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The Lutheran Educator



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**Whoever SERVES ME
must FOLLOW ME,
and where I AM,
my servant also will be.**

The Lutheran Educator

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Editor — Jack N. Minch

Editorial Board — Philip M. Leyrer, Cheryl A. Loomis, James F. Pope, David D. Sellnow

Editorial correspondence and articles should be sent to *The Lutheran Educator*, Editor, Martin Luther College, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm, MN 56073. Phone 507-354-8221. Fax 507-354-8225. e-mail: lutheraneducator@mlc-wels.edu

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Flag-wrapping

Some have called it wrapping yourself in the flag. It's the practice of invoking the protection and privileges of citizenship after one has demonstrated by his irresponsible behavior that he has little regard for the very status he now hopes will bring him immunity. In 1775 English author and critic of his times Samuel Johnson said it more succinctly: "Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel." We understand his pique.

As grateful as we are for our status as residents of the United States, we prize our citizenship in Christ's kingdom more highly. Since a kingdom not of this world does not have a physical flag, we might assume that the danger of wrapping ourselves in one does not exist. But, for the sake of argument, let's say the kingdom of God does have a flag—call it the Word of God.

Properly understood we want to wrap ourselves and our schools in this flag. Its position at the foundation of our curricular and co-curricular activities, its influence upon our policies, its sway over the tone and behavior in our classrooms, and, finally, our firm belief in its ability to create and sustain saving faith are the clear marks of distinction that make our schools Word-centered ministries, not just a place to receive an education. May we never be ashamed to fly this flag with appropriate boldness and humility. Without this flag, our schools are only schools.

Still, an undesirable wrapping of ourselves in the flag is possible and results apart from due vigilance. It happens when the standards for our operation slip so that our curricula are marred by gaps, and our facilities droop from a lack of maintenance, and our professional growth flirts with extinction to sound only a few alarms. In themselves, sinking standards are concerning enough, but when we tacitly—or not so tacitly—offer the defense, "Yes, but we have the Word at our school and that is far more important than the world's standards." have we not wrapped ourselves in the flag?

High standards need not be Martha-like pursuits that come at the expense of a school's Word-centeredness. Rather, let them be our grateful response to the presence of the Word among us and the message of peace through Jesus it proclaims. The careful management of all aspects of our schools is one way we show our people and our community how greatly we value and honor the Word that makes our school distinct.

PML



Overcoming Weariness

John Schultz

Come unto me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30.

Overcoming Weariness

Surely in the body, mind and heart of each person reading this there have been times of deep sighing, of spiritual fatigue, of numbing weariness. The daily schedule, the constant activity, the frustration, the temptation, our feelings of failure and inadequacy sometimes cause us to shout, "Enough, enough, I quit!" Becoming weary is part of the sinful condition of our nature and world we live in. The extreme of giving up is spiritual weakness.

The Scriptures give examples of exhausting experiences that can cause weariness. Psalm 69 presents the cries of a godly sufferer. Notice the desperate plea of the psalmist as he waits for the Lord's deliverance, "I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God," Psalm 69:3. David's enemies seized upon the occasion of his illness to vent their animosity. Notice how their persecution

affected him. "I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes," Psalm 6:6-7.

Mentally overworking can cause weariness. "Of making many books there is no end, and much study wears the body" Ecclesiastes 12:12b. Fighting the enemies of God can cause weariness. "(He) struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword" 2 Samuel 23:10.

There is no end to the causes of weariness. Satan uses many of the experiences of called workers to create weariness, hoping it will lead to despair and hopelessness. That would indeed be a spiritual weakness or worse!

Listen to the Savior's invitation: "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened." The Scriptures certainly give examples of God's people suffering weariness, but above all they show that his people know where to go for relief: "Lord, do not rebuke ... O Lord heal me... How long, O Lord, how long?... turn, O Lord, and deliver me, save me," Psalm 6.

Listen to the Savior's promise: "and I will give you rest." There's the antidote – Jesus' presence in Word and Sacrament provides unthreatening well-being. David believed it, "for the Lord has heard my weeping ...the Lord has heard my cry for mercy ...the Lord accepts my prayer," Psalm 6.

Listen to the Savior's will: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." The weary look to Christ as their example. He suffered for them in gentleness and humility. Their attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus.

Listen to the Savior's assurance: "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Jesus' will for us is never burdensome. Because of the Spirit working in our new man, we are able to overcome our nature and the sinful world.

Are you weary? Hear the Lord's invita-

tion. Believe his promise. Follow his will in your life. Trust his assurance.

Read some more: Isaiah 40:28-31.

Prayer:

Art thou weary, art thou troubled,
 Art thou sore distrest?
 "Come to Me," saith One, "and, coming,
 Be at rest."
 Hath He marks to lead me to Him
 If He be my Guide?
 "In His feet and hands are wound
 prints,
 And His side."
 Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
 Is He sure to bless?
 "Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
 Answer, Yes." Amen. (TLH 513)

John R. Schultz served as principal/administrator of Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School. He is currently retired and living in New Ulm, Minnesota.

FROM A LITTLE TE DEUM OF THE COMMONPLACE

For all things beautiful, and good, and true;
 For things that seemed not good yet turned to good;
 For all the sweet compulsions of Thy will
 That chastened, tried, and wrought us to Thy shape;
 For things unnumbered that we take of right,
 And value first when they are withheld;
 For light and air; sweet sense of sound and smell;
 For ears to hear the heavenly harmonies;
 For eyes to see the unseen in the seen;
 For vision of the Worker in the work;
 For hearts to apprehend Thee everywhere;—
 We thank thee, Lord!

John Oxenham

World War I and its Impact on German-Lutheran Education and Religious Freedom in America

Caleb Bassett

DESPITE THE mounting costs and growing challenges, Christian education at both the elementary and secondary levels continues to be highly prized in some corners of Lutheranism. The influence of Martin Luther is no doubt responsible for this emphasis. In one of his numerous tracts on Christian education he wrote, “I certainly advise that no one send their child where Holy Scripture does not rule. Everyone who is not unceasingly occupied with God’s Word must become corrupt....I greatly fear that schools for higher learning are great gates to hell when they do not actively drill God’s Word and impress it on the youth.”¹

Shortly after Luther’s death the policy of *cuius regio, eius religio* was set in place, closely linking the church and the state. German princes and city councilmen needed to care for the religious and vocational instruction of the youth under their care. Thus, in a sense, Lutheran educational principles and practice pioneered both the public and parochial school.²

Centuries passed and Lutherans emigrated from Germany to the United States of America. They formed congregations, founded schools, and organized synods across the nation. For decades, they were able to educate their children in relative peace.³ By the turn of the

20th century American-Lutheran educational philosophy had crystallized into a clear ideal: “The Word of God in its full amount is the one means of education.”⁴ Lutherans considered the instruction of their children to be a primary task assigned by God.⁵ Simply put, educating children was part of their activity as Lutheran Christians.

Along with a clear ideal of Christian education, the 20th century also brought new and challenging circumstances for German-Lutheran parochial schools. The many complicated cultural, diplomatic and armed conflicts in connection with World War I helped to promote extreme antipathy towards German-speaking Americans.⁶ Thus Lutherans became an easy target for the hyper-patriots and jingoes.⁷ The persecution against German-Americans was reaching its highest levels at a time when American councils and legislatures, heavily influenced by the anti-German mob mentality in America, were reexamining the American education system. More and more secular educators and legislators began to consider education as a means of assimilation during a time when they assumed it was critically necessary to “Americanize” the immigrant population in the United States. It was thought that the English language was the best means for the Americanization of these foreign immi-

grants. Thus fears were expressed that teaching in a foreign tongue, especially German, furthered ideals diametrically opposed to the American way of life. Some even said,

We have been so averse to interfering with schools organized under private auspices that we have allowed those schools which are un-American to grow up. . . . we should enforce upon all schools the requirement that the language of instruction during the elementary school period be English, the only language in which we may hope to have handed down to boys and girls the ideals and purposes of our democratic society.⁸

Tolerance for private parochial education evaporated and state legislation began to impose sharp limitations on parochial schools. After all, “must the government wait until the pernicious doctrines have been absorbed by immature minds? Should it not have the power as soon as the aims of the school are ascertained, before a single lecture is delivered, to padlock the doors of this nursery of assassins?”⁹ The state was beginning to assert control on private education, and what’s more, private parochial education. On the other hand, German-Lutherans viewed the aggressive changes in American educational regulations and legislation during and after World War I as attacks on religious freedom.

Early difficulties

The American desire to reform and improve the schooling system began

with relatively noble intentions.

Industrial advancement was drawing the population into the cities at a furious pace. The racial diversity of the citizenry became ever more apparent to the American eye. As is true today, such ethnic mixing produced tension. Americans became concerned about the fabric of the nation. This concern increased exponentially during the war years. As a result, it was felt that the American public school system should assume an even greater responsibility to prepare American children for citizenship and useful vocations and, as such, would promote “true” Americanism.¹⁰ As school boards and educational councils wrestled with the various decisions they had to make on how best to promote good American citizenry, the key questions that arose had to do with the language of instruction and attendance requirements.

Some state legislatures had already begun to address these issues in the late 19th century. Wisconsin and Illinois enacted compulsory child education laws whereby parents of students attending private schools were required to report to the public school district the name of the school the children attended and how many days of the year they were present in class. It also became mandatory for parochial schools to file statistical reports to the clerk of the local school district. To modern readers, this seems perfectly acceptable, but “those who conducted parochial schools in the 1880s saw the filing of such a report and the fine for noncompliance as illegal...interference with the rights

Bassett

of parents to decide unhindered where their children should go to school.”¹¹ The Wisconsin compulsory education law went so far as to define what kind of school children must attend in order to fulfill the obligatory attendance requirement.

No school shall be regarded as a school, under this act, unless there shall be taught therein, as part of the elementary education of children, reading, writing, arithmetic and United States history, in the English language.¹²

This definition of a “school” was certain to incite a host of criticism from all religious institutions. In fact, Lutherans and Catholics even worked together in their legal battle against the law since both had much to lose because of the law. Although the law was eventually repealed, it had set a precedent upon which future laws would be built. Indeed, when one considers that such laws were passed well before World War I, it becomes very apparent how much more legislators would want to pass similar laws at a time when nationalism was at a peak and disgust of all things German (including German-language schools) reached a climax.

Xenophobia reigns over reason

America declared war on Germany in 1917. And as American weapons fought the “Huns” overseas, Americans on the home front continued their assault on German-Lutherans. All sorts of physical and psychological persecutions were leveled against Germans.¹³ Some German-born were even lynched and

murdered by angry mobs.¹⁴ Irrational hyper-patriotism and xenophobia had taken over. This led many Americans to search for ways to remove the source of their irritation. They needed to “Americanize” the German-Lutherans and they saw the means to accomplish this goal in the English language. The words of the past bear witness:

English should and must be the only medium of instruction in public, private, denominational and other similar schools. ... Let those who cannot speak or understand the English language conduct their religious worship in their homes.¹⁵

—

We think a plan of eliminating the German...would be to make the privilege of conversing in German a matter of license. Sell the privilege of talking in German at a price as high as the traffic could bear—say fifty dollars a year, and give the owner of a license a metal check to carry and to be shown on demand of any citizen who might hear the language spoken.¹⁶

—

No one will deny that the English language is always used when anyone is 100 percent American; is always used when one is intensely patriotic; is always used in expressing abhorrence of the treachery, butchery and debauchery of the Huns. It is equally undeniable that all traitorous tricksters champion the use of German in schools and elsewhere. ... [The German lan-

guage] is more serviceable to traitors than to patriots.¹⁷

—
America's inspirational creative genius is being lost in the inglorious glory of Germanized Americans.¹⁸

Fueled by the war-induced frenzy, more stringent controls on parochial schools were imposed on Lutheran institutions. By the end of 1919, sixteen states had passed laws to prohibit the teaching of foreign languages in both private and parochial schools.¹⁹ It was thought that if children who spoke foreign languages at home could be insulated from the “demoralizing” effects of those languages, especially German, perhaps they would then become more devoted to the United States.²⁰ Furthermore, legislators “maintained that it was fully within the police power of the state to regulate its own educational system,”²¹ apparently assuming that they had the police power to also require each child to be a part of that system regardless of the will of his parents.

Lutherans respond

The response from German Lutherans makes clear that they viewed the attacks against their educational practices as aggression against the first amendment that guaranteed freedom of religion.²²

Some German-Lutheran replies were blunt and immoderate; others were well prepared, thoughtful, and persuasive. And leaders of the German-Lutheran Wisconsin Synod did far more than volley pot-shots back and forth. Through-

out the pages of *Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gemeinde-Blatt*, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, and *Northwestern Lutheran* there appeared numerous articles featuring commentary and counsel concerning the increasing crisis. These show how closely Lutherans linked religion with education. In fact, some Lutherans even thought the crisis was the work of the devil's evil angels in an effort to fight against the church.²³

Professor John Schaller, of the Synod's seminary, was one of the more prominent contributors to the defense of the German-Lutheran cause. Leaders like Schaller were well versed in the laws and statutes of the United States and they used their knowledge of the Constitution to their full advantage. In an article entitled “Religious Freedom Endangered,” Schaller asserted that the attacks being made on Lutheran schools simply because they used German would “culminate in the repeal or at least the invalidation of the first amendment of the constitution...at least inasmuch as it refers to religious freedom.”²⁴ He went on to say, “Since the Christian church considers it essential to the free practice of its religion that it be unhampered by any language restriction, who has the authority under the American constitution to say that this is not an essential feature of religious freedom?”²⁵

The *Gemeinde-Blatt* joined the fray with numerous articles concerning the language laws. The prevailing theme stressed by the *Gemeinde-Blatt* authors in 1919 was that language does not make a nation. They said that unlike Europe, America did not have language, race, or

religion but the American Constitution as the unifying factor. The *Gemeinde-Blatt* also emphasized the necessity of trust among citizens in creating a strong American nation. They maintained that the current attitude of so many Americans did not foster trust in any way, shape or form.²⁶

Another of the Synod's seminary faculty, Professor August Pieper wrote: "In the long years before the war we were so sure of our religious freedom, especially the freedom of our elementary and high-school systems."²⁷ He continued to point out that such freedom was quickly disappearing under the new system of laws. In regard to Pieper, it is important to note a major shift in German-American thinking concerning the statistical reporting required by many states. Pieper pointed out that the state had a right to pass certain laws requiring that children be educated. He also encouraged synod teachers and principals to report statistics to the state promptly and correctly.²⁸ During the 1890s, such an opinion would have been dismissed as irrelevant.

It is important to remember that German-Lutherans were not simply holding on to the German language for the sake of German. Although one cannot deny that many people in the synod had hoped to perpetuate the German tongue through parochial schools, it is also a fact that such people were a minority. Rather, it was widely accepted that German-Lutheran schools did not exist for the sake of language but for the sake of religion.²⁹ The language problem lay in the fact that German-

Lutherans had no suitable religious materials available in English. They were not driven by hatred for English, but rather by a desire to make a slow and steady transition into English.³⁰ Complications arose because religious terminology is very difficult to translate. A Milwaukee newspaper even printed: "The language of commerce and social intercourse can be translated. The language of religion cannot be, in any effective sense."³¹ Although in hindsight it is clear that the German-Lutherans did an outstanding job of making the transition to English, the task at the time was nevertheless a daunting one. Indeed, much progress had been achieved already by the 1920s. Most German schools used German only to teach religion. English was the language of instruction for other subjects.³²

Landmark cases and watershed decisions

Perhaps the best example of the Anglo-German conflict over education in the United States is found in the case *Meyer v the State of Nebraska*. Mr. Robert T. Meyer of Zion Lutheran School in Hampton, Nebraska, was discovered teaching a Bible lesson in German in May of 1920. This was a clear violation of Nebraska law. Meyer was convicted and fined for his offense. The ruling was appealed to the local district court, but the appeal was denied in December of 1920. Yet tenacious and dedicated German-Lutherans did not let it end there. They challenged the law's constitutionality before the Nebraska Supreme Court. The Lutheran appel-

lants argued the case on the basis of freedom of religion, saying that the language law was “in contravention of the constitution of the United States...because it denies...to patrons and pupils of parochial schools...the free exercise of their religion.”³³ The high court would eventually reject the appeal on February 16, 1922, but the decision was not a unanimous one.³⁴ It appeared that a strong and unified decision in favor of the language laws was impossible, despite the vigorous support that the school language laws enjoyed. The German-Lutherans seized the opportunity and appealed the law to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Once again we see that the German-Lutherans continued to view the prohibitive legislation as attacks on the basic freedom of religion promised in the First Amendment. Arthur F. Mullen, the attorney who would represent the cause of German-Lutherans before the Supreme Court later wrote in his autobiography, *Western Democracy*: “The real purpose of the Nebraska legislation was to destroy parochial schools.”³⁵ However, lessons had been learned in the Nebraska Supreme Court, and although they wanted to continue arguing on the basis of the First Amendment, Mullen and the German-Lutherans chose to argue the case based on “how the United States Constitution had been interpreted up to that time.”³⁶ That included making the case on the basis of the more recent Fourteenth Amendment which provided for due process and protected against the loss of liberty or property.³⁷ Mullen maintained

that the laws denied Meyer of his property and liberty by making it impossible for him to carry out his vocation effectively.

On June 4, 1923, Justice James C. McReynolds delivered the Supreme Court’s majority opinion. He elucidated that the court had made its decision on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment.

While this court has not attempted to define with exactness the liberty thus guaranteed, the term has received much consideration and some of the included things have been definitely stated. Without doubt, it denotes not merely freedom from bodily restraint but also the right of the individual to contract, to engage in any of the common occupations of life, to acquire useful knowledge, to marry, establish a home and bring up children, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and generally to enjoy those privileges long recognized at common law as essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men.³⁸

It seems that the Court was able to rule on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment due to a rather glaring *non sequitur* found in the wording of the Nebraska statute:

The challenged statute forbids the teaching in school of any subject except in English. ... The Supreme Court of the state has held that ‘the so-called ancient or dead languages’ are not ‘within the spirit or the purpose of the act.’ ...

Latin, Greek, Hebrew are not proscribed; but German, French, Spanish, Italian, and every other alien speech are within the ban. Evidently the Legislature has attempted materially to interfere with the calling of modern language teachers. ...³⁹

By grouping some foreign languages as harmful (living languages) and others as benign (ancient languages), the Nebraska law had in essence sealed its own fate. Such a distinction obviously made no sense to the Supreme Court and they were quick to point out the fallacy.⁴⁰

The Court also commented on the language question.

Mere knowledge of the German language cannot reasonably be regarded as harmful. Heretofore it has been commonly looked upon as helpful and desirable. Plaintiff in error taught this language in school as part of his occupation. His right thus to teach and the right of parents to engage him so to instruct their children, we think, are within the liberty of the amendment.⁴¹

The Supreme Court's ruling overturned similar laws across the nation.⁴²

The entire situation was summed up nicely by a piece of contemporary commentary in the *American Journal of International Law*. James Brown Scott wrote about nativist tendencies, "There is, however, a very great danger that the alleged right to regulate the teaching of languages may affect that most priceless of all blessings, the freedom of thought."⁴³ Consequently both secular

scholars and ecclesiastical educators were pleased with the outcome.

The *Gemeinde-Blatt* spoke of the ruling in rather grand terms. It said that "true Americanism lives on and rises up a gleam and shining forth from the fog and smoke by which it was muffled during the times of the blind, warring hatred of those who had lost their clear thinking."⁴⁴

Of course, German-Lutherans were not yet in the clear. There would be more legal battles for parochial schooling, even in the Supreme Court. But the subsequent court battles had to be judged on the precedent set by *Meyer v Nebraska* and were ruled in favor of private education. By the end of 1925 the crass nativism brought on by the war was "dying or very nearly dead."⁴⁵

Critique and evaluation

This highly volatile period in history provides an interesting opportunity for critique and evaluation, as well as applications to modern American situations. Perhaps the most startling aspect of the entire problem was not the lower court's disregard for the individual religious freedom of German-Lutherans, especially since the United States had not yet become very sensitive to the "free exercise" stipulations of the First Amendment;⁴⁶ rather, it was the lack of understanding and cooperation on both sides of the issue. It is reasonable to assume that an unbiased critic would place more blame on the often irrational actions of the ultra-zealous Anglo-Americans, and rightly so. They were indeed guilty of some of the more

appalling examples of coercion and fundamentalism.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the German-Lutheran side was not without its faults, especially during the early stages of the war. Secular German leaders had been extremely chauvinistic in the promotion of German *Kultur* and thereby had tarnished the previously sterling reputation of German-Americans. Some German-Lutheran laymen were openly pro-German before the war. While this was not wrong, it was often overbearing and left a lasting impression on the Anglo-Americans and fueled their antipathy. German-Lutherans were also often reluctant to file the required reports to the state education offices.⁴⁸ Their lack of concern was viewed as contempt toward the American system.⁴⁹

But for all the blame that can be placed on the German-Lutherans, all the more rests on the shoulders of the xenophobic Anglo-Americans. Their open coercion and advocacy clearly contradicted both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution. Take, for example, the American Legion. It was one of the most active and vocal groups in support of the restrictive education legislation. The Third State Convention of the Nebraska League of the Legion approved a resolution on October 1, 1921, which encapsulates quite well the fundamental misunderstandings present at the time. They resolved

that Americans, who are real Americans should desire to know and to use the American language, and should desire their children to be taught such language, and that

Americans without such desires are not properly imbued with the true spirit of America and American institutions and should be required by the legislatures and courts of this country to comply with laws designed for its welfare and perpetuity.⁵⁰

From this example it is clear that both reason and truth were taken hostage by some of the more zealous Anglo-Americans. It would be very difficult for citizens in the 1920s not to notice second generation immigrants speaking fluent English with their English-speaking friends.⁵¹ Even if nativist Anglo-Americans did not have the benefit of research and statistics showing such language usage trends, they nevertheless conveniently ignored actual realities.

The Nebraska American Legion's resolution furthermore stated

that the Supreme Ruler of the Universe is not a German God, unable to hear and to answer a suppliant's prayer in the English language. That this language law does not strike at religion; that it does not interfere with education; that it is fundamentally American and absolutely right.⁵²

This statement is a superb illustration of the core disagreement, and it facilitates the understanding of why German-Lutherans would view the aggressive changes in American educational regulations and legislation during and after World War I as attacks on religious freedom. Admittedly, it must have seemed very odd to a zealous American patriot that a religious group would say that the

German language was key in the practice of their religion. But again, the statements of German-Lutheran leaders were misunderstood or otherwise conveniently ignored by many Anglo-Americans. German-Lutherans never said that they needed to use German because “the Supreme Ruler of the Universe”⁵³ was a German God. They simply maintained that their religious literature was in German and that many of their older members were still unable to use English well.

In the end, the facts show that the educational legislation and persecution surrounding World War I were in no way “fundamentally American” or “absolutely right.” Although the *Meyer v. Nebraska* decision was based on the Fourteenth Amendment, the entire ordeal no doubt increased America’s awareness of religious freedom and of the persistent problems in keeping the state separate from the church. Indeed, “the problem of retaining both church control and educational independence is one which seems difficult to solve in any system.”⁵⁴

Despite the difficult ordeal in the early 20th century, progress was in fact made. Nevertheless, questions about parochial schools and their relationship to public education arose again decades later.⁵⁵ The issues of parental control over education addressed at the start of the 20th century are also being now addressed at the start of the 21st century. More and more cities are exploring or even implementing school voucher systems by which parents can freely opt out of public school education and

make use of public money to send their children to the private school of their choice. Ironically, this is even serving to benefit Lutheran parochial schools in cities with German-Lutheran roots, like Milwaukee. Educational practices have truly come full circle since the 1920s, and although there is still much debate over the new voucher system, it appears that Americans continue to follow the lead of *Meyer v. Nebraska* preferring personal choice and liberty over public mandates. In fact, many Lutherans view today’s aggressive changes in educational legislation as very encouraging for the free exercise of their religious education. This is in stark contrast to the travails of their forebears who had to deal with aggressive legislation as it attacked and prohibited the free exercise of their religion. ✪

ENDNOTES

¹ Martin Luther, “An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, von des christlichen Standes Besserung,” *Sämmtliche Schrifften*, ed. Dr. J.G. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1885), 341-342. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the essayist.

² Wayne E. Schmidt, *The Lutheran Parochial School* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Publications, 2001), 17-26.

³ Walter H. Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1939), 68.

⁴ John Schaller, *Die Nothwendigkeit der christlichen Gemeindschule für die christliche Familie, die Kirche und den*

Staat, Bericht: Verhandlungen der...Evang.-luth. Synodalconferenzen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1900), 25. In his paper, Schaller is not suggesting that disciplines other than theology are inappropriate or unimportant, rather, all these disciplines should be undertaken in the context of a Christian environment that places God's Word at the forefront.

- ⁵ Proverbs 22:6 New International Version. "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Also Psalm 111:10. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding." Also Ephesians 6:4. "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."
- ⁶ A good overview of these facts can be found in Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974).
- ⁷ Frederick Nohl, "The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Reacts to United States Anti-Germanism During World War I," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 25:2 (1962): 50-51.
- ⁸ G.D. Stayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *The Classroom Teacher*, 15, as quoted in Beck.
- ⁹ Zechariah Chafee, *Free Speech in the United States* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1941), 306. It was not uncommon that German-Americans were falsely accused of sedition, espionage, sabotage, and assassination. Cf. Luebke.
- ¹⁰ Beck, 316.
- ¹¹ Schmidt, 176.
- ¹² Wisconsin, *Laws of Wisconsin* (1889), 729-30, as quoted in Beck, 178. This act is commonly referred to as the "Bennett Law."
- ¹³ Otto Engel, "The Anti-German Spirit Experienced by German Americans During World War I," *WELS Historical Institute Journal* 4:1 (1996): 35-44.
- ¹⁴ Luebke, 4.
- ¹⁵ "Woher der Wind Weht," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 16:1 (1919): 68. This article was simply a compilation of various quotes and opinions from around the country.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 69.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.
- ¹⁹ Kenneth B. O'Brien, "Education, Americanization and the Supreme Court: The 1920s," *American Quarterly* 13:2 (1961): 163. The states were Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 164.
- ²² "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the *free exercise thereof* abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." *Amendment I: United States Constitution* **E**mphasis added.
- ²³ Dr. Franz Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*,

vol. 1 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), 616. Pieper, a Missouri Synod dogmatician, also pointed to the parochial school cases being argued in Oregon and elsewhere in the nation as evidence of the devil's work against the church.

²⁴ John Schaller, "Religious Freedom Endangered," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 16:2 (1919): 81.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

²⁶ *Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gemeinde-Blatt*, (1919).

²⁷ August Pieper, "Zum Kampf um die freie Christliche Schule," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 7:3 (1920): 177.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁹ Schmidt, 260. There is testimony to this fact scattered throughout the German-Lutheran publications of the day.

³⁰ "Zur Sprachenfrage," *Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gemeinde-Blatt* 3:11 (1918): 248-250. Wisconsin Synod leaders wrote very often about the heterodox religious spirit predominant in the English language church (Reformed, Calvinist). For Lutherans who are deeply concerned about orthodoxy, a swift change to a language filled with unclear words infused with improper connotations was not advisable. Again, let it not be forgotten that the synod was willing to work towards a transition to English; they simply wanted more time to study and translate their literature and hymnody than the Anglo-American ruling authorities wanted to allow.

³¹ Quoted from "Woher der Wind

Weht," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 16:1 (1919): 71.

³² Schmidt, 266.

³³ Schmidt, 289.

³⁴ Beck, 332.

³⁵ Quoted in Schmidt, 287. Other writings in the *Gemeinde-Blatt* and *Theologische Quartalschrift* offered this same assessment of the situation.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 297.

³⁷ "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Amendment XIV: United States Constitution.

³⁸ *Meyer v. State of Nebraska*, 262 U.S. 390 (1923).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ For those who have the benefit of a broader historical perspective, the notion that certain languages are harmful is easily dismissed. Although the Nebraskans had no problem with use of Hebrew, there were other periods of history in Europe in which its use was considered harmful. A broader historical perspective shows the changing and fickle opinions toward various languages.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* Cf. Schaller, "Die Nothwendigkeit etc.," 9.

⁴² Beck, 333.

⁴³ James B. Scott, "Foreign Language Teaching in the United States," *The American Journal of International Law* 17:3 (1923): 509.

⁴⁴ *Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gemeindeblatt*, June 15, 1923, 214.

⁴⁵ O'Brien, 169.

⁴⁶ Schmidt, 296. The contempt towards free exercise of religion is, of course, very startling to modern readers, but within the historical context of the time it was not so startling.

⁴⁷ This mob mentality was in many ways even encouraged by the governmental institutions of the day, most notably the President himself. President Woodrow Wilson said, "There are citizens of the United States, ... born under other flags but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to the full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life; who have sought to bring the authority and good name of our Government into contempt, to destroy our industries wherever they thought it effective for their vindictive purposes to strike at them, and to debase our politics to the uses of foreign intrigue." Luebke, 146.

⁴⁸ Schmidt, 279.

⁴⁹ August Pieper attributed the persecution against parochial schools to the lack of competent, responsible performance in many of the schools. He recommended that German-Lutheran parochial schools maintain such high standards that it would be impossible for their enemies to bring charges against them. Cf. "Zum Kampf um die freie christliche Schule."

⁵⁰ "The First Americanization Work,"

History of the Nebraska American Legion, 2003, <http://www.memoriallibrary.com/NE/Military/AL/eight.htm>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2005.

⁵¹ In fact, German-Lutherans pointed such facts out in their publications. For example, the *Gemeindeblatt* cited the example that Milwaukee, where one had previously heard exclusively German on many streets, was now primarily an English speaking city. They also asserted that when each generation started a new family, English usage became more predominant. Cf. W.H., "Zur Sprachenfrage," *Evangelisches-Lutherisches Gemeindeblatt*, 53:16 (4 August, 1918): 248.

⁵² "The First Americanization Work."

⁵³ Even this quote betrays the reformed emphasis of God as the Supreme Ruler (as opposed to the Lutheran soteriological and Christological emphasis) promulgated by English language religion which German-Lutheran theological leaders sought to avoid.

⁵⁴ Chester L. Hunt, "Religious Instruction versus Secularization: The German Experience," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 22:4 (1948): 309.

⁵⁵ Cf. Rudolph M. Binder, "The Public School and Religion," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 23:5 (1950).

Caleb Bassett is a senior at Martin Luther College, and will be graduated in May 2006. This paper was adapted for The Lutheran Educator by its author. In its original form, it won a John H. Ott Award, available to upperclassmen in MLC's pastoral studies program who do extracurricular research/writing in the fields of history or English.

Two New Read-aloud Book Awards

Arthur Schulz

The Curriculum Materials Center of the Livingstone Lord Library, Minnesota State University (MSUM), Moorhead, Minnesota, has established two read-aloud book awards for children's literature. The award for literature for younger children (preschool to age 8) is fittingly named the Wanda Gag Book Award in honor of the author-illustrator of *Millions of Cats* (1928), generally considered America's first authentic picture storybook and to this day a perennial favorite read-aloud both among young listening audiences and adult readers. The second award is for the best read-aloud book for 8- to 12-year-olds. It is called the Comstock Book Award in recognition of Samuel G. Comstock, a local state senator and U.S. Congressman considered the father of Moorhead State Normal School, which has evolved into MSUM.

Called the Comstock Reading Aloud Initiative, this awards program seeks to recognize and encourage authors and illustrators, to promote reading aloud to children, and to help those who read to children with the selection of quality picture books. Carol Sibley, the MSUM curriculum librarian, requested publishers to send the Center copies of their 2004 picture books. A ten-member committee of students, faculty, and librari-

ans chose 190 of the more than 400 books received to be read to area children by regional teachers, librarians, and MSUM elementary and early childhood education majors. Based on the readers' comments and children's reactions, the committee named *I Like Myself* by Karen Beaumont and illustrated by David Catrow as the winner of the first Wanda Gag Book Award and *Elena's Serenade* by Campbell Geeslin and illustrated by Ana Juan as the first winner of the Comstock Book Award. Two honor books were also chosen for each award.

The preceding paragraph might lead a reader to consider these award winners as mere reading and listening preferences of the Moorhead area teachers, librarians, students, and the almost 15,000 children to whom they were read during the past year. Three areas of specific criteria, however, were to be kept in mind by those reading the stories and the selection committee. First, they were to give attention to qualities that make a book a suitable read-aloud selection: The story captures children's imagination and holds their interest. Children are interested in repeated readings of the story (especially critical for preschool children). The book shows respect for all children, contains a rich vocabulary, and the text and illustra-

tions stimulate a variety of responses on the part of listeners/observers.

The other criteria that guide the selection of these read-aloud book awards have to do with those qualities of text and illustration that we have come to expect in good picture books. Therefore, those who evaluated these books were to ask themselves: How well is the theme or concept of the book presented? Is the information clearly presented, organized, accurate? How well are the plot, setting, and characters developed? Is the style of language appropriate to the book's topic or theme and to being read aloud? Do the artistic medium, the artistic style, the elements of art and design principles, and the overall design of the book provide children with a worthy and wholesome visual experience? Finally, do the book's illustrations enhance the read-aloud experience by complementing (i.e., interpreting and extending the meaning of) the text?

Reviews of the 2005 award and honor books

The 2005 selections are mostly worthy examples of both good read-aloud choices and quality picture books. Of course, as with any read-aloud, readers must thoroughly prepare themselves before reading to an audience. This includes becoming well acquainted with the story or information, practicing reading the text aloud, anticipating audience responses, and planning how to deal with the responses. The reader also keeps in mind that age limits sug-

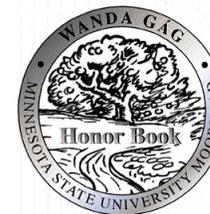
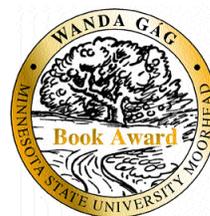
gested by publishers and others are only suggestions. Children make their own decisions regarding their likes and dislikes.

The 2005 Wanda Gag Book Award
I Like Myself written by Karen Beaumont and illustrated by David Catrow, Harcourt, Inc. Catrow's illustrations

interpret and extend Beaumont's well-cadenced rhyming text in this serious, yet humorous, little work on self-esteem. Our

trial audience of three-, four-, and five-year-olds responded gleefully throughout. The two-page spread at midway showing the protagonist on her bicycle particularly tickled their funny bones. The humorous touch softens the narcissism that often arises when self-esteem is the theme. Surely, the Lutheran early childhood teacher will have prepared her class well to enjoy this wonderful collaboration between author and illustrator by having taught them earlier wherein lies the essence of their self esteem.

The 2005 Wanda Gag Honor Books.
Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale written and illustrated by Mo Willems, Hyperion Books for Children. This urban tale of what happens when Trixie, Daddy, and Knuffle Bunny make a trip to the nearby laundromat is an appealing combination of



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expressive cartoon drawings superimposed on sepia tone photographs of a Brooklyn neighborhood. The elements of line and design used by Willems elaborate on the text and are truly in the tradition of Wanda Gag. *Knuffle Bunny* also received Caldecott Honor Book status for 2005. Oh, yes, those of you who know Willems' "Pigeon" books, look for that delightful character's cameo appearance in *Knuffle Bunny*.

Kumak's Fish: A Tall Tale from the Far North written and illustrated by Michael Bania, Alaska Northwest Books/Graphic Arts Center Publishing. Illustrations and text of this simply-stated, humorous tall tale provide ample evidence that Michael Bania has a lively appreciation for and a rich understanding of the Eskimo people among whom she lived for two decades. Their customs, wildlife, and stories are vibrantly evident as pictures and text unfold how patience, cooperation, and humor can turn a bad day into a good day for an entire village.

The 2005 Comstock Book Award Elena's Serenade written by Campbell Geeslin and illustrated by Ana Juan, Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

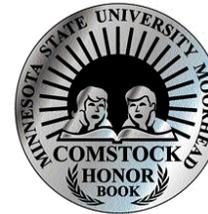


Everyone knows that girls can't be glassblowers. Or can they? Elena is sure she can be even if her father, the expert craftsman, knows better.

The magic realism is a bit overdone, but the appeal of Elena's perseverance, Ana Juan's brilliantly colored illustrations establishing an unmistakable warm

Mexican setting, and father and daughter coming to peaceful terms all serve as redeeming features in this tale of what is required in the struggle to accomplish one's dreams. An added plus is the Spanish-English glossary.

The 2005 Comstock Honor Books Mighty Jackie: The Strike-Out Queen written by Marissa Moss and illustrated by C. F. Payne, Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers. We



probably have all known girls who could rival the athleticism of all the neighborhood boys, but we've all seen the day when they eventually left the playing field for more feminine pursuits. Not so with Southpaw Jackie Mitchell who at least got her chance to take the mound against Babe Ruth, "The Sultan of Swat," and "Iron Man" Lou Gehrig, not in a world series game, as she hoped, but on 2 April 1931, when the mighty Yankees came to play an exhibition game with the Chatanooga Lookouts. Yes, Mighty Jackie struck out both Ruth and Gehrig. Here is a piece of baseball history that baseball enthusiasts of either gender will listen to in disbelief. Enjoy the history, ponder the pictures that resemble trading cards at their best, and check out the sources. Here is a sterling read aloud for anytime that baseball is in season. Pair this with "Casey at the Bat." Maybe your listeners will even act each out or use them as material for a readers' theater program.

Mr. Maxwell's Mous written by Frank

Asch and illustrated by Devin Asch, Kids Can Press. The Asches are a father-and-son duo who have combined their talents in other books. One expects that *Mr. Maxwell's Mouse* celebrity status reflects the influence of television on how children think about literature. This battle of wits between cat and mouse takes place in the fashionable Paw and Claw where Mr. Maxwell is the most regular of regulars for noon lunch. The repartee between Mr. Maxwell and the live mouse he has ordered from the menu to celebrate his recent promotion leads to chaos for Mr. Maxwell and escape for the little white

mouse and his cohorts in the kitchen. The illustrations vividly reveal the qualities of the characters and richly depict the grand setting of the lavish Paw and Claw. Clever, witty, suspenseful, but this take-off on David and Goliath among our whiskered friends gets a bit gross. Use it if you like, but please be ready to deal with the mouse's request to offer up a prayer. At least then, your listeners will have a chance to exercise their critical reading and listening skills.

Art Schulz is a retired professor of Martin Luther College and resides in New Ulm, MN



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Martin Luther College Strategic Plan

A Vision for Leadership: 2010+

Steven Thiesfeldt

In February 2006, the Martin Luther College Governing Board approved the MLC Strategic Plan. The following article contains an abridged version of that plan. The document can be found in its entirety at www.mlc-wels.edu.

Introduction

As Joshua prepared to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land, he realized that God's people were about to face formidable opposition in the stronghold city of Jericho. God could have destroyed the city himself, but he chose a strategy that involved Joshua and his people. Seven days later, the walls of Jericho fell and the Israelites were victorious (Joshua 5:13-6:27).

The Bible provides many examples of how God used his people to advance his mission. It is no different today. God still uses strategies that involve his people. Recognizing that truth, Martin Luther College began development of a strategic plan during the 2003-04 school year. The process began by affirming the college's mission of service to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in the preparation of pastors, teachers, and staff ministers. That mission was

inherited by MLC from its predecessors, Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College. That mission has been part of an unwavering focus since the formation of Martin Luther College in 1995. Under God's blessing, that mission will endure well into the 21st century and beyond. With a look to the future, Martin Luther College has established a vision statement to guide the ongoing fulfillment of its mission:

"Martin Luther College serves its students, staff, supporters, and the people of God's world as the WELS College of Ministry by providing educational leadership with a global outlook."

God has commanded that the gospel be proclaimed "to those who live on the earth—every nation, tribe, language and people" (Revelation 14:6b). The MLC vision recognizes that we live in a world where doors to gospel outreach are opening wider every day. The challenge and urgency to educate future gospel heralds for service in a world with a diversity of needs is greater than ever. Recognizing the importance of the task, committees composed of faculty, students, and support staff were appointed to begin the process of identifying strategic issues. Input was gath-

ered from faculty, staff, students, alumni, stakeholders, and synod leaders to develop a list of ten strategic issues facing the college. That list was later narrowed to a more manageable list of five. A characterization and summary of the top five strategic issues follows.

Issue A: Faculty Workload and Expertise

The mission statement of Martin Luther College identifies the school as the WELS College of Ministry. No one group is more directly responsible for the fulfillment of that mission than is the faculty. The 1999 Self-Study Report prepared for the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) characterized this relationship well:

The carrying out of the mission of Martin Luther College is largely a matter of having qualified, competent faculty for the task. The strength of the MLC faculty lies foremost in their oneness in faith and then their experiential background as pastors and teachers in the church body they serve. They know first-hand the work for which they are preparing the students

who have chosen a form of public ministry as their vocation. Martin

Luther College values the long-standing view... that confessional integrity, Christian character, commitment to ministry, and an aptitude for teaching are essential char-

acteristics for those called to prepare the next generation of WELS public ministers. However, this attitude does not ignore the necessity of teachers and administrators being knowledgeable about their academic fields and determined to grow in the scholarship of teaching. The Lutheran heritage, which the WELS cherishes, prizes such well-roundedness in its teachers.

The report repeats a concern expressed by a 1992 visiting team from NCA that “the teaching load of the faculty (15 hours per semester) leaves little time for professional development or personal time.” The 1999 Report of a Visit to Martin Luther College from the same accrediting body reiterates that “faculty workload continues to be a concern because it threatens the ability of faculty members to carry out their responsibilities effectively.” A February 2005 survey of proposed strategic issues showed that more than 50% of the respondents in four different target audiences agreed that the matter of “faculty workload and expertise” deserves priority attention. The tabulation is shown in Figure 1.

It was on this basis that the Strategic

Students (233 res.)	Faculty and Staff (70 res.)	Governing Board (12 res.)	Parents (33 res.)	Alumni (22 res.)
52.8%	62.9%	58.3%	45.5%	54.5%

Planning Committee identified the following strategic issue:

- Investigate the impact of faculty workloads on morale, professional growth, and effective ministry modeling.

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For each strategic issue, a list of goals to address the issue was identified. Before taking any major action, a comprehensive study to review faculty workloads and professional growth opportunities was launched. The results of the study will guide the college in its desire to maintain a dedicated, competent corps of faculty members who can effectively train the next generation of gospel ministers.

Issue B: Financial Stability

The cost of higher education has skyrocketed in recent years. Double digit percentage increases in tuition and fees have been the norm through the first half of the current decade. Private post secondary schools depending on endowment earnings for operational expenses have been hurt by lower investment returns. The same economic climate has cut into subsidies at state universities. According to a recent report in the *Chronicle for Higher Education* the rapid increase in college costs has earned 36 out of 50 states an “F” rating at keeping college affordable (September 24, 2004).

Although God has richly blessed the church through the mission of MLC, financial obstacles are placing unprecedented challenges before the college. A reduction in operating subsidy from the synod has led to tuition increases that have averaged almost 10% over the last four years. The increased student costs and a perceived shortage of

calls have led to a sharp decline in enrollment. As a result, MLC faces an operating budget deficit of at least \$3 million a year for the indefinite future.

The college has reduced operating costs and increased recruitment measures in an effort to maintain its important mission. One of the realities of our synod’s financial struggles is that our WELS ministerial education schools have been asked to bear greater responsibility for funding. At its fall 2004 meeting, the MLC Governing Board directed the college to establish an office for mission advancement to address the need for expanded support of the college. Within months a plan was approved to include both a public relations and a development department in this office. During the summer of 2005, the MLC Office for Mission Advancement was established with two resource development directors, a public relations director, and clerical help.

With all of the attention on the need for expanded financial support, it is not surprising that strategic planning surveys and focus groups identified “financial stability” as one of the top strategic issues for the future of MLC. The results of the February 2005 survey are shown in Figure 2.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation and aware of the fact that the financial stability of the college was already being addressed, the Strategic Planning Committee established the following

Figure 2

Students	Faculty and Staff	Governing Board	Parents	Alumni
(233 res.)	(70 res.)	(12 res.)	(33 res.)	(22 res.)
87%	91.4%	100%	93.9%	77.3%

strategic issue:

- Address the stability of the college as it relates to financial resources, rising tuition, student financial aid and endowment holdings.

Goals for this area include an expanded program of mission advancement, a return to an optimal enrollment in the 900-1000 range, and lowering the student share of educational costs by minimizing tuition increases and maximizing financial aid.

Issue C: Internal and External Communication

In its August 1999 report to the administration of the college, the ad hoc Committee to Review Administrative Structure identified communication as one of several concerns that emerged during the assigned study. These concerns were addressed in various ways as a new administrative structure was implemented at the college beginning with the 2000-2001 academic year. A subsequent review of the administrative structure after four years did not identify any major issues with communication from an internal perspective.

The advent of technology tools that facilitate communication efforts has undoubtedly made it easier to share timely information with and among colleagues, students, and constituents. Email and the MLC Portal are two obvious and readily-accessible examples.

There are few barriers to communicating regularly for those who are will-

ing to make the effort. At the same time, members of today’s society have increased expectations in the area of communication. The savvy communicator is not only concerned with the quantity of communicated messages, but also the quality and timing of those messages. In the fall of 2004, a Mission Advancement Advisory Team was established at MLC. Comprised of individuals from various walks of life, this group held an intensive series of meetings during the 2004-05 school year to identify ways to promote the mission of the college. As the meetings progressed, the theme most often repeated was that MLC needed to “get the message out” about the many positive things happening at the college. The recent establishment of a public relations department at MLC can be attributed directly to that valuable input. The launching of a new institutional website during the summer of 2005 and the hiring of a staff member specifically responsible for its development and maintenance was an independent but related step.

The February 2005 survey of the Strategic Planning Committee also identified internal and external communication as one of the top five issues for consideration by the college. A summary of the results is shown in Figure 3.

On the basis of this survey and subsequent feedback, the Strategic Planning Committee has established the following strategic issue:

Figure 3

Students (233 res.)	Faculty and Staff (70 res.)	Governing Board (12 res.)	Parents (33 res.)	Alumni (22 res.)
40.8%	72.9%	100%	54.5%	36.4%

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- Explore communication processes utilized by the college and their impact on school image and functionality.

Goals for enhanced external communication include an expanded role for the public relations office and establishment of an MLC alumni and friends organization. Efforts at enhanced internal communication among administration, faculty, staff and students focus on the use of technology tools and face to face contact.

Issue D: Recruitment of Ministry Candidates

Just before he ascended into heaven, our Lord set the mission of the church on earth when he told his followers, “Go and make disciples of all nations.” The vision for the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod focuses on that mission by proclaiming, “The gospel in Word and sacrament is everything! Go with it! Study it! Apply it! Teach it!” While the responsibility to spread the gospel rests with every blood-bought soul, the Lord of the church has established the public ministry for the good of the kingdom. The students at MLC are the future public ministers of our WELS congregations. The opportunities to spread the gospel are growing every day. Literally millions are starving for the gospel in every corner of the globe. Our church body is grateful that the Lord of the harvest has consistently provided workers to fill the pulpits and classrooms of our WELS congregations through its ministerial education training system.

But recruitment of ministry candidates is not without its challenges. A document prepared by Vice President for Enrollment Management Phil Leyrer on behalf of the MLC Admissions Department in November 2004 characterizes those challenges:

At present the synod subsidy that once made education costs more affordable for students and helped to mitigate loss of tuition revenue for schools experiencing a period of enrollment decline is minimal. No change in this situation is forecasted for the foreseeable future.

From an earthly standpoint, students will always be a school’s most important commodity because enrollment drives a school’s ability to maintain viable programs. At a time when enrollment is declining and little subsidy is available to help weather the effect, we ask God to guide our thinking about the factors that affect our enrollment and the way we view enrollment at Martin Luther College.

MLC’s enrollment is affected by the same factors that have an impact upon the enrollments at other colleges. Chief among them are cost of education, demographic trends, and the economy. In addition, historically, our ministerial education schools’ enrollments have also been affected by another factor—call day—since it is tied directly to their unique purpose and specific mission . . .

For ministerial education in particular, the results of call day each

May are an unofficial comment on enrollment. Unassigned candidates can mean that too many are enrolled. A shortage of candidates means we need more. Either natural or deliberate corrective measures have soon followed. Students discouraged by the potential of being unassigned fail to enroll, or we allocate more resources to recruitment to make sure we can meet “the needs of the church . . .”

Our conclusion and our resolve is that Martin Luther College must continue to graduate strong, well-equipped candidates for the public ministry by means of viable curricular and co-curricular programs.

Every group surveyed in February 2005 tended to agree with our Admissions Department. More than half of all respondents identified “recruitment of ministry candidates” as a top strategic issue. The breakdown by category is shown in Figure 4

Students (233 res.)	Faculty and Staff (70 res.)	Governing Board (12 res.)	Parents (33 res.)	Alumni (22 res.)
51.5%	58.6%	58.3%	60.6%	72.7%

The philosophy and premises expressed in the previous document, coupled with feedback from the audiences identified in the survey above, has led the Strategic Planning Committee to establish the following strategic issue:

- Recruit and retain qualified and diverse candidates for ministry.

Goals for this issue reflect ideas similar to those stated earlier—expanded

recruitment efforts and merit aid programs—and the investigation of some new ventures. Studies will be launched to investigate the possibility of piloting one or more branch campuses, expanding the availability of online coursework, establishing an associate arts degree program that would allow students to pursue general studies while considering ministry, and establishing additional programs for alternate forms of ministry in areas like social work or counseling.

Issue E: Student Leadership and Learning

Jesus told his disciples, “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16).

Jesus goes on to teach his disciples about some of the many challenges that they would face in his service. Today’s disciples of Christ also face many chal-

lenges. Martin Luther College joyfully accepts the responsibility to prepare future gospel ministers for

the challenges they will face in their personal lives and in their public ministries.

Associate Director of Admissions John Dolan has described MLC as “a school from which you never graduate.” In the summer 2005 issue of MLC *KnightWatch* he explains:

MLC is a training ground for the public ministry of the gospel. That

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is something that never really ends. Our graduates continue to grow

in faith and knowledge of their Savior as they continue to study and meditate upon the Word. The early ministry opportunities they experience [as students] become daily experiences that continue to teach, challenge, and help them grow. The chances [they have] to serve others . . . in college develop into a way of life. After all, that's what the ministry is—serving God and serving others.

The gospel ministry is also about leadership. The psalmist says that God “chose David his servant . . . to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David shepherded them with the integrity of his heart; with skillful hands he led them” (Psalm 78:70-72). It is fitting that the MLC Mission Statement proclaims the objective to “encourage the student in developing and demonstrating a heart for service in the church, community, and world.” In keeping with that mission, MLC seeks to serve its “constituency with educational leadership in the instruction of Martin Luther College students.” The concepts of servanthood and leadership may seem to be at opposite poles, but developing servant-leaders for the church is a very real challenge and a goal at MLC. The February 2005 Strategic Planning survey shows that many respondents agree, with current students most strongly expressing

Figure 5

Students (233 res.)	Faculty and Staff (70 res.)	Governing Board (12 res.)	Parents (33 res.)	Alumni (22 res.)
69.1%	31.4%	41.7%	48.5%	50%

their support (Figure 5).

To that end, the Strategic Planning Committee has identified the following strategic issue:

- Review the role of students in defining their campus life, learning, and ministry preparation.

Goals for this area attempt to broaden student horizons through both formal and informal, classroom, and experiential opportunities. A growing emphasis on ethnic and cultural diversity in many of these opportunities promotes a mindset of ministering not just to the WELS, but to the world. Expanded use of technology tools enhances both academic and professional training opportunities.

Conclusion

In an article entitled “From Strategy to Action,” Robert Servier offers some important advice to strategic planners, “The goal is not the creation of a strategic plan. Rather, the goal is a sense of direction and institutional coordination created by an effective strategic planning process” (*University Business*, February 2003). Solomon, the inspired writer of the book of Proverbs, provides an even more important reminder, “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails” (19:21). A Vision for Leadership: 2010+ has been prepared with a goal of

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providing direction to the ministry of Martin Luther College for the next five years. The plan recognizes that God has richly blessed the college and positioned it to serve in a leadership role for its students, staff, supporters and the people of God's world. God grant that

MLC ever recognizes its important role and carries it out with faithfulness and diligence. ✠

Steven Thiesfeldt is Vice-President for Administration at Martin Luther College.

*For the message of the cross is
foolishness
to those who are perishing,
but to us who are
being saved it is
the power
of God.*
1 Corinthians 1:18

On Being Offended and Taking Offense

Theodore Hartwig

(For further reading on this subject, I would recommend Matthew 18:1-14, Romans 14, and Formula of Concord, Article Ten.)

In what follows, I shall make a distinction between being offended and taking offense. The distinction may be artificial, and it certainly is not a distinction in common use. In this distinction, to be offended will define the scriptural use of the term, and that is to mislead or to put a death trap in someone's way, whether the person responsible for this realizes it or not. A deathtrap does not advertise its existence, for then it would not be a trap. It catches a person by stealth. An offended person, in the Bible sense, comes to grief as the victim of someone else's word or behavior. So it is not far wrong to say that the offended person often, perhaps usually, is not aware of being offended. Consequently, children, so easily influenced by adults, are most vulnerable to being offended, and those perhaps most often responsible for this are one or the other parent, or both. It should therefore be no surprise that Jesus speaks so vehemently in Matthew 18 about offending children who are so defenseless. Whoever offends one of these little ones who

believe in me, he declares, should have a millstone hung around his neck and be drowned at the bottom of the sea.

In the popular view, however, being offended or taking offense has more to do with being displeased, annoyed, even angered and outraged because of some individual or group's language, behavior, or activity. These feelings may be justified or may be unjustified. It depends on the circumstances as well as whether God's word is involved or not involved. Either way, the person or persons annoyed or outraged are not being misled from what is right or what they think is right. It's rather the other way around; they disagree and are displeased with what has been heard or seen or done and then may go so far as to make a big issue out of it.

There should be no problem in cases where annoyance or anger is justified in view of the circumstances or of the divine commands (law) and promises (gospel). The problem of taking offense normally comes in situations where Scripture is not the issue (called indifferent matters) or where, due to faulty understanding, Scripture is thought to be the issue. Then it happens that people, from faulty knowledge or for personal reasons, may claim

offense where no true offense exists in order to have their own way or to have others conform to what they mistakenly set down as the correct pattern of life or standard of behavior or, as happens so often, because they do not want change, as if the old way is the only right way. Thereby, whether they realize it or not, they do violence to Christian liberty if not also to Christian love.

No general rules can be laid down in matters which Scripture has left to our liberty. In these cases, Christians are challenged to exercise good judgment. In obedience to the commandment of love, they will bear the infirmities of the weak. This is the message in Romans 14. Christians will be patient with the insufficiently informed as long as this condition is genuine and is not used in order to have one's own way for lording it over others, conscience or superior wisdom or even large financial support being made an excuse for selfishness or pride.

The *Formula of Concord*, Article X (30-31), warns against making a fuss in matters of indifference such as human ceremonies so as to give the impression that Christians do not have the liberty to do with or without them at any time or place according to the circumstances at hand. It also counsels Christians not to condemn one another because of differences in human ceremonies, as long as there is agreement in the teaching of the gospel and the sacraments. Disagreement in indifferent matters does not destroy agreement in faith.

Luther on Christian Liberty

[In matters where God has not

spoken] it is up to you to weigh in your own mind how far your Christian liberty and your love are to extend themselves and, when necessity demands, to refrain from your liberty and to practice love.

As for personal relations between yourself and God, Christian freedom is so perfect and complete that you are under no obligation to obey in matters that he has not commanded. In this context, heaven and earth are full of your freedom; indeed, heaven and earth cannot comprehend this freedom.

As for relations, however, between you and your neighbor or someone in authority, Christian freedom does not extend to anything which might do others harm. Indeed, where you can be useful and of service, your liberty will not care to be free but will surrender itself in order to serve. Thus, if you deny yourself certain foods for the sake of others, they will have to praise you and say: This person, who could have acted differently, denies himself for my sake, from which I infer that he must indeed be virtuous, since he does not with his freedom yield to his own wishes and desires. And if he is so obliging in matters where there are no hard and fast rules, how much more will he be so in cases where one is obligated to obey. (WA 26:582)✠

Theodore Hartwig is a retired professor of Martin Luther College and resides in New Ulm, MN

REVIEWS

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Brokering, H. (2004). *Dog Psalms*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Books.

“My relationship with dogs mirrors my relationship with God.” These words explain Herb Brokering’s purpose for writing *Dog Psalms*. He uses the relationships between dogs and their owners to explain the relationship between people and God. You do not have to love dogs to enjoy this book, but dog lovers will certainly appreciate the creative way the author compares dogs and humans.

Mackall, D.D. (2004). *A Friend from Galilee*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Books.

A Friend from Galilee was written to

show children that Jesus faced challenges and struggles just as they do. The illustrations picture Jesus as a child on the left page and a modern day child on the right page. The text is a series of questions that children might ask Jesus concerning his childhood. The poetic form and pattern are easy to follow. Children will enjoy the illustrations and identify with many of the questions asked. Although some of the questions may not seem appropriate to ask Jesus, adults and children could use this book to talk about the challenges of childhood.

Carla Melendy