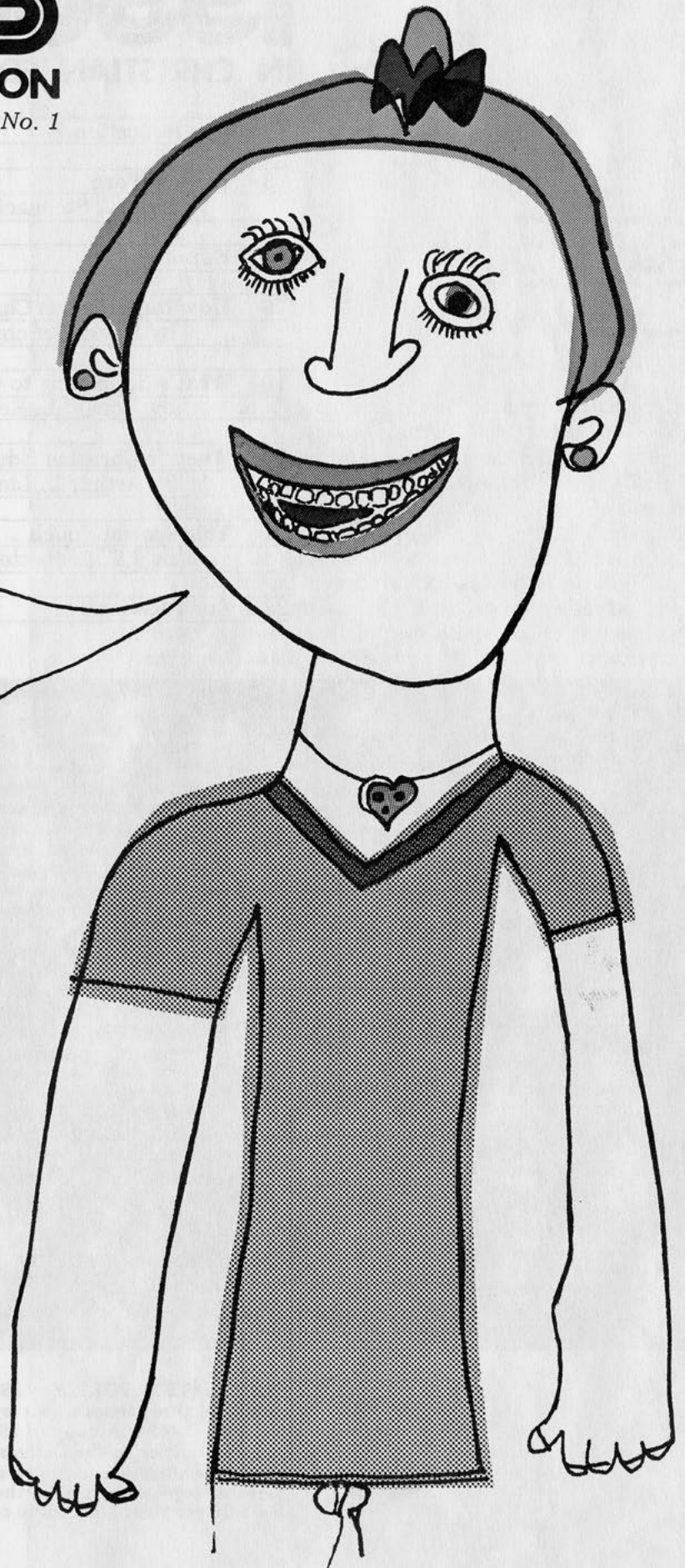


ISSUES

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Fall, 1982

Vol. 17, No. 1



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EDITOR'S NOTES

Some years ago your editor reviewed some of the history on Christian education as far back as the Middle Ages. One conclusion that seemed warranted was that Christian churches supported Christian education for the wrong reasons with surprising frequency. Through the ages Christian education has served a variety of purposes in addition to teaching the Holy Word to those being instructed.

The reader is invited to make his or her own assessment of what the status of Christian education is today. Following such an evaluation the pages of this ISSUES may provide some reinforcement for one's views and/or some new perspectives on what needs to be done to add to the vitality of and interest in Christian education that has been growing, particularly in circles outside of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, in recent years.

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A FOREWORD

Christian Education is, of course, a part of the regular name of this journal. This issue of ISSUES tackles this broad, major topic head on.

Christian education, or more precisely Christian schools, has been a very prominent topic in the news lately. Millions of people in the United States have suddenly become more aware of Christian schools because of the controversies surrounding the founding and operation of Christian schools by many church groups which previously had not sponsored many schools. The issue generally has centered on teacher certification and the state's right to establish standards and regulations for teacher certification vs. the church's right to promulgate its religious teaching without state interference.

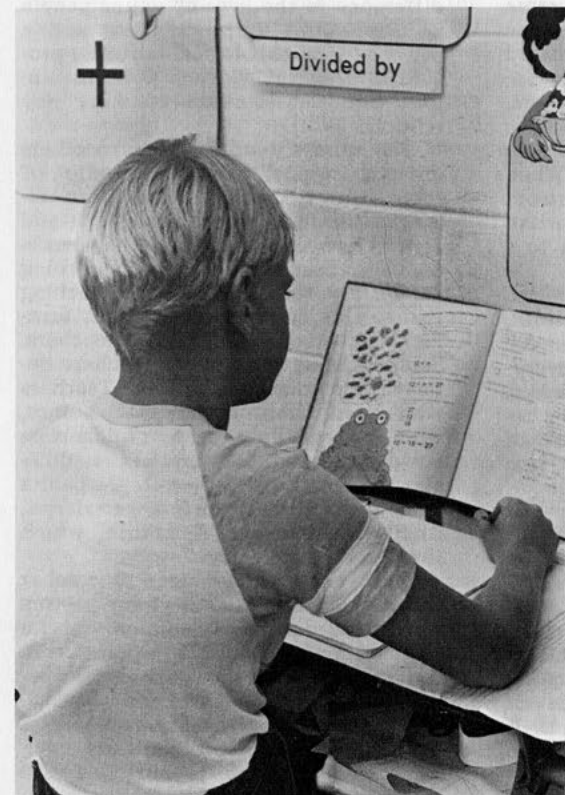
The three major articles in this issue review the developing scene of Christian schools in our nation. In "What's Happening to Christian Schools?" a wealth of valuable statistical information is provided as well as identification of important current trends, especially in Lutheran education.

In "When Is Christian Education Effective?" the reader is provided with many helpful references and is pointed to recent research studies pertaining to this question.

Finally, the article "How important Is Christian Education?" provides a sound theological perspective and describes the place of Christian education in the church's overall mission.

This issue is one which I believe will find its way into the permanent files of many Christian educators for future reference and use.

M.J. Stelmachowicz



A PARISH EDUCATION AGENDA FOR THE '80s

A survey of parish education in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod reveals a number of significant events deserving applause, such as: 1. the introduction of *Eternal Word*, a religious education curriculum for elementary and mid-week schools; 2. greater attention to developmentally disabled persons; 3. an investment of more resources and personnel in early childhood education; 4. a competent synodical youth ministry staff and a growing youth organization; 5. the emergence of DCEs as parish education leaders; 6. a corps of committed teachers, volunteers and called, on the parish, district, and synodical levels.

A review of education in parishes also reveals unfinished business. At the risk of revealing a number of biases, several items will be identified as an agenda for parish educators during the 1980s.

Parish education is "data poor," with very little being known about most important areas. What, for example, motivates 19% of our adult membership to engage in Bible study? Why are we losing so many young people between Baptism and youth confirmation? (The attrition rate is approaching 45%.) A data base would be invaluable in dealing with these and other problems.

Adult and family life education, instead of being peripheral concerns or luxuries, need to be at the center of parish activities. In one sense, a vital educational ministry begins with adults. Adults are the key shapers of their youth, and significant change involves this age group. Growth in stewardship, evangelism, or social ministry calls for the teaching of adults. With large numbers of families in our country looking for help, the church can seize a golden opportunity IF we become equipped to do family life ministry.

A shift toward an older population alerts us to the need to get busy in developing ministries among adults 65 years of age and older. Ageism and the notion that one is "over the hill" at age 65 is a social disease that easily spills over into the life of the church. To minister to older adults, congregational models and tools for lay and professional church leaders are needed. The Center on Aging being proposed by the Nebraska District of the LCMS, to be located at Concordia College, Seward, can be a big step toward meeting this need.

With the completion of *Eternal Word* in 1984, there is a need to begin work on a curriculum for the 1990s. To some, a 10 year life-span appears to be optimum for any one curriculum. Inclusion of extensive field testing and



evaluation prior to publication would improve these resources.

There is a need in our circles for a new Sunday School curriculum. Though teaching the *New Life In Christ* curriculum is convenient for adults who want to focus on the same Bible selection for all age groups on the same Sunday, a chronologically-based curriculum for younger children insures too many problems for learners, teachers, and writers. Time-lines have very little meaning for young people prior to the 4th or 5th grades. When each age group studies the same lesson, what does the story of the Samaritan woman with five husbands mean to a first grader?

Teachers of religion in our Lutheran high schools are searching for solid, Biblical, and relevant resources for their classes. Instead of using "everything under the sun," these teachers and their students deserve better resources consisting of core courses and electives designed especially for Lutheran high schools.

Many pastors are interested in their own continuing education and skills development. While a variety of resources are available, such as the *Growth in Ministry* workshops, a delivery system is needed that will make these learning events more available to pastors. A greater consciousness among congregations of the importance of including continuing education in their budgets (about 44% of our pastors do not receive any kind of financial support for professional growth) would help pastors.

New links between district/synodical offices and parishes may be needed. With committed district and synodical education leaders carrying a heavy load, the identification and development of networks of resource people in metropolitan areas and districts could

serve to bridge the gap between parish needs and resources.

The role of Lutheran elementary and secondary schools deserve vigorous promotion. The day when one could say that such schools don't make a difference in the lives of young people is over. Both empirical data and a psychological-theological rationale provide impressive evidence for the support and development of more day schools.

The ministry of Lutheran teachers deserves support, and a clarification of their role is needed. There are respected teachers who no longer attend district conventions because of a sense of futility resulting from teachers being denied a vote. Describing the teaching ministry as an auxiliary office is turning off veteran and young teachers. Salaries being paid many teachers deserve immediate attention. Teachers who come from middle-class homes, who are called to serve middle-class congregations which reflect middle-class expectations, but who are paid a little more than poverty-level salaries, find themselves in a crunch which short-circuits ministry.

The role of the pastor as teacher deserves attention. That young pastors with backgrounds in education report a great deal of satisfaction in their teaching, while some other pastors indicate that teaching, especially their instruction of young confirmation classes, is their number one problem and challenge, suggests that teaching is a skill that can be learned. A seminary curriculum that would give as much attention to teaching as to preaching would serve parishes more effectively.

Reports indicating that directors of Christian education are making important contributions in parishes suggest that there is a need for persons to serve as mentors in working with congrega-

tions and DCEs engaged in developing a new role as called ministers of the Word.

It is time to re-examine the use of object lessons in teaching the faith and in children's sermons. That object lessons call for abstract thinking and the ability to use analogies means that such devices are more appropriate for adults than children. Teachers and pastors who recognize this limitation and remember the power of stories and images will observe greater satisfaction among younger learners.

By giving attention to these and other agenda items during the '80s, there is a better chance that the church will be applauding important developments in the 1990s.

Marvin Bergman

THE ISSUE OF NURTURE

The state of Christian education is great. Signs of this include the growing interest of adults in Bible study; the desire of a growing number of adults for indepth theological study; the increasing number of, increasing size of, and increasing quality of Lutheran day schools; the widespread interest of Sunday School teachers in workshops which help them become more effective in teaching the Word; the Gallup survey which reports "Bible Study up sharply among teens" (from 27% in 1978 to 41% in 1981).

The state of Christian education is in great need of improvement. Of the many aspects which need improvement, five are listed here. Enhancing these five areas will do much to improve the state of Christian education in the church.

1. We need to grow in our understanding of Christian education as nurture. Nurture is one of the God-given functions of every Christian congregation (along with celebration/worship, witness, service, fellowship, and stewardship). The term "nurture" emphasizes that Christian education is not merely growing in Biblical information but primarily growing in Christ by the working of the Spirit through the Word. Every baptized Christian needs such nurture.

2. We need to do a better job of adult education. We Lutherans are known for our outstanding education of children and youth. We Lutherans also have written umpteen articles deploring the fact that confirmation is regarded as graduation from Christian education. Adults need the growth in faith and love which the Spirit works through the Word. Possibly the best way to improve the Christian education of children and youth is to surround them with adults (at home, in school, throughout the congregation)

who are spiritually alive and growing in the Word.

3. The parish leaders need to be involved in Bible study. It is unlikely that a congregation will give Christian education its appropriate emphasis and commitment without the lay and clergy leaders giving emphasis and commitment to their personal involvement in the nurturing function of the congregation.

4. The style of Christian education needs to be such that it facilitates the building of relationships (with God, with others, with self). Christ Jesus gave His life for us so that through forgiveness we might have a new relationship with Him, with others, and with ourselves. As we study His Word of forgiveness and life, we need to share it with one another. In the New Testament we see that this mutual sharing of the Word was a key ingredient of congregational life. Where this "Word-ing" of one another occurs, people grow in their relationships with God, self, and others.

5. We need to remind one another that Christian education is for mission. Christian education is not an end in itself, but it is the means which the Holy Spirit uses to equip Christians for doing God's mission — reaching out to people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

Karl K. Schmidt

NEEDED — MORE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

President Ronald Reagan recently provided opportunity for debate when he proposed his "prayer amendment" to the Congress of the United States. Sides are already being chosen for the great debate — to pray or not to pray in the public schools of America — that is the question.

Neither the question nor the debate is of recent origin. Both go back to the founding of the public school system as it developed on the eastern seaboard of the United States. The question of what to do about God and Biblical beliefs confronted early Americans just as it does now. Involved in the controversy is the fact that early schools in America were primarily religious schools. In fact, one of the earliest school laws in America — the "old deluder Satan law" of 1647 — required towns to provide education for the children in order to fight against Satan who desired to keep people from gaining a knowledge of Scripture. Our forefathers never dreamed that education in this country would develop into a school system which promoted a "freedom from religion." Those who framed the Constitution, which includes the often misused First Amendment, had no idea of the way in which the concept of

separation of church and state would be used in the future schools of America. My guess is that had they known then what many of us know now, they would have requested permission to begin all over again.

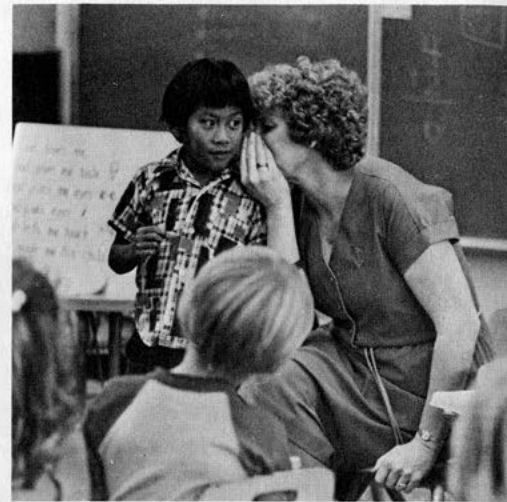
In the philosophical minds of many Christian people today education must include the education of the whole child; and by the term "whole child" they would include the mental, social, physical and spiritual. Public schools over the past several centuries have educated children in the mental, social and physical, but not the spiritual. To many of these people the omission of the spiritual is one of the major causes, if not the major cause, of the problems confronting public schools today. This does not mean that if the spiritual had been included there would be no problems. It does say that they believe the problems would be less extensive.

In this writer's opinion universal education for everyone in the United States need not have developed as it did. There were alternatives and one wonders what education would be like today if one of those alternatives would have been followed. Suppose, for instance, that the First Amendment would have been interpreted as freedom of religion and not freedom from religion. Suppose furthermore that as schools were being formed, it was decided that property taxes would be used to educate all children. Since all property owners paid taxes, all children in all schools would receive an education. Persons not paying property taxes would be charged for education in other ways. Parents would be at liberty to send their children to a school of their choice — either public or non-public. All would be treated alike. All schools would receive financial support and be expected to meet certain educational standards, but the nature of the school would be individual. As some might say today — that would be a type of voucher system — and they would be correct. For many this type of system would produce a more completely educated public than the system in use today.

The decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States over the past years indicate that the pattern of public education in our country has been established and that it is to be an education void of God and void of Biblical teachings. This being the case, there seems to be but one logical answer for those of us who are convinced that the spiritual is an integral part of education and that education cannot be complete without God and the Bible. We need to promote more and better Christian schools. They are our remaining hope for a complete education in the future.

Roy C. Krause

The answer to the question, "How important is Christian education?" could be terse and simple: "Critically." This article is an elaboration of that succinct response.



HOW IMPORTANT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ?

by David G. Schmiel

The Scripture themselves are of course replete with exhortations to carry out Christian education, broadly construed. The ancient words recorded in Deuteronomy 6 already intone the admonition:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise, And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hands and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut. 6:4-9)

Several characteristics of the Deuteronomic concept of Christian education are readily apparent: parents have the first line responsibility, religious training is to be a constant preoccupation, and a rudimentary form of visual aids is already in evidence.

The familiar statement in Matthew 28:18-20 is our Lord's magisterial command to the New Testament church:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.

Here the teaching role is assigned not only to parents but to the entire church, which has the responsibility to teach the faith to young and old alike. Moreover, the teaching function is set in the broader context of disciplining, and is coupled with Baptism in the name of the Triune God.

The effect of a pious up-bringing in which a God-fearing mother and grandmother apparently taught young Timothy conscientiously is implicit in Paul's words to Timothy regarding his "sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you" (2 Timothy 1:5). The pastoral epistles contain a number of references to the teaching function of the church, suggesting, for example, that a bishop should be "an apt teacher" (1 Timothy 3:2) and insisting that "he must hold firm to the sure Word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confront those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9). Instruction in the faith and in the life of faith is beyond question a key to Christian nurture.

Making the Cultural Transition

While Christian education will always be an essential task of the church, no specific methodology or format for such education dare be absolutized. There is a great difference between the Hebrew family unit at the time the book of Deuteronomy was written, and a Gentile Christian community in the Near East at the time of Paul, and a German Lutheran village

parish in the seventeenth century, and a farm newly hacked out of the woods on the American frontier, and a rural parish, a suburban parish, an urban parish and an inner-city parish in the 1980s. Each generation of Christians has the responsibility of seeking out the most helpful ways to carry out its task of education, and to do this in a way that is sensitive to cultural diversity. A transition needs to be made in which, rather than attempting to find explicit regulations in Scripture to govern the educational process (there are none), the intent of the Scriptural admonition is translated effectively into the context of the present.

Accordingly, even a cursory study of the history of the church will reveal a variety of ways of doing Christian education, and a variety of contexts in which it has been done. Christian education has happened in the parental home, the pastor's study, the church basement, the monastery school, the "public" school, the parish school, the Sunday School, and combinations thereof. It has been rigid and authoritarian, and student-centered and personalistic. It has accented now the head, now the heart, now doctrine, now life; and those debates continue.

The point is simply that Christian education is in dialogue between the message of Scripture and the nature of society, so that the church endeavors to shape its educational enterprise in a way which is faithful to Scripture and responds effectively to the people whom it has the opportunity to serve. It must be open to change, therefore, to respond effectively to people, but it dare not change the eternal message which it is to proclaim and teach.

The Special Needs of Our Own Society

Probably Christians in almost every age have felt that their age posed some unique problems and that the challenge to them was greater than that of their parents' generation. It certainly seems that we face some very difficult problems:

- 1) The breakdown of large numbers of marriages, with concomitant serious impact on the partners and their children.
- 2) The tragedy of drug abuse, notably the use of alcohol by a growing number of children.
- 3) For many, the loss of a sense of religious and moral consensus, sometimes results in the anomie which leaves people completely adrift. They simply have no truth to believe.
- 4) Concomitantly, a hunger for acceptance and for clear direction has made large numbers of people susceptible to pied pipers who readily draw them into various cultic experiences.
- 5) Also concomitantly, for some, a reaction to the moral and ideological drift leads them to attempt to enforce a new and sometimes perilously legalistic order.

There is a great need — and therefore also a great opportunity — for a clear word of direction: one that is Biblical, confessional, evangelical and sensitive to people. Both children and adults have that need. Those who doubt this should try providing a group of adult Christians with a truly substantive piece of

instruction, and then witness their interest and their gratitude. Meeting this need is largely an educational problem, in the sense of "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." For where there is confusion or even anomie, it is because people have failed to observe all these things and to bring them to bear on their own situation. Today children and adults respond to instruction which probes the Scriptures and Christian doctrine in depth and substance and makes relevant application to life in such a way as to clarify their ultimate questions and concerns. It may even mean directing them to the really appropriate questions and concerns. All of the above, obviously, suggest nothing more or less than the clear teaching of Law and Gospel.

A Variety of Forms

The Scriptures, apart from assigning responsibility to parents and to the church, do not prescribe the context or format or method of Christian education. Consequently, the church is both responsible and free to seek out the most viable ways to carry out its task in its own way. It goes without saying that, while certain ways may be deemed preferable, Christians will not sit in judgment over brethren who do not share their particular commitments.

This is not the occasion to elaborate on the many contexts and formats which are available today: home study, Sunday Schools, Bible classes, released time instruction, pastor's classes for children and adults, parochial schools, Bible institutes, Lutheran high schools, synodical colleges — these are but a few of the options.

The basic choice will of course be between part-time and full-time agencies. It is possible for a person to receive his or her religious instruction, from childhood through to young adulthood, totally in a Christian context, by attending a parochial grade school, Lutheran or other Christian high school, and a church-sponsored college. It is also possible to receive Christian instruction, childhood through adulthood, in part-time agencies. Lest one range too far afield, the following comments will be limited to the question of full or part-time agencies for the training of children of grade school age.

Among American Protestants the Sunday School has been the educational institution of choice, and Missouri Synod Lutherans have, after initial resistance, accepted it as well. Undoubtedly almost all Missouri Synod congregations utilize some kind of Sunday School, often buttressed by one or more ancillary agencies as for example the Vacation Bible School, released time instruction during the school year and, for the youth and adults, various kinds of Bible classes. In terms of Lutheran tradition the anchor institution is the pastor's confirmation instruction, which retains its central significance also in those parishes which sponsor a parochial school.

Sometimes it has been suggested that a parochial

school is the only God-pleasing way for the church to teach its children the faith, or that congregations which do not conduct a parochial school are *ipso facto* indifferent to Christian education. Such judgments are uncharitable, unrealistic and betray ignorance of the many ways in which the Holy Spirit has worked among God's people.

On the other hand, it is difficult to understand how a part-time agency could be as effective as a parochial school in helping young Christians a) understand and live the Christian faith and — in the case of a Lutheran parochial school — b) absorb the Law/Gospel ethos which Lutherans regard as central to the faith. The difficulties confronting any of the part-time agencies are considerable:

- 1) The sheer fact that one is interacting with a group of children for only an hour or two each week, and that any homework from the (public) day school is an obvious difficulty.
- 2) Beyond the sheer mechanical fact of minimal time for teaching and other interaction, the very fact that so little time is devoted to Christian education signals children that it is relatively unimportant.
- 3) In many cases, it is difficult to enlist experienced teachers for the part-time agency. Often, when available, they have had little education in theology. This problem is lessened when there is a full-time, professional director of Christian education on the church staff. But even then he will personally do only a small fraction of the teaching.

The parochial school, conversely, affords ample time for religious instruction through daily lessons and through conducting the entire educational enterprise in a Christian context. The child receives the signal in a Christian context. The child receives the signal that both his parents and his church regard his Christian education as very important. In this setting, professional trained teachers who have had a reasonably thorough preparation in Bible and theology are doing the religious instruction.

There are also potential stumbling blocks in the use of the parochial school:

- 1) Such schools may be established for the wrong reasons: to provide a sheltered cultural enclave, perhaps to avoid contact with minority groups, or to offer children a small, sheltered environment in which they can seem important. The satisfaction of what is in effect a monastic impulse is not an appropriate reason for conducting a parochial school.
- 2) The parochial school may become separate in spirit from the sponsoring congregation(s), and then be divisive rather than unitive. This is particularly a danger when a large number of children of the congregation attend the public schools, and the teachers, parents and students associated with the parochial school assume an elitist attitude and/or do not support the part-time educational efforts of the congregation. A related risk is the occasional failure of principal and teachers to recognize that the pastor is pastor of the entire congregation, also of the school. Dedicated, selfless pastors and teachers can find ways to avoid the human pitfalls, each fully recognizing the important work of the other.
- 3) The school, even when the strictures outlined above do not apply, may nevertheless separate the children and

youth from appropriate contact with the broader community. Wise teachers and administrators will find ways to train students for service in the kingdom of the left, even while they lead them to know the Savior and His kingdom of grace.

Granting that the parochial school can have its problems, it nevertheless is difficult to imagine any more effective agency of Christian education than such a school when it is well-conducted. One is led to conclude that this is the agency of choice for the congregations which can find the will and the requisite means.

The Need for Excellence

Whatever the format of Christian education selected by Christian parents and congregations, Christians who take their faith seriously will insist on excellence. It is simply indefensible to offer God any less than the very best effort in this critical aspect of church life. Moreover, to carry out this endeavor in a slipshod fashion is to signal to our children that it is relatively unimportant anyway. It is simply not acceptable to defend incompetence or laziness on the grounds that, after all, one is doing the Lord's work and that makes it all right. This is true whether one is speaking of a sophisticated, twelve-room parochial school or of a Sunday School in a small rural parish. In either case excellence is a possibility, and whatever is the opposite of excellence is a problem to be corrected.

The costs must of course be counted. Conducting a truly effective program of Christian education costs money, energy and time. This is especially true of a parochial school or Lutheran high school if run properly, with a fully adequate facility and a sufficient number of well-prepared teachers who are paid a salary which enables them to live with a measure of comfort and security. Part-time agencies are far less costly, but it may well be that many congregations which choose this approach do so without fully realizing the kind of expenditure of time and money that *should* be made. Part-time agencies too should have adequate facilities, well-trained teachers and good equipment. In many cases, if the work is to be done adequately, one or more full-time professional church workers should be called in order to organize and conduct the program and do a substantial portion of the teaching. A large congregation may well have a large staff for its parochial school and, in addition, have one or more professionals to conduct part-time agencies for children, youth and adults.

Sometimes the objection is made that the demands of a highly-developed program of Christian education so depletes the resources of money and energy that a congregation neglects other important aspects of its work such as mission outreach, evangelism, social concerns and the like. That is indeed a serious problem where it is truly the case. But Christian education which is really true to the message of

Scripture will incorporate a vision of the church and its mission which will lead people into the whole range of Christian fellowship and service. Both critics and proponents of a heavy investment in Christian education need to be encouraged to have a broad view of the church's mission and to see education, not as an end in itself, but as a gateway to Christian understanding, sensitivity and a life of meaningful service.

Taking the Long View

To a considerable extent, one's attitude toward Christian education will be determined by how great a stress one places on the inculcation of the faith, the body of Christian teaching, and whether one sees such inculcation of the faith as supportive of or in conflict with Christian experience and living.

The development of American Protestantism has been such that large numbers of American Protestants today place very little emphasis on cognitive knowledge of Biblical truth. A study of Protestantism in America leads from Puritanism with its strong dogmatic tradition, through the periods of awakening and revival and the various conflicts among Protestants, and through the emergence of new denominations, which in most cases place little stress upon substantive doctrine, to the emergence of a popular, least-common-denominator theology in which Christian truth is frequently confused with patriotism and with middle-class American values. The churches which are characterized by a high ecclesiology, strong dogmatic tradition and sacramental emphasis have frequently seen these eroded. Lutherans too have from time to time felt the breeze from the prevailing Protestant winds, and this seems again to be the case in our own day.

A strong commitment to Christian education is, over the long haul, a key to the presentation of the Biblical and confessional commitments which Lutherans hold dear. Such ecclesiological, confessional and sacramental commitments are ends in themselves and are also the substratum for our fellowship, our mission outreach, our service to society, our sense of Christian vocation, and our good works done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christian education properly understood — that is, centered in the whole life of the parish, oriented to Word and Sacrament, committed to all Biblical truth, open to God's world — is a challenge, an opportunity and a solution to many ills of the church.

||



by Donald L. Kell

WHAT'S HAPPENING to Christian schools ?

Christian schools are riding the waves of changing conditions in the society and in the church. Strong incentives for starting and expanding elementary and secondary programs are having a growing impact within congregations, in communities, and at the state and national levels.

Frustrations run deep in the fiber of a society ravaged by rampant inflation, high unemployment, oppressive interest rates, burdensome taxes, escalating crime against people and property, a deteriorating environment, persistent prejudice and discrimination, threats to peace and safety and the right-to-life, and expose's of ethical and moral degradation in high places. Citizens feel alienated from structures that seem bureaucratic, expensive, impersonal, ineffective, and secularized.

Much of the frustration focuses on the public schools where society's conditions reflect in the learning experiences and their support systems. The private school, especially the Christian school alternative, has become increasingly attractive to parents and to leaders in government, business, and industry.

Evidence of this interest has appeared in the increase of inquiries, applications, and enrollments at most private schools; in news reports on private school activities; in professional articles on private

school issues; in research on public opinion, school practices, and funding patterns; in state and federal initiatives to apply or modify regulations and to provide or reduce services; in supportive or critical planks to party platforms; and, most dramatically in President Reagan's personal support of tuition tax credits and its repercussion on Capitol Hill and across the country.

A second wave is spiritual and is sweeping the church. Characterized by greater emphasis on prayer, Bible study, and worship interests and experiences, this movement is attracted to Christian schools. Whether "born again," renewed, enlightened, or rededicated, a rapidly growing number of Christians, within and outside of denominational and congregational loyalties, are experiencing a deeper spiritual experience and desiring it for their children. Much more than a safer environment or a superior education, permeation of religious beliefs and practices is a priority in the choice of school. Church-sponsored or parent-organized Christian schools are offering this alternative.

What's Happening to "Christian" Schools?

Some illumination on the impacts can be obtained by examining available statistics which reveal the following trends:

- 1) The total number of children enrolled in public and private elementary (K-8) and secondary (9-12) schools in our country has been declining since 1970. A declining birth rate has reduced prospective students for 1982 by 14.2% (16.6% elementary, 5.6% secondary). A reversal of this trend is projected to begin in 1985.
- 2) The percentage of children enrolled in private schools, decreasing since 1960, is now increasing, and that trend is projected to continue in the eighties. In 1980 the five million private school students were 10.9% of the total national enrollment. Private schools continue to be a significant minority in American elementary and secondary education. Their continuance is an important concern not only for their constituents but also for all citizens. A supportive public climate is needed to maximize their contributions.
- 3) Roman Catholic school enrollment, while dropping over 40% since 1965, is still 63% of the private school total. Because of the size of the system, their enrollment patterns have a heavy impact on private school statistics. Their rapid decline, now stabilized, affected a trend which was not typical of most other private schools.
- 4) While Catholic schools were losing over 2,000,000 students between 1965 and 1980, other church-related schools have been steadily and, in some cases, dramatically increasing enrollment. The most evident gains are in those sponsored by "evangelical" and "fundamentalist" congregations, usually of Baptist persuasion.

Since many are independent of denominational membership and resist reporting data to government at any level, accurate statistics are difficult to obtain, but estimates of as many as six new schools starting daily, which now total over 12,000 nationally, have been given. Many are small, one-room operations with an individualized curriculum supervised by an uncertified lay person in church or home, but others include fully certified faculties with several hundred pupils.

Radicalized because of government pressures to comply with school regulations, these schools are involved currently in over 2,000 court cases throughout the country. At issue is the government's alleged attempts to separate school from church, which is a violation of their structure and theology.

While the national focus today is on the "Moral Majority," and while it represents the convictions and causes of a large number of Protestant churches of fundamentalist persuasions, Christian schools are diverse in their orientations and allegiances.

Other religious bodies sponsoring schools with over 1% of the private school enrollment include: Baptist (233,000); Lutheran (220,000); "Christian," i.e. mostly related to Reformed churches, (113,000); Jewish (85,000); Seventh Day Adventist (83,000); Episcopal (77,000); "Other church related" over 800,000.



Lutheran Elementary Schools (Preschool through Grade 9)										
		1975			1980			1981		
Lutheran Church Bodies	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	
The Luth. Church — MO Synod	1227	7294	152,123	1401	8358	166,845	1479	9102	175,185	
Wis. Ev. Luth. Synod	293	1244	27,506	366	1502	30,626	371	522	30,689	
American Luth. Church	168	752	16,121	365	1337	29,380	366	429	30,466	
Luth. Church in American	14	121	2,915	33	480	7,128	38	563	8,144	
Church of the Luth. Brethren				2	4	100	2	4	83	
Church of the Luth. Confession	15	48	436	17	45	483	18	46	503	
The Luth. Church of Canada	1	1	40	1	2	40	1	2	40	
Assoc. of Ev. Luth. Churches				19	197	3,972	46	249	4,941	
The Protestant Conf. (Luth.) Inc.				2	3	33	3	6	71	
Evang. Luth. Synod				17	37	725	17	47	763	
TOTAL	1718	9460	199,141	2223	11,965	239,332	2341	12,970	250,885	

Lutheran Secondary Schools (Grades 9-12)										
		1975			1980			1981		
Luth. Comm. High Schools	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	
The Luth. Church — MO Synod	36	838	13635	59	1124	15839	59	1133	16150	
Wis. Ev. Luth. Synod	11	210	3677	18	300	4320	18	301	4310	
American Luth. Church	1	15	176	3	39	471	1	26	381	
Luth. Church in America				3	35	441	7	78	911	
Church of the Luth. Confession	1	6	31	2	6	37	2	6	29	
Church of the Luth. Brethren				1	14	135	1	12	131	
The Luth. Church of Canada				2	21	520	2	36	544	
TOTAL	49	1069	17519	88	1539	21763	90	1592	22456	

Lutheran Boarding High Schools Connected with colleges										
		1975			1980			1981		
Lutheran Church-MO Synod	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	Sch	Tchr	Enr	
The Luth. Church-MO Synod	4	—	599	2	32	155	2	32	155	
Wis. Ev. Luth. Synod	5	74	1121	3	96	904	3	50	861	
Church of the Luth. Conf.	1	8	117	1	12	84	1	12	84	
TOTAL	10	—	1837	6	140	1143	6	94	1100	

Source: Annual Statistical Reports from LC-MS Board for Parish Services

What's Happening to "Lutheran" Schools?

Lutheran schools, too, are very much alive and growing. Early childhood, elementary, and secondary programs are providing an increasing number of young people with the opportunity to learn in the context of our beliefs and care. But the currents of tradition and change are crossing with a turbulence that rocks even the most "protected" and secure.

That Lutheran schools continue to grow is a remarkable fact, considering this country's economy, the recent controversy within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and the reluctance of many congregations, their districts, and the synod to invest in new or expanded school programs. Schools, whether private or public, are very vulnerable when sponsoring organizations are distracted from full and unified support or when the primary sense and expression of

mission is concentrated in other programs of the church.

But the statistics in the tables included with this article show that schools are being added by all Lutheran synods. Both LC-MS and WELS, traditionally strong in school support, show a steady pattern of growth, the former in spite of losing many congregations (and schools) with the formation of AELC. While the AELC retains the strong school involvements of its LC-MS origins, both the ALC and, especially, LCA initiatives are relatively new developments within those synods.

Feasibility studies for early childhood, elementary, or secondary programs have benefited from comprehensive guidelines and resource materials developed cooperatively by the synods. Many additional congregations are involved at this time in exploring the possibilities of starting schools in their areas.

What's Happening to "Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod" Schools?

Growth in the number of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod schools is at the highest rate experienced by the Synod. This is attributable largely to a dramatic increase in the number of pre-kindergarten programs and the rapid expansion of secondary schools during the 70s.

Counted in the elementary school statistics since 1972, 961 pre-kindergarten programs were reported in 1981. Of these 388 are operating alone, 90 with kindergartens, and the rest with additional grades. The total is 187 more than reported in 1980 and indicates that 65% of our elementary schools include pre-kindergarten.

The response of Lutheran congregations to a pressing societal need for the care and education of pre-kindergarten children is providing an important service and helping to maintain and expand Lutheran schools during a time of lowered birth rates. The addition of a pre-kindergarten program has been the single most important factor in attracting new pupils to begin and to continue in many of our elementary schools. Correspondingly, the influence and resources of Synod's early childhood education office, of district consultants, of the Lutheran Education Association's Department of Early Childhood Education, and of specialized programs at our teachers colleges have provided congregations with planning guidelines, program materials, and trained personnel.

Paralleling the prolific expansion of this new school program level has been an explosive spurt in secondary schools, which more than doubled in the 70s. Prompted by parents who carry concerns for their children during a vulnerable age, feasibility studies have led to as many as 10 new schools in one year (1977) and a current total of 59 with locations throughout our country. Although this trend has slowed since 1979, feasibility studies are being conducted in additional communities.

While still maintaining strong presence and growth in the Midwest, LC-MS school growth is developing most rapidly in the coastal districts where over 60% of the new programs have been initiated since 1977. Nearly 1/2 of the elementary schools are located in cities of over 50,000 population; nearly 1/7 are in communities under 2500. While this has been a continuing statistic, the relatively modest accommodations needed for a pre-kindergarten has permitted an increasing number of small congregations with limited facilities to sponsor programs. Others are affiliating with existing schools so that nearly 1900 congregations, almost 1/3 of the Synod, are now part of the elementary school system.

The 27 high schools that have been started since 1970 are about evenly divided between coastal and interior districts. Most are located in large cities or metropolitan areas and are sponsored by associations

of congregations. Over 1000 congregations from the several Lutheran Synods (LC-MS, AELC, ALC, LCA), a strong majority being from LC-MS, are now associated with secondary schools.

Corresponding to the increase in the number of schools, the number of pupils served by LC-MS elementary and secondary schools has been rising steadily during the past decade. Enrollments at the pre-kindergarten level are dramatically higher and still increasing. A greater number of pupils are not Lutherans and/or not white. Large numbers of applications continue to be declined because of inadequate applicant qualifications or lack of space in some areas.

The reported 175,185 elementary pupils enrolled in 1981 represents a gain of 8340 (5.0%) over 1980, which could have been doubled if no applications had been declined. Pre-kindergarten enrollments showed a gain of 16.5%, kindergarten 3.9%, and grades 1-9 2.1%. Secondary students number 16,150, up 311 (nearly 2%). Most Midwest districts show slight gains; the coastal districts report substantial increases.

While a gradually increasing percentage (63.5% in 1981) of eligible children from sponsoring congregations are attending elementary schools, the children from these congregations are constituting a steadily decreasing portion (49.5% in 1981) of the enrollment in a typical school. Offsetting gains are reported for non-Lutherans (now 31.5%) and the unchurched (now 9.1%), which combine for over 40% of the average student body. While Midwest schools continue to enroll a majority who are Lutherans, coastal districts tend to serve a majority who are non-Lutheran.

After declining steadily for many years, the percentage of the white enrollment has risen slightly in 1981. This is influenced by the composite of burgeoning early childhood classes and by the steady decline since 1976 of the percentage of the enrollment which is black (7.9%). They retain, nevertheless, the dominant minority status. Steady increases in the proportion of Hispanics and Southeast Asians are balancing that trend.

Great differences in nonwhite enrollments are reported among districts. While all minorities are represented in Lutheran schools in most of the larger cities, the largest concentrations of Hispanics and Southeast Asians are in the coastal districts.

The 1981 roster of full-time Lutheran elementary school teachers is at 6676 (up 504); 2426 part-time teachers (up 240) brings the total of 9102. Secondary full-time equivalent faculty for community Lutheran high schools is 1059 (down 1). A total of 1133 teachers (up 9) are reported.

It's the Lutheran school teacher who has the primary responsibility for carrying the purposes of the church into the changing arena of education. What they are and what they bring to the classroom

and other aspects of the school (and church) program largely determines the quality of the learning experience, so Lutheran schools select their teachers carefully and prayerfully.

Lutheran schools continue to show strong priorities for teachers trained in synodical colleges and certified by the Synod. Over 80% of degreed, full-time personnel in Lutheran elementary schools are synodically educated. A large majority of high school teachers have similar preparation. The percentage, while lower than in 1970, is higher than that reported in 1975.

A significant minority of lay teachers are also a vital component and are filling critical positions, often in multicultural areas or specialized fields, with competence and commitment to our goals. Many of them are adding through the colloquy program synodical certification to their distinctive backgrounds.

Within a church that is male-dominated by doctrine and practice, female teachers have become increasingly dominant in number and proportion in the schools. The change from 3188 full-time teachers (54%) in 1975 to 4205 (63%) in elementary schools in 1981 is indicative of a strong trend that is consistent with other private and public systems. Accorded teacher roster status by the Synod in 1974 and affected by nondiscrimination movements within the society, more female teachers are assuming greater responsibilities, including the principalship, in schools and congregations. They are receiving more equitable salaries which, although still much lower than public school salaries, have risen significantly for all teachers.

Salary raises of 5.7% to 20% during the past five years have usually kept pace with inflation and have brought the median compensation, including benefits, to between \$14,000 and \$15,000 in 1981; 15.4% of our teachers now receive over \$20,000. Synodical Placement Committee recommendations (\$11,000 + benefits in 1982), district salary guidelines and status reports, and more enlightened local committees and boards are positive influences.

Lutheran schools are costly investments. While efficiently operated at about half the public school rates, elementary schools have experienced a steady rise in per pupil costs to a reported \$888 in 1981. While averaging about an 8% rise in several previous years, this represents about 25% over 1980 costs.

Although congregations continue to provide almost 2/3 of the elementary school operating costs in addition to most of the capital investments, there is a steadily increasing dependence on tuition, including assessments to member parents. Other sources of income remain relatively insignificant and unchanged although third-type funding expansion is being explored.

Pre-kindergarten programs are largely self-supporting. Congregations furnish facilities, involve

parents and others in volunteer services, and provide special gifts, but tuition covers most of the cost.

Secondary schools vary widely in their funding programs but the current \$1787 cost-per-pupil is raised mostly by an average church support of about 50% and by tuition. An expanding third type funding effort has accompanied the addition of development personnel to many staffs.

What's In the Future for Our Schools?

Lutheran schools seems to be gaining momentum as they approach with the church and the society the frightfully challenging end of the 20th century. Without any attempt to be a futurist I project some challenges that are already here.

1. *The society is setting our agenda.* It's always been that way, of course, since we must and do bring what we have to what really is, but can we make the adjustments to the rapid changes that confront us — the family structures and circumstances; the economic, political, racial, and social environments; the technological advances; the media impacts — in order for our ministry to be effective? Beyond that can we assume a more proactive posture toward affecting changes that are needed?

2. *Other nonpublic schools are influencing the society.* Lutherans tend to forget that they are not the whole church and that theirs are not the only non-public schools. In this we have a potential identity crisis. Statistically, nonpublic schools enroll about 11% of our country's students; Lutheran schools (from all Synods) enroll about 4½% of the nonpublic portion.

While I'm convinced that our impact and influence is much beyond our relatively small share of elementary and secondary education, we need to recognize that the public views private schools basically as Catholic and more recently as a fundamentalist movement. While continuing to develop relationships with both other private and the public schools that are supportive of providing our youth with the every best education that can be offered, Lutherans need to project their distinctive image, individually and collectively, so that we are not stereotyped by or generalized with the larger or currently more dramatic systems.

3. *The church is setting our priorities.* That's the way it should be, and schools need to be sensitive to their mission as church, but I worry about some trends. It seems that the priority is missions (usually meaning ministering overseas), evangelism (usually meaning gaining new members), and stewardship (usually meaning raising money) and that Christian education (edifying the body of Christ) ranks low. The "Church Growth" movement is influencing this. Statistics are primary concerns. That hurts low growth potential areas. Evidences show up in other challenges.

4. *Lutheran schools are in the vanguard of the church.* Congregations are frequently not ready for the changes encountered by the schools. The most obvious example of this is racial change. Concurrent changes are not happening in the sponsoring congregations, and even less in nonschool churches, which makes "ownership" for the school's mission very difficult. Support for those who are "different" seems easier if they're also distant. Schools are being closed because of this disparity.

5. *Lutheran schools must retain commonalities while developing diversities.* As each school gathers resources for its own special community, it carries "what's Lutheran" along with "what's Christian" and "what's education." We need to affirm and build on both the common and distinctive elements in our system if we are to maintain credibility with both sponsor and student. This is a coordinated leadership challenge.

6. *Funding challenges could reach crisis proportions.* Concurrent with the many school openings are some closings each year. Additionally, an increasing number of congregations are facing real struggles over deficit budgets and balanced allocations to local, district, synodical and special ministries. Members are being confronted with opportunity to contribute by financial counselors representing a proliferating number of church-related and other charitable institutions. Tuition is rising beyond what many parents can afford, especially in areas where our schools are needed most. Materialism continues to affect standards of living.

We need to continue to build the church, including our schools, on a Scripturally-based stewardship program that evidences God's love and concern for each of His people through us while we apply sound financial planning policies and programs at all levels. We need to continue to explore the responsibilities of the government in providing a real choice of a private school for all parents. If not, our schools will become exclusive enclaves for the affluent parishes and communities.

7. *Teachers are losing status in society and the church.* The fallout from all the conflicts over public education is a demoralized profession, declining interest in teacher education, and lowered standards of admission and status of education programs at many colleges and universities.

The fallout from the continuing hesitancy of the church to affirm teachers as full partners in the ministry, as evidenced by status studies, statements of parish roles and compensation, is affecting the type and number of students preparing for this ministry and the morale of some who now serve. Is this a factor in the decline of male teachers from 46% in 1975 to 37% in 1981? In their moving through colloquy to the pastoral ministry in increasing numbers?

We continue to be deficient in supply and prepara-

tion of teachers for responsibilities in large urban multicultural areas where opportunities for growth are often the greatest. How we deal with this dilemma has great impact for our future.

Lutheran Schools Must Be In Our Future

It's time for acknowledging and celebrating the gift of God that we have in Lutheran schools and for uniting behind their continuing growth and development as a vital agency within the church. It's time for many more congregations to become affiliated with a Lutheran school or to initiate their own programs. It's time for Synod and its Districts to expand their support for the thorough education of its youth. It's time to encourage all parents to consider their responsibilities in making a Lutheran school education available to their children.

Lutheran schools must be in our future because:

- 1) They are an established structure which has a history of effective service. Personal experiences and research over many generations testifies to the effectiveness of Lutheran schools in affecting the faith and lives and learning of thousands of students. Hundreds of trained and experienced teachers are in service and preparing for service. It's a resource that we cannot afford to lose.
- 2) They constitute an important partnership between parents and God's people. Both feel the weight of God-given responsibilities for children. Parents want and need this comprehensive support program from their church. The church cannot be satisfied with less than a full commitment to help with the challenges facing parents. Nothing is too costly in human or material resources for that.
- 3) They provide a link between the church and society. In fact, schools are often our most effective link. They're a valid social ministry where a good education is needed. They're an effective accompanying witness to the Christian faith. They're a strong invitation to membership in a Lutheran church.
- 4) They strengthen the entire mission of the church. While parishes may struggle with budgets and make many sacrifices to maintain schools, they reap rich benefits from that association in the quality of spiritual understanding and life of participating families. Many school parishes are among the leaders in membership growth, per communicant giving, contributions to the worldwide mission, participation in Synod and District functions, and providing new workers for the church.

Thank God for Lutheran schools. We've been blessed through them. They will be a blessing in our future.

When Is Christian Education Effective

?

by Arthur L. Linnemann

added to the original lists. The process was doing its job.

The ensuing interaction sought clarity and meaning of particular statements. The whole group appeared to be contributing to the discussion so that most persons could no longer identify the author of a particular item unless the originator claimed it.

The list was long. It was exhaustive, if not exhausted — at least for that group for the time being. In their search for a way to organize their product one of the participants suggested, "It seems to me that all of our items fall into at least one of the three categories and are tied to the three key words of our question: CHRISTIAN, EDUCATION, and EFFECTIVE. CHRISTIAN is the keystone for our theological concerns and the message; EDUCATION carries all the implications for the learning of and the teaching of that which is Christian; and EFFECTIVENESS is clearly related to the identification of the intentional, the designed goals and objectives, and the planning of our Christian education program."

With that basic outline surfaced, the scenario will end. The persons alluded to were purposely not identified by role or function in order to suggest that a local congregation or regional task force might replicate the experience and endeavor to wrestle the question in a similarly structured way. Further, it is hoped that while the process could be limited to a particular age level or educational agency, it might not be that restrictive but be an attempt to consider the needs of everyone from the very young to the elderly learners within our constituencies.

There they were, seated around the table, when the question was asked, "When is Christian education effective?" A reflective pause hinted that every person had caught the impact of this question and that they were very much aware of its breadth and depth. None would venture an immediate and simplistic answer. The question was too big for that.

The leader readily sensed the importance of that lull. In fact, it was gratifying to note that the members of the group were sensibly cautious. The caution did not suggest an inability to reply, but rather a concern that the ensuing discussion would be contributive to the topic that was so dear and important to them all.

After a reasonable moment or two had elapsed the leader acknowledged several of the dynamics that may have caused the delayed response by saying, "I'm sure that all of you can reply to the question, and that you are fully aware that your answer or answers cannot fully reflect the perspectives and the perceptions of everyone here. I am also sure that every one of you has asked and has tried to answer the question in one way or another and from a variety of postures. Some of those postures may have been as a learner, as a teacher, as a budget-shaper, a program planner, a curriculum developer, a board member, or a critic. The question has also surfaced from time to time in various stages of your development as a child, a youth, a young adult, a maturing person, or even now as some of you are approaching 'senior citizenship.'"

The questioner went on, "Let's see if we can take all these things into consideration without diluting the complex answer by doing a process exercise. I have a suggestion. On a sheet of paper each one of you work at completing the sentence stem: CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IS EFFECTIVE WHEN... Write down as many ideas as you can by merely completing the sentence. Try to be as clear as you can in your subordinate clause statements so that you do not need another paragraph to explain it. We'll take the time to share all of your thoughts and ideas and then see if we can find a common, yet comprehensive pattern to our collective contributions. I assume that we will value one another's statements and that we will not evaluate any particular response until our list is complete. At that time we'll check out the theological, educational, or functional aspects of our list and give an opportunity to clarify and/or edit any of the statements.

The group did not delay in getting their thoughts down on paper. It was quite some time later before only a few were still building their lists. It took even more time to fill the pages of newsprint with the entries. The leader noted too that one person's thoughts when verbalized also had inspired and triggered new ideas within the group which were

... WHEN IT IS CHRISTIAN (with sample clauses)
when it communicates the Gospel
when it makes disciples
when it serves the five functions of the Christian congregation
when it is centered in the Person, the life, the teachings and the model of Jesus
when it practices repentance, forgiveness, new light
when it leads learners to Baptism
when it divides the Word of Truth — Law and Gospel

The first premise is basic. It is the bedrock foundation upon which all of our efforts are built. This is the starting point and the place to which we return as we test our plans and programs, our methods and materials, our curriculum and courses of studies, our goals and objectives. Do all of these aspects communicate JESUS CHRIST as Savior and Lord? Is the Gospel proclamation an intentional "heart" of every lesson to be taught and learned? Does the good news of the Gospel predominate in our learning and living together? Do we trust the power of the Gospel?

After all, the power for change is the Gospel. Certainly, we're attentive to dividing the Word of Truth, the Law and Gospel. However, we acknowledge that when the individual learner is tuned to the will and way of the steadfast loving Lord, it is in this Gospel promise that the tuning takes place. His Will is that He would have all persons saved, "for God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." (John 3:17) Jesus, Himself, claimed this Christocentric place when He said, "I am the Way, the Truth,

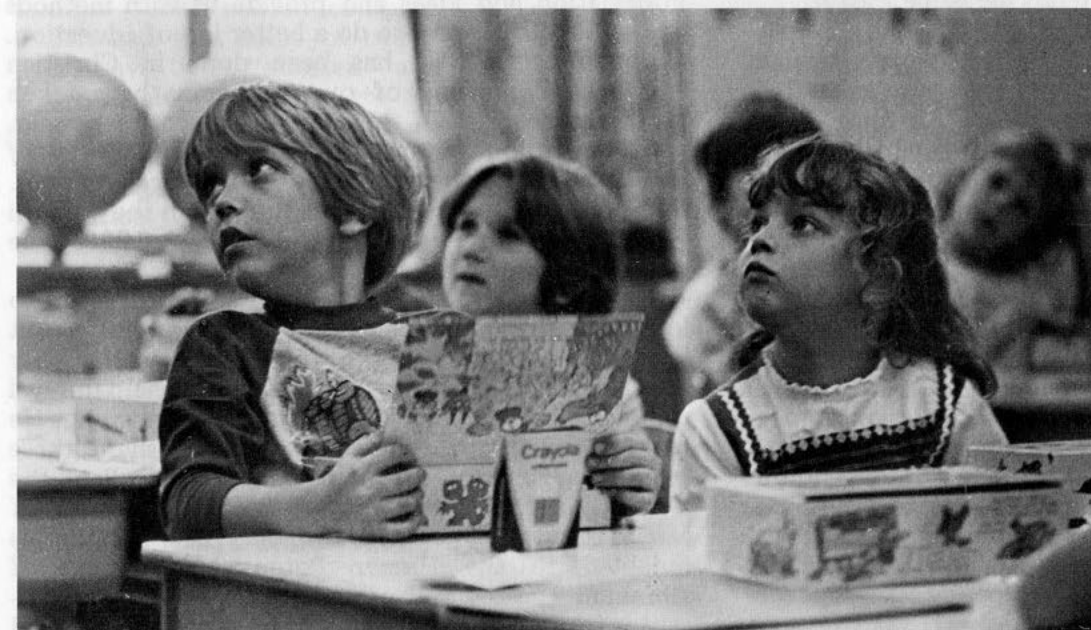
and the Life. No one comes to the Father but by me." (John 14:6)

The central teaching of the Scriptures and of Lutheran Confessions is JUSTIFICATION. Ours can be no different. We proclaim the mercy of the Heavenly Father by assuring His children that all charges against them and their sin have been dropped because of the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus the Christ. We are justified by grace, through faith, another of His gifts to us. We live in the forgiveness of sin.

The limitations of space prevent a further discussion of this basic premise. However, the brief treatment is not to be interpreted as a token acknowledgment. Our task has been given its direction and focus by the Lord. Unfortunately, not all that passes for religious education is necessarily Christian, even in our churches and schools.

Jesus, the Lord of the Church, has called us to MAKE DISCIPLES. That is the simple mandate, the one imperative of the Great Commission. That direction to His disciples, then and now, is the foundation passage for evangelism and for Christian education. He said, "(You) make disciples..." and He told us how through the three participles — (go)ing, baptizing, and teaching. Making disciples through teaching provokes further questions from us, "How, Lord, do you want these disciples to be? How do you want them to live? How should they function?"

These questions are related to, and an extension of, the major question of this article. A partial answer to them can be surfaced by taking a look at the accepted list of the five functions of the Christian congregation



— worship, witness, service, fellowship, and nurture. These hold true for the whole body of believers in a congregation, and they are also the reasonable expectation of the individual disciple.

The disciple worships — privately and corporately — in formal settings and in everything that a child of God does in faith. It is the joyous response to the holy and merciful God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; an expression of my delight and confidence in His goodness; and an awe-filled recognition of the great mystery that He is at the heart of my very being.

The disciple witnesses. The witness function belongs to every baptized member. Some of us have the gift of an evangelist and some have the aptitude to learn the role of an evangelist. To witness, then is to own the readiness and willingness to share the Good News of God's plan of rescue in Jesus Christ; as Peter says, "To be ready always to give the reason for the hope that is in us."

The disciple serves. The service function is described as the desire to be of service to all people so that they might have the more abundant life (John 10:10) and to practice charity for all human need and to champion justice in the face of injustice and oppression.

The disciple practices fellowship. Fellowship is the unique Christian willingness to mutually share feelings, burdens, help, and to avoid or heal schism. It is a common sharing in the Gospel, in faith, and in spiritual and mutual gifts.

The disciple grows in nurture. Nurture is the sum total of all learning and experiences that lead to Christian maturity and life. It is a lifelong process since we find more and more aspects of our life, our learning and our living that need maturing. The object of Christian nurture (education) is "that I might be and become all that God intends me to be."

This focus on the functions of Christian discipleship assumes that the learner develops his/her personal stewardship in accord with the gifts that God has given to each person. The five basic functions also provide a benchmark to which can be identified all the aspects of planning for as full and complete an individual and/or corporate program of Christian education as possible. We seek for each learner the most complete opportunity "to grow up into Him in all things . . .," trusting in His promise.

One final word in all this is that as Lutherans we confess in the Third Article that the making of disciples is God's work. However, Jesus recruited us in the imperative of the Great Commission into a partnership with Him. St. Paul also emphasizes that we are co-laborers together with Him. We depend on His power and presence in the last words of Matthew's gospel, "I am with you always, to the close of the age." In further pursuit of "how" we disciple others, we will look at the second category for effective Christian learning and teaching.

. . . WHEN IT IS EDUCATIONAL

when it utilizes appropriate learning theories
when it balances the cognitive and the affective
when it teaches LIFE
when it speaks to the whole person
when it is life long
when it creates a value system
when it appropriates a variety of teaching styles

Just as not all religious education is necessarily Christian, so also not all that passes for teaching/learning is necessarily educational. Some well-intentioned teaching can have a negative learning result. In his delightful little book, *Teaching Today — The Church's First Ministry*, Locke Bowman summarizes a point about teaching, "A teacher never knows what he or she may be causing to BEGIN." He goes on, ". . . and sometimes teachers are insensitive to what they may be killing or snuffing out. One must be careful to note that overinstructing, overindoctrination, overtraining — without the 'plus' element that combines these and allows for much more besides — can very well quench the spirit of a learner and remove that openness and wonder . . ."

Because learning belongs to the learner, the teacher can truly be responsible only for the teaching act. Since the teacher is in control of what he/she does as teacher to make learning possible, it is basic that the teacher grows in understanding the learner, the learning process, and the communication skills, techniques, methods and materials that serve the individual and the group.

The past two to three decades have produced a plethora of educational research, theoretical propositions and empirical data about learners and learning. Practitioners in turn have applied the information and ideas and provide us with methods and materials in order to do a better job of education. Unfortunately, little has been done in Christian education. Too few of our Lutherans have taken seriously the work of the Lutheran pastor researcher, Merton Strommen, and his work in *The Study of Generations* and the subsequent *Five Cries of Youth*. See also the more recent of his findings in the "Youth Research Project Report" in the Summer, 1980, issue of the *Lutheran Secondary Schools Quarterly*.

It is imperative that we seize the opportunities to learn all that we can about learners and about learning as teachers of the Christian faith. Not only has God allowed secular educationists to help unravel some of the questions and mysteries of both, but He has led educators and researchers to share these breakthroughs. We are aware that almost all of the studies of the past thirty years are products of humanistic thought, and the field of education is indebted to the Human Potential Movement of Abraham Maslow and others. While we cannot subscribe to the tenets of humanism, we can be helped

by many of its findings. Roman Catholic researcher, Ronald Goldman, concluded that "religious thinking employs the same modes and methods as thinking applied to other fields." There are many areas of learning which are relevant for religious educators.

For example, another Roman Catholic educator, James Michael Lee, in his *The Flow of Religious Instruction*, shares ten major findings on learning and provides data which religion teachers and curriculum builders can use in designing instructional environments and in enhancing the teaching-learning process. The book's bibliography and supporting review of educational research is a veritable bank of information for the serious Christian educator.

Studies of human development continue to lead us to reaffirm that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," products of our omniscient and omnipotent Creator. We are grateful for the studies that give insight into our physical, social, emotional, mental and spiritual development. As Christian educators we need to adapt and apply what others can teach us about the stages of growth and development.

The careful observations and annotations of Jean Piaget and his stages of cognitive development help us to learn about the learner and his learning. These studies were extended by Lawrence Kohlberg in his stages of moral development. Both of these researchers, along with Erik Erickson, Gail Sheehy, Daniel Levinson and others, have served as mentors for James W. Fowler's *Stages of Faith*. The reader cannot help but be impressed by the fact that in Fowler one finds not only a research empiricist, but also one with Christian conviction and commitment.

As we grapple with the concept of stages of the researchers just named, we can begin to get a better handle on some of the dynamics that lead to the familiar "confirmation complex." We can begin to understand that some of our pupils, students, and peers have been "arrested" at a particular stage of their development. We are thus also in a better position to meet them where they are in the nurturing process.

In the previous section we considered the disciple in relation to function and here we can consider the developmental dimension of each disciple. For example, the disciple develops his/her full stewardship of physical development in accord with the will and way of his/her Lord. The same is true of the disciple's social, emotional, mental, and spiritual growth, so that he/she MIGHT BE AND BECOME ALL THAT GOD INTENDS FOR HIM/HER TO BE.

As Christian educators we also have new insights awaiting us in the current studies of brain development. Implications for teaching the faith are already coming our way from Robert Sylwester, a fellow Lutheran, and University of Oregon professor of education.

We cannot be insensitive to what we can learn

about a balance between the cognitive and the affective domains in teaching-learning the faith. A study of Bloom and Krothwohl's taxonomies and the applications thereof can help us to strategize our lesson and unit planning. Lutheran pastor-educator Roland Larson in his *Values and Faith* provides us with models and samples of techniques in values clarification, a technique which was previously pioneered by Louis Rath, Sidney Simon, Harold Kirschenbaum and others.

We also become more sensitive to our teaching behaviors when we become aware of the studies that reveal interaction analysis as designed by Edmund Amidon and Ned Flanders. Their pioneering work has led to a host of measuring devices that not only measure teacher behaviors, but also learner behaviors and subsequent reactions.

The references listed above are only a few of a myriad of helpful resources for attending to that which is educational. It is hoped that these references might inspire a setting aside of hit-or-miss ideas among educators and a giving of careful attention to theories of learning. Perhaps even more important is that each one of us puts together our THEORY OF TEACHING and that in our mutual sharing of these we can enrich one another and also better identify what we are doing and why we are doing what we are doing in religious instruction. Again, James Michael Lee's work, *The Flow of Religious Education*, can serve as a spring-board for such an effort, particularly the first five chapters of his book.

Having considered the paramount importance of the kerygmatic content and also the stressing of educational principles, we turn to the third category suggested earlier, the concern for effectiveness.

. . . WHEN IT IS EFFECT(IVE)

when it assesses and meets the developmental needs of the learner
when it enjoys a strong support system
when it is designed to be life-long nurturing
when it is objectified
when it is promoted
when it is adequately funded
when its purpose is clear

Effectiveness is a relative term which implies that something is measurable over against an intention and/or a purpose. Questions like, "How do I want my pupil(s) or student(s) to be different as a result of this lesson, unit, course, program, et.al.?" or, "What change in knowledge, understanding, attitude or behavior do I (we) want to accomplish?" or, "What are the goal(s) and objective(s)?" are basic to measuring effectiveness. Inherent to the task are assessing the needs of the learner, identifying goals for learning, and applying strategies to meet the goals that satisfy the needs. Boiling all this down to one word suggests the word PLANNING.

We can plan for effectiveness in Christian education at the level of the individual learner, of any and all age levels or stations in life, represented in a typical congregation. We can plan for all of our agencies or forms of Christian educational programs within the parish. Our choices and decisions affect people, curriculums, methods and materials. Our planning determines whether we are content-centered, virtue-centered, behavior-centered or use a combination to reach a balanced concern for each learner's personal experience of Christian understanding, action and love. Assessing these dynamics is an attempt to measure that which is to be effected.

A November, 1981 series of articles which appeared in the *Eugene (OR) Register-Guard* can serve as a sample for identifying the effectiveness of a program. Richard H. Hersh, University of Oregon, reporting on school-effectiveness research that he has done as part of a five-year National Institute of Education grant, identified the "Attributes of Effective Schools." He reviewed the literature to determine what, if anything, makes some schools more effective than others. "Effective" referred to student academic tests in reading and math. He chose these two subject matter areas as the two variables under consideration but acknowledged that there were other objectives to consider for effective schooling. He points out that this study and others are reaching similar conclusions about effective schooling. Three powerful factors emerged: 1) people run schools, i.e., how teachers, administrators and students behave in a school setting matters and accounts heavily toward determining a school's effectiveness; 2) quality and not just quantity of effort, materials and time is what counts; and 3) the curriculum of the school, which includes both *what* is taught and *how* it is taught, is important.

The outline below lists two sets of attributes associated with most effective schools. The necessary social conditions which help individual teachers and students to excel and which pervade the school building are listed under the heading "Social Organization." The second heading, "Instruction and Curriculum," subsumes those items which are found in the most effective classrooms in the context of the social organizational factors. These help promote the classroom conditions for maximum student engagement with purposeful learning activities.

- I. Social Organization
 - Clear Academic and Social Behavior Goals
 - Order and Discipline
 - High Expectations
 - Teacher Efficacy
 - Pervasive Caring
 - Public Rewards and Incentives
 - Administrative Leadership
 - Community Support
- II. Instruction and Curriculum
 - High Academic Learning Time (ALT)

- Frequent Monitored Homework
- Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress
- Tightly Coupled Curriculum
- Variety of Teaching Strategies
- Opportunities for Student Responsibilities

Hersh concluded his article by saying, "The more important conclusion that one draws from the research is that it is the cumulative effects of these conditions that has payoff . . . It seems that one has to do many things at once to do one thing well."

The implications for measuring the effectiveness of Christian education in our homes, classrooms, parishes, districts and the Synod are obvious. We simply have to do many things at once to do Christian education well. We must in a conjunctive way attend to all that is Christian, all that is educational, and all that is planned for in a holistic frame of reference. Concentrating on one or two of these categories at the expense of the third is bound to yield ineffectiveness. That is too high a price to pay for this important function of the church, its children, youth, young adults, and the elderly.

When, then, is a congregation's program of Christian education effective? What are the factors that are essential to an effective program of Christian education? To summarize, consider these steps:

1. Congregational leadership should engage itself along with a representative age group to articulate the purpose of its Christian education program in a credo statement. Relatedly, it should:
 - a) Ask how this statement is an extension of its congregation's constitutional statement of purpose,
 - b) Shape its goal statements, and associated objectives,
 - c) Clarify theological expectations and educational expectations of the various agencies,
 - d) Recognize that their most important home mission is a strong, vital and dynamic ministry of Christian education.
2. Congregational leadership must initiate a comprehensive analysis of its response to the Lord's imperative TO MAKE DISCIPLES through Christian education by assessing:
 - a) What are we doing as a congregation for each and every baptized member?
 - b) How well are we doing? Improvements needed?
 - c) What else can we be doing well?
 - d) Do we assess and solicit membership reaction to a congregational every-member visitation?
 - e) Is our budget adequate to pay for a trained staff and physical plant and instructional materials and equipment that are needed to do the job?
 - f) Do we enlist the cooperation of parents and families for home-church-school commitment?
3. The congregation's professional ministers, the pastor(s), principal and/or DCE, teaching staff should assess their gifts and expertise toward a mutual enrichment and relational ministry and:
 - a) Determine a personal program of continuing education, e.g., Growth in Ministries programs,
 - b) Plan programs that are educationally sound for all members,
 - c) Secure resources that are in harmony with 1. c above,
 - d) Identify the gifts of teaching among the membership and provide appropriate in-service education.

Finally, the Districts and the Synod must function as an integral part of the congregational support system by providing programs and materials that enable and equip the congregations to do their very best in providing Christian education that is effective.

A closing thought is related to the opening scenario. What if the leader raised the question: "What would we have to do to destroy our school, or Sunday School, Bible classes, special education programs, VBS, etc., etc.?" or, more relatedly, "When is Christian education NOT effective?" The ensuing lists could offer additional insights, but, of course, would have to go through the mirroring process in order to provide positive direction.

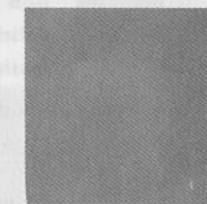
The question raised in this article is monumental, but worth every effort to answer it for the sake of more than two million baptized members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and for the potentially millions more who already are or who could be touched by an effective ministry of Christian education.

A Dozen Books Worth Reading

1. Bowman, L.E. *Teaching Today*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.
2. Brekke, M.L. et al. *Ten Faces of Ministry*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1979.
3. Fowler, J.W. *Stages of Faith*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.
4. Kirschenbaum, H. et al. *Readings in Values Clarification*. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1973.
5. Larson, Roland and Doris. *Values and Faith*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1979.
6. Lee, J.M. *The Shape of Religious Education*. Mishawaka: Religious Education Press, 1971.
7. Lee, J.M. *The Flow of Religious Education*. Mishawaka: Religious Education Press, 1973.
8. Richards, L.O. *A Theology of Christian Education*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.
9. Strommen, M.P. *Profiles of Church Youth*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.
10. Strommen, M.P. et al. *A Study of Generations*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972.
11. Strommen, M.P. et al. *Youth Research Project Report*. St. Louis: Board of Parish Education, 1980.
12. Westerhoff, J.H. III ed. *A Colloquy on Christian Education*. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1972.

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THIS SPECIAL TOUCH
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J.T. Ledbetter

There is a touch that comes quickly
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deep inside the spirit —
that is a call to be answered

there is a touch that seeks you out
turning you to light —
turning you to brite
ways of hearing and knowing

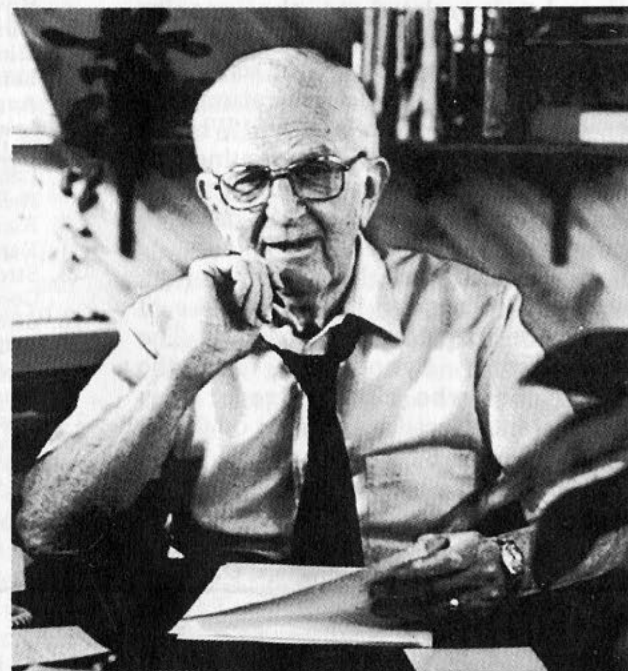
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meanings of grace —
meanings of need —
we sense in every breath

this is that special touch for you;
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spirit cracking the chrysalis —
clothing you in love

and spring leaps in our pulses
and Christ lives anew for us
in this holy time —
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CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY by David Ng and Virginia Thomas. Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1981.

In this paperback two Presbyterian educators address the perennial challenge of engaging children in meaningful worship. The conviction that children of all ages and adults are to join in worship as the central, unifying activity of a congregation is based on both theological and psychological grounds. The theological perspective presented calls for the active participation of children in the Body of Christ. This has no age requirements. A study of the social, emotional, and cognitive development of children reveals that all have needs, interests, and tasks which warrant their inclusion in the worship life of the church.

After presenting their rationale, the authors tackle many of the challenges and problems related to the participation of children in worship, such as the contradictory and confusing beliefs of some adults, and the negative impact upon children of being ignored for years in public worship. Believing that the possibilities for meaningful participation far outweigh the problems, the authors outline a number of strategies.

Their approach is not to capitulate to "band-aid" solutions, such as the use of object lessons, but to develop a long-term plan that centers in educating for worship. Parents, church school teachers, pastors and congregations are seen as the key educators. Discussions of learning to worship in the home, teaching the meaning and practice of worship in graded classes, involving children through music, and planning for the participation of children by pastors and worship committees provide a constructive contribution to meeting a key challenge in congregations today.

Marvin Bergman

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF ADULTS by Leon McKenzie. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1982.

McKenzie tackles in head-on fashion the question asked by many adult educators in the church, "Why don't adults participate in our programs? We work hard developing a program for adults and only a few show up." Citing his experience, vision, and some empirical data, the author insists that the main problems center in the theories and practices of church educators rather than in adult members. Several million adults are involved in educational events today, mostly outside the church.

Bad models and inept practices within church adult education are the culprit. For example, having individuals or committees develop a program for adults is a favorite approach which nearly guarantees failure. Assuming that adult learners can be treated like children is another fatal error. Another source of confusion is to conceptualize teaching as telling. A lack of understanding of adults as persons as well as of how adults learn also contributes to a low participation rate by adults in church education. A focus on religious or theological topics without paying attention to other everyday life concerns is another problem.

Though highly critical of many contemporary efforts in adult religious education, the author makes a constructive contribution by offering correctives. McKenzie begins by encouraging church educators to develop a theoretical base for their practice. For example, four dimensions of a theory of adult religious education are identified: 1. a perspective on church adult education; 2. a coherent vision; 3. a set of guiding principles; 4. ways of implementation.

Several approaches to program

development are analyzed in terms of congruence with one's theoretical base and with the motivation of adult learners. An analysis of teaching and learning in its best sense is described as a transformation of one's perspective or frame of reference, such as a person seeing one's self as a minister of Christ in the family, at work, within a congregation, and in the larger community. That transformation in mind-set, then, serves as the target not only of adult education in the parish, but also of needed changes among adult educators themselves. Only in this way does adult education have a chance of being restored to the center of the life of the parish rather than remaining at the edge. This book is a "must" for everyone who believes that adult education deserves our best efforts and continuing commitment.

Marvin Bergman

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION by Jack L. Seymour and Donald E. Miller with Sara P. Little, Charles R. Foster, Allen J. Moore and Carol A. Wehrheim. Nashville: Abingdon, 1982.

Here is a little book of stimulating essays on several basic approaches to Christian education. Don't read it unless you are interested in being challenged and stimulated to think seriously about what Christian education is or can and should be; it has the potential to shake the reader to rethink what we are about and why we do what we do in Christian education.

With that warning to the rigid traditionalist reader, let me say that this reviewer found the essays stimulating and captivating for the most part. Let me share a few quotes to give you a feel for it.

In the first essay Seymour overviews "... five ways contemporary Christian educators approach the theory and practice of Christian education: religious instruction, faith community, development, liberation, and interpretation." (p. 11) These approaches "illustrate primary metaphors used to understand the task of Christian education." (ibid.) The contributors' "hope is that this volume will stimulate dialogue among Christian educators as to the future shape of the discipline." (ibid.) An excellent chart on pages 32-33 compares the five approaches presented.

Little, in the second essay, focuses on instruction which she defines as "... the process of exploring the church's tradition and self understanding in such a way that persons can understand, assess, and therefore respond to the truth of the gospel for themselves." (p. 41) She concludes with the comment, "There is more



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(Continued from page 23)
to the teaching ministry than religious instruction, but religious instruction is at the heart of teaching." (p. 52)
In the third essay Foster discusses the dialogical character of the "faith community . . . that God might be worshipped and glorified." (p. 71) "The life of the community is the content of Christian education." (p. 64)
Miller "... examined the concept of development and found these elements: ground plan, invariable sequence, increasing complexity, interaction, and goal." (p. 101) He discusses cognitive, emotional, and faith development. Then he goes on to apply these to the learner, the goal, the teacher and the setting. He also shares his views about the limits of developmental theory.
Moore deals with the controversial, but significant liberation approach to Christian education. He "... proposes

that Christian education become prophetic education to challenge oppressive social structures . . . Prophetic education will be concerned with the development of a new Christian consciousness which will be aware of the global context of oppression and will lead Christians in constructing new, faithful, life-styles." (p. 103) Seymour and Wehrheim present interpretation as a means "to support Christian faith in a pluralistic environment." (p. 143)
In the final section Miller and Seymour discuss "The Future of Christian Education." They analyze, compare and summarize the foregoing approaches to Christian education. In conclusion they offer "... five directions that may stimulate the shaping of Christian education:
1) Christian education must seek to recover its historic commitment to social transformation;

2) Christian education must continue to define Christian education as a central yet distinct ministry of the church;
3) the relationship of developmental psychological theory of Christian education must be reconsidered;
4) Christian educators must seek to clarify the relationship of Christian education to the wider learning environment;
5) the foundational relationship of Christian education to both educational theory and theology must be explored continually." (p. 153-154)
I am convinced individuals who are interested in understanding and changing Christian education will want to read at least some of these very stimulating essays.
Glenn Kraft

