often. A good friend of mine recently died, and it was a great affirmation to see on his suit lapel, in his casket, a pin that simply said "attitude". That told the message of Bob's life in the Lord. He lived an "attitude of gratitude".

One’s attitude is the result of where we have chosen to focus our attention. As pain, death and struggles continue to exist, through faith we are able to cling to the Cross and the Resurrection. As someone once said, "Don't cry because it is over; smile because it happened".

Our attitude grows out of our baptismal covenant that the Lord is always with us. We know that even when we feel down, kicked, unappreciated and destroyed, the good news of God's love for us in Christ is always there to pick us up. It is great to realize that our faith does not depend on how we look, act, or feel, but rather on what God has done and continues to do for us in Jesus Christ! That is the strength of living out an "attitude of gratitude"!

**R is for RELATIONSHIPS**

No one is an island – we are all connected with the waters of our baptism! Our C.A.R. Theology is completed by celebrating and affirming the Church as the body of Christ, the place where relationships happen. We need to support, encourage, celebrate and affirm the people of God who are all around us. Faith is not only about knowing the right answers and stories – it is more about how God and Christ relates to us and allows us to share our faith with those around us. How we communicate the content and attitude of our faith is crucial in living out our life in the Lord.

Here is another story as an example: There was an old missionary who struggled by himself for many years in a remote area of the world. Finally, the mission board wrote to tell him it had raised enough money to send an assistant. They sent a young man who had the self-confidence that comes with being young and right out of the seminary. When the young man arrived at the mission station, they called together the chief and the entire tribe to welcome him. Then they asked the young man to say a few words. He could speak only English, so the old missionary stood by to translate. The young fellow said something like this: "We must always remember that there is an infinite and qualitative distinction between the eternal Gospel and all the historical manifestations of it under the contingencies of human existence."
The old missionary stood for a moment dumbfounded, as the young man waited for him to translate. Finally, the wise old missionary turned to the people and said, "Friends, he says that he loves you and is glad to be here!"

It is all about relationships – beginning with God's relationship to us through Christ's death and Resurrection!

C.A.R. Theology – that is what life is all about! May you continue on the highways of life, through the detours and flat-tires and even the times you feel out of gas, knowing that the Lord continues to lead us by providing us with Content, Attitude, and Relationships.

And, thanks again to all of the politically active people out there that allow me to say, "I am Rich Bimler and I approved this message!" —LEJ
In the last ten years, I have seen various approaches used in Lutheran high schools to nurture faith in students. I have observed a teacher remove desks from the room, lay down a rug, and keep the lights off during class. Grades, tests, and homework were discarded. The affective domain, rather than the cognitive, became the target.

I have also seen a traditional classroom during a student's religion period. The instructor and methods were much the same as the English teacher's down the hall. Desks were neatly arranged in rows, quizzes and tests and papers were the norm. Grades were monitored.

I have had people from other Lutheran secondary schools ask me which way is superior. Although I know of two schools that have returned from the first approach to the more traditional way, and although I have a personal bias as to which general approach is better for teenagers in a high school setting, I must admit that I have also seen God's Spirit move students in both environments. So, as I ponder the issue of religious education for this column, I want to avoid pointing to a program or to a particular methodology.

Perhaps you have heard of the adage: "It's not the program; it's the people." This, too, can be dangerous ground where we are tempted to fashion our Lutheran teachers to present themselves a certain way. For example, I have observed a very businesslike persona as well as a spontaneous instructor both yield fruit in and out of their classrooms. It seems that the Spirit indeed blows where it will, despite our programs or our personalities. We would do well to praise God for that!

But I believe there are a few characteristics that emerge in secondary religious educators who seem to be effective in and out of the classroom. (I include here all Lutheran teachers as "teachers of religion.") As I write this, I fear that I will forget some quality much as I would fear omitting someone's name that I should thank at an award ceremony. So, in advance, please forgive my omissions and I invite you to consider your own list of qualities.

First, the effective secondary religion teacher accepts and encourages the inquisitive nature of God's young person. Questions and challenges of God or Christianity do not threaten or disarm this mentor. Each are dealt with sincerely, honestly, and respectfully. The mentoring disciple knows that there are many mysteries in this subject area and that trust is more important than understanding. There is a certain comfort level in being able to say, "I don't know" or "I have wondered the same
thing" or "I think we are treading in areas where "God's paths are beyond tracing out."
(Rom. 11:33)

Second, the effective secondary religion teacher, to an ever-increasing degree, tastes and
appreciates God's grace. The educator realizes that the core of our Christian faith is not
knowing the right answers or doing the right actions. This educator knows that coming to
faith, remaining in the faith, and understanding anything in the faith, is first and last
God's work of grace. Whereas the flesh is always focusing on us, this teacher continually
points to what God has done, is doing, and will do for us. This person also knows that he
is totally dependent upon God's Spirit. He realizes that he can plant and water by God's
grace, and that it is God alone who will give the growth.

Third, the effective secondary religion teacher knows that the power is in the Word.
Whatever else happens in the classroom, whatever method is used, whatever personality is
facilitating, God's Word must have preeminence. This Word will not return void but will
accomplish that which God proposes for it to accomplish on His timetable. It will renew
minds and transform hearts. This Word is alive and active, sharper than any two-edged
sword. It is not your normal textbook. It is personal and will evoke various responses at vari-
ous times. And it is totally trustworthy. If God says He will do something, He WILL do it!

So, how do we best provide religious instruction at Lutheran high schools? I submit to
you that the question should be: WHO best provides religious instruction at Lutheran high
schools? And we all know the answer as beautifully given in II Cor. 3:3-6: "You show that
you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the
Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such con-
fidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves,
but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new
covenant—not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

Our great God is so creative, so multifaceted, so powerful, that He uses a variety of
people and programs to draw others to Himself. He uses the personalities, abilities, and
faith that He has given each one of us—just as He used the writers of Scripture—for His
own ends. He even uses our weaknesses and our faults for others' good and His glory.

As we prepare to provide religious instruction again this year, may I suggest that our best
preparation is a prayer: "Dear heavenly Father, may your holy name be hallowed in our class-
rooms and in our teaching this year. May Your kingdom come into the hearts and minds and
spirits of each student we encounter and into us. May Your will be done and not ours. Give us
what we need in both body and soul to do this gracious work that You have called us to do out of
Your great grace. Forgive us when our eyes shift focus to us. Pour your refreshing forgiveness
upon others through us. Lead us out of temptation and keep evil far from us. All glory and
honor and power and praise are Yours. Amen." —LEJ
The spring issue of Lutheran Education Journal focused on issues of cultural and racial diversity facing our churches and schools. In this issue we consider parish education in its various forms and in so doing we again address diversity. Today’s delivery of Christian education is complex and diverse.

During the early years in our church, the local pastor delivered Christian education with possible assistance from a day school teacher. Life was simple and the delivery methods reflected this simplicity. In today’s church, religious education is performed by a variety of ministers and laypersons. This diversity still includes the pastor but now also involves commissioned teachers, lay teachers, directors of Christian education, deaconesses, directors of parish music, and lay ministers, to name only a few. The opportunities for educational growth have increased and the delivery opportunities include a diversity of methodology.

Although there are increased opportunities to deliver Christian education in our modern times, there are also increased difficulties. The authors contributing to the current journal address some of the problems faced by today’s parish educators and also discuss some of the opportunities that exist. How will the identification of our teachers as employees impact their educational ministries? What additional opportunities exist for family ministry? Finally, how will the church continue to attract and retain dedicated religious educators, especially DCEs? Our authors raise questions and provide all of us with the opportunity to join in the discussion.

I urge all of us to take up the discussion in our churches and in our schools. We must continue to provide diverse educational opportunities that are effective in reaching children, youth, and adults. —LEJ
Guidelines for Submissions to Lutheran Education Journal

Lutheran Education Journal intends to publish the best research and reflection on a wide range of topics relevant to Lutheran Christian Education. The Journal welcomes manuscripts addressing Lutheran education at all levels from early childhood to higher education, in the classroom or in the parish. First consideration is given to well-documented articles which may inform its theological context or which explore issues specific to or present implications of Lutheran education. Summaries of current, documented empirical/action research, unpublished elsewhere, are especially invited. (Research submitted for publication must clearly include indication of informed consent of subjects as appropriate to the study.)

1. Format for submission: The preferred format for manuscripts is in Microsoft Word via documents attached to an email. Second preference would be documents submitted on CD-ROM or 3.5 inch floppy disk. Contributors are encouraged to request a "read receipt" from the sender side. Please limit formatting as much as possible, e.g., multiple fonts, type sizes, headers/footers, boldface, etc., as these must be removed and/or changed when creating copy for the printer. Tables or charts should be submitted as a separate file with point of insertion indicated in the body of the text.

2. Length: Manuscripts may range from approximately 3000-5000 words. The editor reserves the right to request modifications.

3. Style and Documentation: These are governed by the most recent edition of The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA); Webster's New International Dictionary is consulted in matters of spelling.

4. Author Biographical and Contact Information: Authors are requested to submit a brief statement of biographical information including name, degree, current professional position and a brief mention of career/ministry context. (See examples herein.) These may be edited for length. Also, articles or the email accompanying them should clearly state current phone, email and regular mailing address to facilitate consultation in the editing process.

5. While Lutheran Education Journal holds the copyright, reprint requests of articles published in Lutheran Education Journal are with the permission of the author.

6. Contact: Manuscripts, article proposals or related inquiries may be made to:

O. John Zillman, Ph.D., Editor
Lutheran Education Journal
Concordia University
7400 Augusta Street
River Forest, IL 60305-1499

E-mail: crfzillmaoj@curf.edu
The Lutheran Education Journal has been in existence since the founding of Concordia University, River Forest. Those years, from 1864 onward, have been filled with both blessing and challenge for the institution on any number of levels: there have been periods of relatively smooth sailing and those that were storm-tossed. Those among the readership who are alumni or have other close connections to Concordia, River Forest know that the last several years have certainly brought the threat of heavy weather.

I’ll point you to other sources of news (www.curf.edu is a good one) for the details of how God has sustained and blessed us here at 7400 Augusta. But, I thought it appropriate to offer a few words of explanation on how the Journal weathered the storm as well.

Although Lutheran Education is the journal of the faculty here, the President serves as publisher. The name on the masthead in this issue is officially a new one, Dr. John Johnson who exchanged the president’s chair at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis for the one in his office here in Addison Hall. He has expressed his commitment to the continuation of the Journal as a forum for ideas in Lutheran education as well as in committing the human and fiscal resources for achieving that goal. His first offering in the Journal appears in the next issue.

As we get to know a new publisher, we’ve bid farewell to two other people whose names were closely associated with this publication. Dr. Bill Rietschel, whose farewell editorial leads this issue, has retired from full-time faculty service which included a number of years as Co-Editor. We’ll still have Bill here teaching on a part-time basis for at least a while longer, but will miss his laser-like logic and down-to-earth good humor as part of the Journal staff.

JoAnn Kiefer now, as she puts it, really retired, outlasting three editors in her service as editorial assistant and business manager for the Journal. She brought us from
typewritten manuscripts to digitally transmitted documents, lovingly maintained archival copies of the Journal all the way back to Volume 1 of *Der Lutheraner* and still insists that we call her with questions. Okay, JoAnn, if you insist.

Mr. Ed Grube joins the Journal as Contributing Editor as his work with Lutheran Education Association brings him into contact with potential issues, ideas and authors around the country. We’ve got some idea…

Mr. Peter Pohlhammer will take on the technical layout and business end of things as Managing Editor. We have grown accustomed to the quality of his design and communications work here. The business and productions affairs of the Journal are now organized as part of the university Office of Communications rather than as an independent entity as in the past. A thank you is due to Krissé Paulsen who helped so much in the transitional period.

Last, after a brief publishing hiatus during this reorganization, the Journal resumes in its 140th edition, shifting the publishing year from the academic to the fiscal calendar. We thank you, the readers, for your forbearance during this time: Volume 140, Number 1 is under way…

Blessings!—LEJ

O. J. Zillman, Editor