

ISSUES

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Fall, 1983

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Concordia College
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Seward, Nebraska



NEEDED: MORE LABORERS IN GOD'S VINEYARD?

Concordia College
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A FOREWORD

Enlisting Laborers in the Lord's Vineyard

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." (Matt. 9:27-28) These words of our Lord Jesus Christ depict the problem clearly and graphically which is the focus of this issue of ISSUES. They also direct us to the first step toward the solution of the problem.

Our Lord urges us to pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into *His* harvest. These words teach us several important truths.

1. It is God Himself who moves the hearts of people to go and work in His vineyard; and
2. The harvest is God's. It belongs to Him.
3. God commands us and expects us to pray to Him to send forth laborers.

The critical shortage of synodically trained teachers and pastors for Lutheran schools, congregations and mission fields which we currently face may be the result of not taking our Lord's words seriously enough. Are we victims of our own prayer lethargy? Do we stand condemned by the Biblical indictment, "You have not because you ask not"?

This issue examines the shortage of workers in His vineyard from several different perspectives. It looks at the problem of recruiting students for our colleges and seminaries; it discusses the challenges of involving more laity as volunteer workers in the vineyard; and it also looks at the problem of supply and demand from a statistical perspective.

The problem belongs to all of us whether we are serving in the professional ministry or whether we are among the lay volunteer workers of the church. God expects His harvest to be reaped. His Great Commission is directed to all who are His disciples. May all who read these words resolve to pray more fervently and regularly to the Lord of the harvest for laborers.

M.J. Stelmachowicz

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EDITOR'S NOTE

One of the popular national pastimes during these years of increased unemployment and job displacement is answering the question, "What will the job market look like in five years, ten years, or the year 2000?" Speakers and writers disagree, and the purpose of the ISSUES Editorial Committee was not to add yet another opinion to the literature. Instead the authors for this number were asked to present both facts and issues that need to be addressed now if the Church is to have ready the types of laborers, in sufficient numbers, who can go forth and can cope successfully with peoples' need for the preaching, teaching and living of the Gospel in a world of uncertainty, turmoil and rapid change.

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A GROWING OPPORTUNITY

"We need to be concerned about the potential over-supply of workers in God's Vineyard." That is what some are saying as our church looks at its ministry now and in the years ahead. They cite factors such as finances and the consolidation of smaller parishes as some of the reasons.

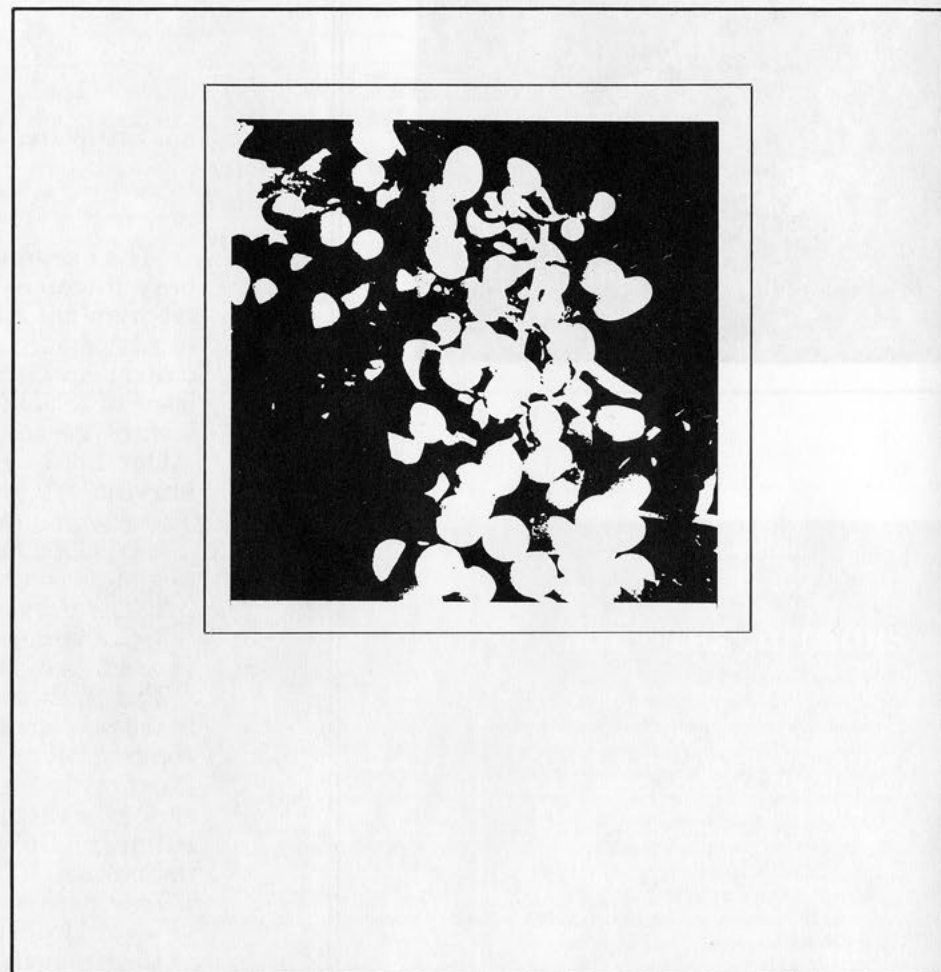
Could it be that their perspective on this matter is inaccurate or inadequate? Could it be that this potential problem is rather a growing opportunity? Could it be that we should, at this time, be intensifying rather than diminishing our efforts to recruit workers?

Fortunately, there is no shortage of the Holy Spirit's power and no shortage of imagination in our midst. These happy facts suggest that what we are facing is really a growing opportunity that will necessitate increasingly effective recruitment.

When compared to the growing opportunities of the church, "problems" of finances and consolidation wane in significance. Opportunities can be seen in such areas as the need for bilingual workers, the need for workers eager to serve in low income neighborhoods, the need for church work professionals and laypersons to serve overseas and the need for Lutherans who are willing and able to effectively use the public media and emerging technologies for the purpose of extending Christ's Kingdom.

Bilingual workers are needed at a rate that alone could absorb a pending over-supply. Today it is Hispanics (more than 20 million in the U.S.A. alone!). Tomorrow it may be Southeast Asians. Already the Synod is reaching out at 29 sites in five of their languages.

Exciting workers to serve in low income neighborhoods, or in part-time or tent-making ministries is a task in which colleges and seminaries need to play a major role. An imaginative emphasis upon the needs and rewards of such service can succeed in redirecting student expectations. This task is aided at this time by our composite national profile that shows a growing appreciation for simpler life-styles and service-oriented lives. Emphasis also needs to be placed upon a very specialized approach in this area of ministry. One congregation of less than 100 members currently is able to field a dozen staff members and twice as many volunteers to cover the neighborhood with a special family-focused ministry. Their midweek meal and worship draw three times the



number holding membership because the Holy Spirit is blessing their emphasis upon a specialized approach.

In another shortage area, the four corners of the globe beckon. Needed are professional church workers to serve in traditional ways and laity who will serve as agricultural, construction, educational and social worker support personnel to missionaries and partner churchmen. There will never be an over-supply of the likes of the chief operations officer of a major medical supply manufacturer who recently settled in the South Pacific to help a partner church plan its financial system.

Finally, we need workers in God's Vineyard who are specialists in the use of the media and emerging technologies. It is staggering to think of the benefits to our Kingdom work that could be derived through good stewardship of the blessings

God has provided in the area of communications. Our need is great for those who can motivate and teach the people of our congregations to effectively utilize communications theory and practice to reach and affect the lives of those within the fold and those outside of it.

The world in which we live is a complex one that requires imagination and innovation on the part of the church. Our Synod has traditionally given evidence of these qualities together with a strong desire to support those ministries that truly serve people in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Gospel. Our opportunity to serve is a growing one — but it will require an adequate supply of workers in the Vineyard.

Ralph A. Bohlmann

HOW CAN THE CALL OF THE LORD BE HEARD?

They can be seen on every concourse of the Salt Lake City airport any day of the year. Dark suits, white shirts and ties accentuate the eager, youthful faces. Surrounded by whole families sharing the obvious excitement of the moment, these young Mormon missionaries are ready to depart for destinations across the country and around the world. Thousands like them are already in place, serving for two years at no salary, with all costs borne by their families. Viewing the scene, one wistfully wishes that these were Lutheran youth poised to proclaim the Gospel of Christ rather than the man-made doctrines of the Mormon church. In a rapidly changing society our church faces the formidable task of motivating its young people to devote their lives to the Lord as laborers in His vineyard. Gone are the days when the sons and daughters of parsonages and teacherages provided a high percentage of the enrollment at Synod's training schools. Today's youth have multiple options. Careers and occupations unknown only a decade ago beckon with promise of adventure and reward. In such a setting, how can young men and young women hear the call of the Lord?

They will hear that call when the whole church recaptures the excitement of the Gospel. The cross of Christ is God's power to renew and to redeem the world. When the urgency and the potential of the church's mission task stirs the people of God anew, the young will catch the vision and want to be part of the action.

Congregations likewise must come alive as instruments of God's life-giving and life-changing love for the world. For most young people the congregation is the church. They are challenged or turned off by what happens there. Youth will also hear the call of the Lord when they are viewed by the church as a resource rather than as a problem. Congregations are tempted to look suspiciously at youth in the context of the popular culture of alcohol, drugs and sex. They tend to overlook the faith, the idealism, and the enthusiasm that wait to be challenged and channelled.

Youth need better role models. Pastors, teachers and other church professionals with unhappy faces and gloomy attitudes disillusion and discourage. Exuberant, energetic and joyful servants of Christ attract and inspire. Good models motivate young men and young women to consider ministry.

Adequate salaries, especially for teachers and other non-clergy personnel, are important for drawing able candidates to the church's ministries. Young people certainly do not offer themselves to the church in expectation of high pay. Yet churches do a disservice to their workers when they give less than a living wage. Programs and agencies of the church should not be subsidized by substandard salaries. The laborer in the Lord's Vineyard, the Apostle reminds us, is worthy of his hire.

Exciting times lie ahead for the church in these last two decades of the twentieth century. The need for laborers in God's Vineyard has not diminished. Billions of people still remain to be reached with the good news of the cross and the empty tomb. Young people will hear God's call to ministry whenever and wherever the church takes its mission task seriously and performs it with joy.

Ralph Phipps

"PRAY YE THE LORD —!"

Creation has no meaning at all, unless it becomes the arena for covenant. Geography and space are used by Creator God to arrange relationships whereby He and mankind establish covenants that carry across the centuries into eternity.

When the creation of God still carried dimensions of perfection, the covenant was implied. It needed no verbalization. It was understood, and accepted, and welcomed, and it brought delight.

When the dimension of perfection was lost, covenant became complex and the incredible became real. Only God could have devised the elements of His unbelievable, yet wholly workable plan of action.

His Son would take our flesh, live our life, bear our burden, pay our debt, die our death, and become our resurrection. Here truth overrides credulity. There is mystery, but faith lays hold on promise, and mystery becomes openly apparent in the revelation of God through His Word.

God desires man's salvation. "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to salvation." "As I live,

saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked should turn from his way and live!"

Jesus in the days of His flesh, looked upon the fields, white unto harvest, and He expressed His yearning for the salvation of man: "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He might send forth laborers into His harvest. The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."

"Fields white unto harvest" describes our day. A renewed interest in things spiritual, a concern for well-being in a troubled age, a need for stability in an era of change, a search for solid foundations among the shifting sands of the moment — all of these are creating a need and a search for the stable, the dependable, and the satisfaction that endures.

Each year the Synod places a little over two hundred new pastors into the field. Deaths, retirements and resignations from the ministry almost match that amount. We are gaining slightly in this area. Generally speaking, the Synod is carrying about 400 vacancies annually in its pastoral work force.

In the teaching ministry, the number of graduates is decreasing. Where in the 60s and 70s we were placing upwards of a thousand teachers per year, that number has now been almost cut in half. This is happening at a time when Christian day schools are growing and when there is a concerted plea for synodically trained teachers.

"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send laborers forth into His harvest." The need of the Church, as it grows, is for more workers in the Kingdom! The Church needs to staff for growth, rather than adding staff after growth comes! Prospects for the future and the needs of the Kingdom seem to indicate a real need for increased numbers of pastors, teachers, and workers in the Church.

He who said "I will build my Church" has chosen to use people as His instruments to get the job done. He is ready to covenant with the workers that he uses, and to equip them and enable them to do His bidding in Kingdom service. If workers are idle in the market place, it is our insufficiency to support His work, rather than His inability to use the workers that have been prepared, which creates the problem.

W.E. Griesse

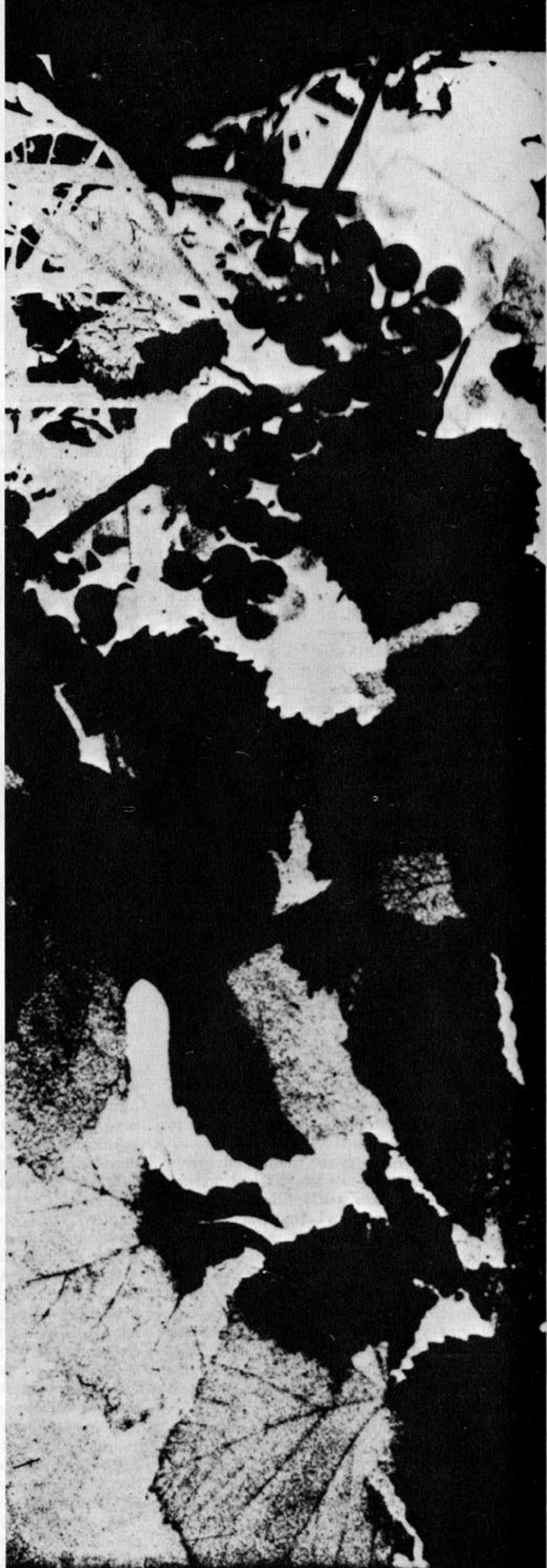
WILL THE CHURCH'S YOUTH WORK IN GOD'S VINEYARD?

by Courtney Meyer

For the past six years I have dealt specifically with the question which serves as the topic for this article. My job: an admissions counselor for Concordia College in Seward, an institution of higher learning whose primary function is to train people for various church work professions. A little more than ten years ago Concordia had no admissions counselors. The need was not there. Students applied for admission early. Quotas were set for applicants to the teacher education program. Often the most painful task of the Director of Admissions was to decline applicants simply because they were too late in applying. Often these were capable, qualified students. Unfortunately, the reality was that the church could serve only so many people each year in Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod schools.

Time and circumstances have changed. Today the Concordia admissions staff consists of five full-time people: a Director of Admissions and four admissions counselors. The main task of the staff is to counsel with young people about the possibility of choosing to serve in the Lord's Vineyard as a professional church worker. Concordia has other non-church work programs; however, the primary aim is to attract young people to fill the need of the church of the future. The question is appropriate, *Will the Church's Youth Work in God's Vineyard?* My experiences over the past few years point to a dwindling number of young people who are ready to say "yes" to a life of service in the church.

I believe in Christian education. I believe in Lutheran grade schools, secondary schools, and our synod's colleges and seminaries. In a sense, I am a salesman. A salesman has to believe in his product. The college which I represent is in the business of preparing people for life's greatest calling, to reach souls for Christ. It is not difficult for me to talk to



young people about becoming a pastor, teacher, director of Christian education or a social worker. In fact, I have an enthusiasm for it which is a result of several convictions. Man's greatest need is to know Christ. Is there another profession other than the professional ministry which is more necessary? I think not. Is it not also true that God uses individuals to reach other individuals? Every single, solitary person who enters the professional ministry of the church can touch souls for Christ! Look at the tremendous potential for soul winning when we think of it in those terms. But there seems to be a problem. Not enough young people are saying "yes" to the church and our Savior's call to offer a life of service to Him.

The need for workers in the vineyard, especially teachers, is great. Dr. Floyd Behrens, Director of Placement at Concordia, states, "We're up against a losing battle right now. Needs are not being supplied through synodical circles at this time. Right now we are supplying two-thirds of our need." Two years ago 80% of the teachers in our parochial schools were synodically trained; one year ago that figure dropped to 70%. The figure will most likely be lower this year. Behrens projects that if this trend continues, synodical schools will be producing about 450-500 teachers per year, about 200 short of the yearly need. The most critical shortage will be at the elementary level where male teachers will be in demand. While the DCE need will plateau over the next few years, seminaries will still be hard-pressed to fill all the vacancies in Synod. Other professional ministries will most likely also experience shortages.

With the need being what it is, why is it becoming increasingly difficult to attract young people to ministry professions? This article will address this question on the basis of countless responses the author has received from high school youth over the past six years, from counselors, parents, pastors, teachers, DCEs, and numerous other individuals, and from general observations regarding societal values and pressures.

The first part of the article will identify the forces working against youth's attraction to ministry, and the second part will identify the positive motivational forces which lead youth to say "yes" to a life of ministry. The aim is to create an awareness of what you, a person interested in the growth of Christ's church here on earth, can do to help youth say "yes" to a life of ministry.

Forces That Detract Youth from the Ministry Societal Pressures

The decisions which young people make today are definitely an outgrowth of the values ingrained into them by materialistic America. Our society no longer is content to have a job which satisfies our needs. The

aim is to choose a profession which can satisfy our wants and desires. It is assumed that food, shelter, and clothing will be there. The aim is to see how exquisite the food, how extravagant the shelter, and how flamboyant the clothing can be. We are much too much status conscious, and of course, money is at the core of most of the solutions to the status issue. Young people learn quickly. They can learn from observing these phenomena. What is unfortunate is that they are also counseled to focus primarily on their future earning power as they choose a profession.

Parents are often the key people in the counseling process. While they will not specifically tell their son or daughter what profession to choose, they will be sure to point out which professions pay the best. In many cases parents who have not succeeded financially will "push" their children into professions so that they "will be better off than we ever were." The values of the parents come through loud and clear as they give advice to their children.

High school counselors play an important role. Their particular value system influences what they tell students. In many cases students are encouraged to pursue professions simply on the basis of having experienced success in certain subjects. For example, students who are talented in science and math are encouraged to become engineers. Engineers make good money. Some counselors consider it a waste of talent to choose the teaching profession when one is particularly gifted in the sciences or math. The result is that many talented students who may be thinking about a parochial teaching profession are strongly encouraged to consider a more lucrative profession. Again, the emphasis on earning power often is at the heart of such counseling.

One of the greatest influences on youth is *peer pressure*. How well we know that they really listen to each other and make decisions based on what their friends think and say! Occasional put-downs from friends who question the sanity of working for little or nothing, or who constantly speak about where the big money is, provide much negative motivation for those who are considering a church work profession. The result is that the good church work prospect finds considerable support from friends to pursue the big dollar, free weekends, and enjoyment of the Monday to Friday, eight to five lifestyle.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy through all of these influences is that the church often doesn't even have a chance to attract the most talented students. In an area serving mankind's greatest need, far too few talented and creative minds are found.

Synodical College Costs

How often I have heard the statement, "It just simply costs too much to attend your college. It's a lot

cheaper to attend the state college in our area." How can one argue with facts? Among private and Christian colleges the synodical college costs compare quite favorably, but they are compared to the public colleges.

It is in fact somewhat startling to learn that the total cost of a four-year education at Concordia over the next few years will be in the vicinity of thirty thousand dollars. It is not too difficult to wince at that figure, especially if a family doesn't know much about financial aid packaging. Consequently, our schools are "written off" without even having an opportunity to present financial aid information.

Financial Aid Shortages

By far the most critical factor in making it possible to attend one of our synodical schools is the amount of student aid available. Colleges can't give money to students which they don't have. It doesn't matter how much it costs to attend a college as long as the resources are there for student aid. One is obviously more wise financially to select a college which costs \$10,000 per year if he receives a financial aid award of \$9,000, as opposed to attending a college that costs \$5,000 and provides a package of \$2,000. We find non-synodical competition usually able to offer substantially better financial aid.

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of being an admissions counselor is to receive information from students that they are canceling their intent to come to your college. Often these cancellations occur long after the time of application and acceptance to the college has taken place. There are a myriad of reasons why students cancel and decide to attend other colleges. In fact, it is no secret that financial aid shortages are the leading cause for such cancellations. When a student cancels and decides to attend another synodical college, the church is not affected; but when the student decides to attend a public or other private college, the church in effect has lost yet another full-time servant for the future.

Money is tight. Everyone is asking for contributions. Development staffs work hard but the colleges need still more financial help in order to give it back to the students. The financial aid director cannot give funds which are not there. Does money still talk, even among Christian parents who want a Christian college experience for their children? I hear about it every day. In fact, as I write this article, my inner sense of frustration mounts because I just received another cancellation notice. Why? You guessed it, the financial aid award is not large enough.

Lack of Encouragement

Let's backtrack for a moment. Why are you in the profession that you are today? Was there perhaps

someone who encouraged you on several occasions to pursue your particular vocation? Many are pastors, teachers and DCEs today because someone took a special interest in them, recognized their abilities and gifts, and directed them to think seriously about a professional ministry.

With the great demands on our time, the hectic meeting schedule, desk work and formal presentations for which we are responsible, too often we don't take the time to chat with our youth when opportunities present themselves. Informal social gatherings are too infrequent and recreational events which allow for interaction are also often impossible to attend on account of our other duties. The end result is that often we fail to approach our young people during these decision making years.

Unless we make a conscious effort to include encouragement as one of our basic responsibilities for the enlargement of Christ's Kingdom here on earth, our young people will never give professional ministry a second thought. We can't expect their high school counselors or others to do the encouraging. Fortunately, Lutheran high school counselors are usually very helpful in suggesting the ministry professions.

Poor Models

There is no greater detriment to the ministry professions than a poor model. Thank God for the countless number of good models who have spurred the hearts of the young to spiritual commitment, but there still remain far too many in ministry who do more harm than good.

There are those who are poor models simply because they lack certain qualities and skills. They lack enthusiasm, creativity, energy, personality, a sense of humor, and a variety of other qualities which ignite and influence kids. They have few bad habits. They have few enemies if any. They simply are very bland people.

Then there are those who have a lot of bad habits. A bad habit is an action which is a negative behavioral influence on one's personal health and well being, and which strains interpersonal relationships with others. The gamut is quite large. We should be particularly concerned about those bad personal habits which are injurious to our health. When it is quite clear that the person has little regard for his own health, we have a bad model. Consider the influence of the smoking, much overweight, poorly manicured and sloppily dressed teacher. How many kids do you think want to grow up to be like Mr. Slob, their fourth grade teacher? Even if Mr. Slob is compassionate and kind and can teach the love of Christ, his influence on lifestyle values will be largely negative.

Probably just as sad is the model who has very

poor interpersonal relationship skills. Teachers who are negative, overly critical, have little tact, and are a pain to be around have no business in the ministry professions. It's not just the teachers who are susceptible to these types of behaviors. Pity the congregation that must endure the hardship of a pastor who just doesn't measure up in some of these areas, and subsequently the youth, who do not get to see the joy of ministry in the life of their shepherd. Will they want to become pastors? People in ministry need special interpersonal skills that have their roots in a profound love for Christ.

God in His wisdom gave man freedom of choice. It is a good thing that He did. There are those who leave the ministry professions for other important and related type ministries where new challenges await them. Others leave because they believe they are not making enough money to provide for their families. Others get burned out, as we say, and go into something different to escape from the tensions and frustrations of full-time ministry.

There is a group, however, who hang on, but whose complacency and lethargy are lethal to the sowing and growing of seeds in the hearts of the young for professional ministry. I'm talking about the chronic complainer. Such a person no longer enjoys his or her work and is verbal about it. It's the person who says he has too much to do, who says kids get on his nerves, who complains about inadequate salary and spends as much time moonlighting as he does working for the church. It's the person who consciously schedules fewer activities for kids because it means more work for him. It's the person who tells his students not to go into teaching and preaching because if they do they will wind up like him.

Do you know someone who turns off people for ministry? If you have counseling influence on such a person, I suggest that you present some viable alternatives. Youth will not say "yes" to a profession which is both verbally and physically modeled in a negative manner. Enough said!

Positive Forces That Attract Youth into Ministry

As an admissions counselor I have come to the realization that God has placed far more positive people in His Vineyard than negative people. I have seen those who encourage, those who by their life style are a model influence beyond measure, those who are willing to do something about the financial needs of their youth, and those who see to it that their youth are given the materials and first-hand opportunity to explore the possibility of a Lutheran college and perhaps a full-time ministry profession. Let's consider these positive forces which lead young people to say "yes" to the call of Christ.

Encouragement

When I was a senior in high school I had no idea of what I wanted to do. A wood worker maybe. A friend merely suggested, "You could play baseball at St. John's College where I attend." "But what do you study there?" I asked. "Well, have you ever thought of becoming a teacher?" "No," I said, "but I think I would like to coach." It was just a beginning. From there the encouragement came from my pastor and others. Oddly enough, it was my love for sports, not my love for Christ, which initially attracted me to attend a Christian college. For me the lesson is obvious. We need to be mindful of the interests and talents of our youth. We are not expected to know the workings of the Holy Spirit to direct a life, but we are given the ability to be able to encourage and direct youth to the places and activities which allow them to cultivate their interests and abilities.

Encouragement to attend summer camps where students come into contact with counselors who are preparing for full-time ministries is a great way to indirectly influence vocational thinking. Many who are in ministry today point to a summer camp experience as the catalyst that pointed them toward serving the Lord full-time.

District, state and national youth conferences have a significant effect on the thinking of young people. As many as possible should be encouraged to attend and measures should be taken to find financial support for such ventures. Retreat and outdoor experiences with a stimulating spiritual leader can strongly influence kids.

Involvement in church functions is also very necessary. Acolyting, reading lessons, planning and presenting youth services, performing in a choir — all are experiences which can impact young people. Encouragement to help teach vacation Bible school often leads to a good experience and further leads to interest in the teaching profession. Helping coach little league teams can accomplish the same end. Encouraging high school youth to serve as teacher aides in Lutheran grade schools often leads to increased interest in the teaching profession.

This spring, North Carolina State won the NCAA National Basketball Championship. Their coach, Jim Valvano, said he never did stress winning with his team. He said, however, he did stress the importance of being in a *position* to win near the end of any game. As leaders in the church, we need to help put our youth in a *position* where they can choose. That means giving them a variety of experiences and encouraging them to consider the ministry professions.

Sometimes youth underestimate themselves. They don't see themselves as having the abilities to be a pastor, teacher, DCE, social worker, deaconess, or whatever. A sincere statement of confidence in their

abilities by a pastor or teacher is often the little nudge that is needed. And it is not just the pastors and teachers who can encourage and influence. Parents, friends and even favorite relatives can be encouraging influences.

Encouragement at an early age is often important. I have heard statements like, "I wanted to be a teacher ever since I was in the sixth grade." When a child identifies his or her vocational goal and verbalizes it, it is naturally important that we do all we can to nurture that interest. We again nurture that interest by providing for experiences and activities which reinforce that goal.

Positive Models

"What you do speaks louder than what you say" has relevance to the area of influencing young people to say "yes" to ministry professions. The Apostle Paul's letter to Timothy is an excellent source for model building information. Paul begins by saying in chapter three of I Timothy, "This is a true saying: If a man is eager to be a church leader, he desires an excellent work. A church leader must be . . ." and he continues with a series of virtues which are befitting a church leader. Who we are and how we live as church leaders has a profound influence on youth. God be praised if someone has decided on a church profession because you served as a model for that person. One of the greatest personal rewards of the profession is to know that another has chosen your profession because of your influence. If you have been told personally, you have another reason for thanks to God.

The qualities of an effective model are varied. At the top of the list has to be love for one's occupation. Finding joy and fulfillment in one's work is not hidden. Students and parishioners know if we enjoy our work. Commitment is not enough when it comes to influencing young people. A good model also has a "gratitude attitude." Being grateful to be counted worthy to serve Christ in a prerequisite. Serving Him will never be a chore when gratitude rules the heart. Energy and enthusiasm also are virtues that are contagious and can be caught by youth. Those who have committed themselves to keeping fit by practicing good health and dietary programs will have reserves to draw upon when the going gets rough. A good model lives by conviction. His or her conviction is that winning souls for Christ doesn't take a back seat to any profession. It's out of that conviction that good models radiate the God-given talent to inspire and motivate others. They serve as wires for the Holy Spirit to fill with a strong current of never-ending energy and power. The list of virtues can go on and on.

Fortunately, models do vary and their influence is caught by students with varying interests. It is more likely that a skilled church organist will influence a person with an interest in music than will a coach who gets only excited about sports. This does point to a need for church leaders to have a variety of interests. Lutheran high schools play a major role in exposing students to a broad range of models who are specialists in certain areas. Small Lutheran grade schools occasionally cannot provide a model for each student interest group.

Think back to your own models. I am sure we can all identify at least one. In spite of all the negative forces at work, strong models have been and continue to be an overcoming force for good in selecting a church work profession.

Jesus is our ultimate model. If we want a good model we need only to look at His life. Jesus died for me, the ultimate personal sacrifice. A church worker seldom today needs to give up his own life for a cause. But he knows it is a cause that will someday win. It is certainly debated whether Woodrow Wilson succeeded in his cause as President of the United States, but his statement, "I would a great deal rather lose in a cause that I know will someday triumph than triumph in a cause that I know will someday lose,"² is good encouragement for any church leader. With Jesus as our model we can, although imperfectly, model behaviors which lead young people to say "yes" to a life of service to Him.

Financial Encouragement

It's important that we put our money where our mouth is. If we encourage youth, that means we must back them financially. This is the practical test of our commitment to the furtherance of the work of the Kingdom. Records at Concordia in Seward show that presently the average amount of congregational support per student is \$66 per year. The average amount of district support is approximately three times that amount, or close to \$200 a year. Do you feel that an average of \$266 a year will be large enough incentive when it costs close to \$7,000 a year to attend a synodical college? Colleges, of course, do have synodical support which comes indirectly from the congregations. At Concordia, Seward, that amount is \$22 per credit hour per semester, or roughly \$700 a year.

What is encouraging is to see individual congregations committing themselves by providing substantially large amounts to those who wish to enter church work professions. Some give as much as \$2,000 a year or more. Others have special youth ministry Sundays where special collections go to a scholarship fund. One service which I took part in was called "Fishers of Men Sunday." The collection

was for scholarships. Congregational scholarship committees play the key role in establishing generous per student grants. Their integrity and foresight in these matters sometimes makes a big difference in the number of young people who go into church work.

Parishes should also promote "sponsor a student" programs whereby individual congregation members adopt and support a student through college. A certain amount is guaranteed each year. Think of the identity which can be established between a student and someone back home! Or, how about the idea of the parish helping with the loan debt of their present teachers? Some students borrow as much as \$10,000 over a four-year period to cover their college expenses. Many first-year teachers have loan payments of over \$100 per month. At the very least, it would be helpful for congregations to be sensitive to what it costs to become a Lutheran teacher.

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League, the Ladies' Aid, the different guilds — all are playing an important role in providing scholarship help. Through volunteer time and effort financial incentives are being provided that otherwise would not be there. Every amount helps. Thank God for these organizations!

It is important that prospective students know that district aid is available. Some districts have more money than others for students who attend synodical schools. Pastors, teachers and even parishioners should know what is available.

Several attempts have been made to develop a synodical loan program with "forgiveness" clauses attached. Such resolutions must be made to the synodical conventions. Colleges and seminaries especially should be in the process of developing such resolutions that can benefit their students.

It takes the creative financial support of everyone including the college itself, synod, the district, the individual parish and interested and concerned individuals. The decision on whether or not to attend a synodical school very often depends upon the availability of adequate financial aid and on information about it. Any creative ideas which you may have in this area should be forwarded to those who *can* and *will* do something about developing them.

Available and Appropriate Information

To a large degree it is the responsibility of the colleges and seminaries to get appropriate information to schools and parishes. Sometimes the information is inadequate. In cases where information is inadequate it is suggested that the parish ask for specific materials from the college.

Any admissions staff will respond to such a request.

It is important that the information gets to the students. Posters, flyers, catalogs and related materials should be in places where students have access to them. Many pastors and youth directors do a valuable service by taking a little extra time to prepare a special bulletin board for such purposes. Personally handing a student a brochure sometimes is very effective.

Information should be current. Files should be updated. Financial information changes yearly. Programs change at colleges. Do you know what programs are offered at the different synodical colleges? Are you aware of the financial aid available and how packaging is done? Current materials usually answer those questions.

The Power of the Calling

The strongest force in compelling youth to a life of ministry is the personal call of Christ. It overrides all other forces. To be sure, there are the other factors which I have touched upon, and each of them is a real and determining force. As men and institutions we are challenged by Christ to do all we can to make it possible for young people to serve in professional ministry. That is our responsibility. We must not shrink from it. Yet, the calling itself comes from Christ. He is in control of the myriad of forces which tug and pull from different directions. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "When Christ calls a man, He bids him come, He bids him come and die. There are different kinds of dying, it is true; but the essence of discipleship is contained in these words."³ For those who are called personally by Christ to a life of ministry there is the willingness to die to some of the attraction of this world. There is the willingness to sacrifice, to overcome financial odds, to turn one's back on the self-serving options of life. We are thankful to the Lord that there still are students who make choices on this basis. They are compelled by the power of the calling.

The future of Christ's Kingdom here on earth is still in His very hands, but we are His instruments. He can accomplish what He wills, but we will each play our part. An awareness of the needs and an understanding of the forces at work is all part of our business. It is time for each of us to be active in helping youth to respond by saying "yes" to the call of work in God's Vineyard.

FOOTNOTES

¹I Timothy 3:1-3.

²National Governors' and Mayors' Prayer Breakfast Movement (Editors). A quote in "A Leadership Led by God," *Today* (New York: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1978).

³Ibid. A quote in "The Cost of Everything."

Are professional workers in short supply?

by Walter L. Rosin

It was probably a balmy summer day as our Lord, moving through the countryside with His disciples, took the occasion to instruct them with regard to His mission and theirs. Master teacher that He was, He chose an illustration to impress upon their minds the urgency, the crucial nature of that mission. The grain fields were ripe and the time for reaping was now. To put it off for even a short time would result in substantial crop losses. "The harvest truly is plenteous," He said, "but the laborers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest."

The harvest which He obviously had in mind was not physical grain but those people who were like sheep without a shepherd. In His mind's eye He no doubt saw the "harvest" in 1983 and the years beyond, the "harvest" of men, women, and children; those just born and those about to breathe their last breath; those entering the work force and those leaving it in retirement; the brilliant and the developmentally disabled; the educated and the uneducated; skilled and unskilled; the people "of every kindred, and nation and tongue." It was a staggering picture of the world population from year one to a date, unknown for man, when physical birth and physical death would cease, the end of time.

Our Lord could not be nonchalant about the situation. He was too involved. He was sweating blood for those whom He envisioned. He was literally pouring our His life for them so that they might have life forever. By our baptism He has involved us in His mission also.

In this context it would almost appear to be impudent, even improper to pose the question, "Are professional workers in short supply?" If they are not, should we cease to pray for a larger supply? Should the laborers for whom we are to pray not include full-time professional church workers but rather only a more extended group involving volunteers and part-time professional church workers? Should we assume that the situation is not as crucial as it once was so that we have more time to gather the harvest? Are we to believe that the

colleges, seminaries, and the church are possibly crying "wolf" when references are made to empty pulpits and potentially vacant classrooms?

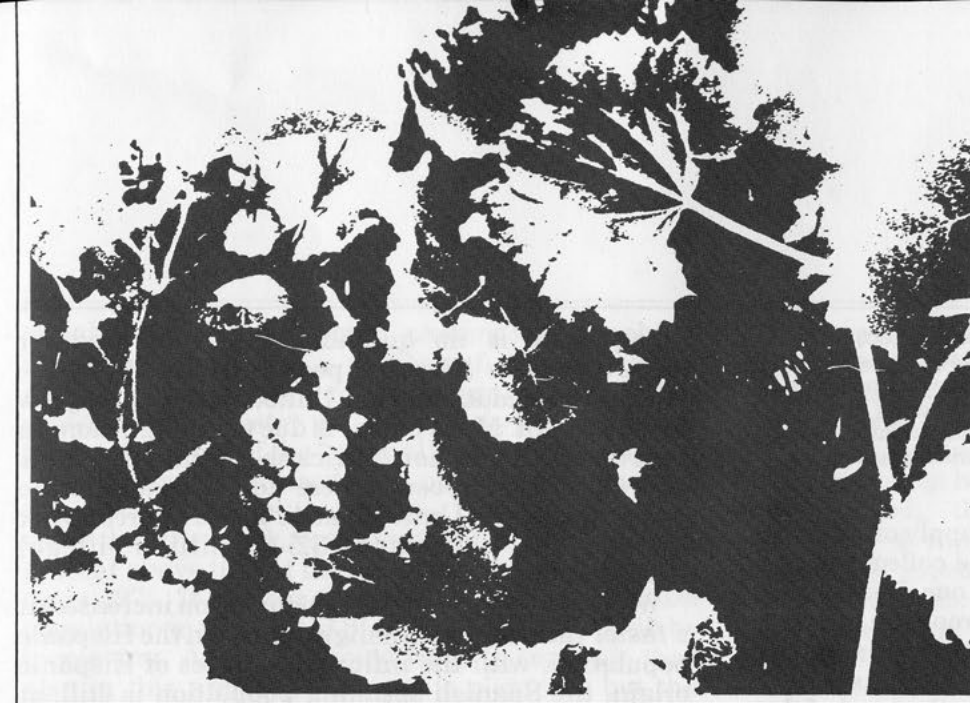
Workers Needed for New Missions

The latest reports indicate that the situation is as crucial as it ever was. Christianity is not gaining ground in the race with world population. The numbers of non-Christians is at least 3.2 billion today. The number of Christian elementary and high schools is growing and their enrollment is increasing. That is good, but it possibly means more vacant classrooms. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has established a goal for entering ten new foreign areas in the decade of the 80s. Included in the goal of one thousand new ministries in North America is the planting of six black, six Hispanic, two American Indian, two American-Asian, two campus, and two death ministries annually. The Synod has opened 102 ministries in the last year. Apparently the goals are realistic and are being realized. And still the need for sharing the Gospel is not being met.

Unfortunately, that is not always the message which is being received by the church. The memory of days when there was an "oversupply" of pastors persists. We cannot seem to blot it out. When district presidents ask congregations to send additional calls for placement of seminary graduates, the rumor mills begin to grind and the specter of "oversupply" injects its haunting presence. In fact, the "oversupply" is not there.

Trends Point to Worker Shortages

Reviewing the statistics for pastoral placement in 1983 will demonstrate that 197 graduates were available in a spring placement of graduates. Since not enough calls were received to place all who had graduated, calls were not issued to some of those men although the potential supply of calls was larger than 197. At a meeting for summer placement in 1983, 52 pastoral candidates were available to fill the 79 calls that were received. Twenty-seven



congregations were disappointed. Furthermore, it does not appear likely that there will be an oversupply in the near future.

It is estimated that each year a minimum of 225 seminary graduates will be needed simply to replace those who die while in office, retire, or resign and enter other vocations. Add to this the annual increase of 100 North American ministries, many of which are pastoral ministries, and an oversupply based on present enrollments is extremely unlikely. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that normally pastoral preparation requires eight years beyond high school. Preparation cannot wait until the shortage appears.

Complicating the picture is the number of pastors who enter the pastoral ministry through colloquy. The addition of 157 men through this program in the years 1979-81 has had a number of major effects. First, they have helped to deplete the ranks of male teachers since this is the source of many pastoral colloquy candidates. Second, it has provided a warped picture of the pastoral supply since many enter the colloquy program after the ages of 40 or 50. As these men have filled vacancies, the impression is given that positions are filled. And they are, very ably. However, in the process an illusion is created since the tenure of these men will undoubtedly normally be much shorter than that of the students who graduate from college and then immediately matriculate to the seminary. Within 20-25 years the number of pastoral vacancies could be critical.

What about the supply of teachers? Annual statistics in the area of teacher placement are recorded from September 1-August 31, and therefore the following is incomplete for 1982-1983.

Between September 1, 1982 and July 1, 1983, 304 teachers and directors of Christian education were placed in positions within the church. At the time of spring placement reports circulating in the church indicated that only 251 of a total of 505 teachers and DCE candidates had been placed. Of the 505 available, 69 were immobile making those actually available for placement only 437. Since that time, 53

teachers and one DCE have received assignments. At the time of this writing, 75 mobile teacher candidates remain to be placed and five mobile DCEs are seeking positions. For many of these, calls are already in process and, if past experience is any kind of dependable indicator, by the time this article appears, directors of placement will be faced once again with a large number of calls for candidates with none available to fill them. That situation is regrettable and serves to defeat the mission of the schools.

A recent report issued by the Board for Parish Services is most valuable in shedding light on the supply of teachers. One table indicates the following:

Year	Need	Filled by Synodical Graduates	Percentage
1968	1309	874	66.8
1973	1282	594	46.3
1982	2095	313	14.9

The statistics speak for themselves.

Not Enough Synodically Trained Teachers

How was the remaining 85.1 percent needed filled? The answer is uncertain. A large number of positions may be filled by synodically prepared teachers who resign temporarily, who may have raised families, and are now reentering the teaching field. An additional possibility is that many vacant positions are being filled by teachers who have not been prepared at synodical colleges. Many of these are undoubtedly dedicated, academically qualified, consecrated Christian people who see a need and seek, as best they can, to fill that need. As the Board for Professional Education Services pointed out in its report to the 1983 convention of the Synod:

Reports from district education executives indicate that the percentage of synodically trained personnel in the schools is decreasing and that congregations are increasingly filling vacant positions with teachers who are available locally, whether or not they are synodically prepared. If this is true, congregations should, at the very least, encourage teachers who do not have this preparation to enroll in the

colloquy program and should assist them in acquiring teacher status on the roster of the Synod through this avenue. Unless this is done, congregational schools can quickly move in the direction of merely offering private school education, rather than toward maintaining and improving the quality of a program of Christian education which is a part of their mission.³

It is obvious that there is no oversupply of teachers who are adequately prepared by the colleges of the Synod for sharing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in word and deed in the classroom, in relating the Christian faith to specific subject matter, and in conducting classroom activities on the basis of a Law and Gospel approach. Prayer to the Lord of the harvest to send forth these laborers is still very much in order.

Too Few Prepare for Ethnic and Other Ministries

In addition to those who are being placed as pastors, teachers, or directors of Christian education, an increasing number of full-time professional church workers are being placed in other areas of service. In the past year, for example seven deaconesses were placed by the Board of Assignments, 12 lay ministers, four parish workers, four parish assistants, and three directors of evangelism. It is obvious that in an age of specialization, the church is recognizing the need for workers with specific talents and preparation, if it is to carry out its mission. The supply of such specialists is extremely limited.

Some areas of the mission are becoming very obvious. One of these is in the difficult area of urban ministry. Since the general preparation which is received at seminaries and at colleges preparing teachers does not usually allow for specialization for service within specific social and/or economic strata, it may be necessary and desirable to devise specific programs for these situations. As a recent release following a three-day conference sponsored by the Center for Urban Education Ministry located at Concordia College, Bronxville stated:

Bold new strategies must be implemented by the church in support of urban Lutheran schools and the specialized ministries they are conducting . . . These strategies must be designed to crash through barriers of a complacent church which are robbing urban Lutheran schools of their full opportunity to reach out in mission and ministry to students and their families in our cities and metropolitan regions.⁴

If such specialized preparation cannot take place during the four years normally required for acquiring a teaching degree, it may be necessary to add a fifth year for such preparation.

Without delving into the difficulties associated with ministry related to differing backgrounds and national origins, whether Mexican, Cuban, Asian or

other, there is no question about the need for ministry to the Hispanic people. In the 1970s, the Hispanic population in the United States alone grew by 60 percent. Much of this is due to immigration. In that decade 1.4 million Mexicans, 1.9 million Asians and 600,000 Caribbeans were added legally to the population of the United States. These figures do not include an estimated 3.5-6 million illegal immigrants.

While the American Asian population increased at a faster rate through immigration than the Hispanic population, with the influx of refugees of Hispanic origin, the Spanish speaking population is still, at least in the United States, one of the greatest fields for harvest. There is no question that the reapers are few. The 1980 census showed, for example, that 11 percent of all persons five years old and over speak a language other than English at home. Spanish was the most commonly reported language. Among the adults who spoke another language at home, 44 percent reported speaking Spanish, and among children, 65 percent reported speaking Spanish. Obviously, this has a tremendous impact on the ministry of the church, especially in its schools, but in other areas as well. We have not even begun to make a significant impact in sharing the Gospel and ministering to this important segment of the population.

Still another area which requires special attention for ministry is the older segment of the population. Turning again to the statistics it becomes apparent that as a nation, the population is aging. The national median age in 1970 was 28; in 2000 it is projected to be 36. By 1990 there will be 124 people over age 30 for every 100 people below that age. By 1995 the population aged 30-44 will grow by 17 million. At present there are 5.6 million Americans over 80. The number will be 10 million by the turn of the century. Do we have a sufficient number of church workers prepared to minister to the people with these special needs? Obviously not.

In addition to the above concerns there is the concern for black ministry. The Synod has been aware of the need for workers in this area for over 100 years, but it does not follow that because we have been aware of it we have been as effective as we could be. This work has been expanding rapidly in recent years. In 1976 the number of LC-MS congregations in black ministry was 193 with 50,000 communicant members. In 1981 the congregations numbered 230 with a communicant membership of over 65,000 and baptized membership of almost 89,000. The 50 vacant pastorates in black ministry have been reduced to 17. Progress is being made. Again, however, we have just begun to scratch the surface in terms of meeting the need.

At least two factors need to be considered. A

sizeable number of black pastors are reaching retirement age; since a number of vacancies were recently filled by colloquy graduates, this professional ministry will most likely be of a shorter tenure than that of the "normal" seminary graduate.

Furthermore, the need for professional workers in this area continues to escalate. Population figures show that the black fertility rate in 1980 was still 30 percent above that of the white population, the same as in 1975. It is clear that the proportion of future population in the United States which is black will be increasing. Again we would have to conclude that also in this area the "harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few." What this means in terms of undersupply of pastors and teachers qualified to minister in this specific area is obvious.

The list of needs could continue. It could point to changing living trends which demonstrate a movement away from big cities. While our sights have been focused on major metropolitan areas our living pattern has changed to what has been termed a "rural revival." This is a stark reversal of a historic trend in America. The list could point to the large number of single parent families who are neglected because ministry is directed to the traditional family. Who is being prepared to carry out a full-time ministry to these groups?

International Needs for Workers Is Critical

With all this concentration on the United States we have not begun to touch the needs throughout the world. Literacy experts are essential if the Gospel is to be made available to those speaking the 5,199 languages into which the Bible has not yet been translated. Doctors and nurses are necessary to meet the needs for a ministry of health and healing both in the United States and abroad. In a broad sense these, too, are surely full-time professional workers for the Lord as they carry out their ministry of word and action. Directors of Christian education and evangelistic missionaries are especially needed in foreign fields. The need for these workers become more critical as some doors which have been open begin to close to Christian mission activity. The time for reaping the harvest is now!

What Can Be Done

What strategies can the church employ to reach these millions of people with the Gospel? The answer seems to lie in a number of different directions.

First is the area of recruitment for full-time professional church workers. If we are to reach the minority groups which are becoming an increasing portion of the population of the United States and which are clearly the major portion of the world, it is logical that workers be recruited from these groups. A liaison must be established between the colleges

and seminaries and those minority congregations which are presently in existence, a circumstance which can perhaps best be accomplished through members of those minority groups. If that is the case, the composition of both admissions staffs and faculties must be reexamined. If, as has always been maintained, the congregations are to recruit workers, a rapport must be established if, as it presently appears, it does not now exist.

Secondly, the curriculum will require review and revision, where necessary, to assist potential church workers in carrying out the mission of the church. This may include such requirements as studies in cultural anthropology to assist them in ministering in cross cultural ministries. The inclusion of a modern language requirement may be desirable, particularly the inclusion of Spanish. At the seminaries, it may require a sampling of various ministries in field work experiences, as well as "live-in" experiences for some, with a final year following the vicarage devoted to preparation for chosen specialized ministries. It is not reasonable to expect that graduates are fully and equally qualified for institutional chaplaincies, ministry to the aging, campus ministry, and ministry to minorities, as well as ministry to the "normal" congregation. This might be accomplished through requirements for certification in specific ministries or, in the case of teachers, utilization of a fifth year of preparation.

Perhaps, above all, it is necessary to remember two things: 1) if Saint Paul was a "professional church worker," one can be a professional church worker today and still earn a living through other forms of work; 2) it is the task of professional church workers to prepare those to whom they minister for sharing the Gospel to others. What this means in terms of paraprofessional workers is clear. The effects could be most far-reaching.

Are professional church workers in short supply? Emphatically, yes. As someone has said, "The problem is not oversupply but underuse."

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Can the Laity Be Effective Workers in God's Vineyard?

by Alan Harre

The title assigned to this article by the editorial committee of *ISSUES* is consistent with the very nature of this journal. "Can the Laity be Effective Workers in God's Vineyard?" implies the possibility of either a positive or negative answer. Perhaps the ministry of the laity concept produces a certain amount of incredulity on the part of professional ministers as they contemplate the potential impact laity may have in carrying out God's work in the church and in the world.

As one reflects on the general issue of lay participation in the work of God's Vineyard, a number of more specific issues seem to become important. These more specific issues include questions like:

1. Do professional ministers of the gospel consciously or unconsciously limit the contributions laity are encouraged or allowed to make in the work of God's kingdom? If so, why are professional ministers inclined to do such?

2. Are the connotations of the term "lay ministry" generally circumscribed to apply only to work carried out in the structures of the institutional church? If this is the case, why is it so?

3. Is "God's Vineyard" to be perceived as the church or the world or both?

4. What constitutes effectiveness? Personal evangelism at the job? Serving on the task forces, committees, boards, councils, etc., of congregations? What criteria need to be used to evaluate effectiveness?

The Importance of Lay Role Clarification

The connotation of the word "laity" in modern English usage which differentiates between "ordinary folks" and "professionals" is not the denotation of the words "laity of God" or "people of God" as we find that phrase used in Holy Scripture. The people of God are not separated from the priests or clergy of God but from nations of people who have no relationship with God.¹ The classical New Testament text is I Peter 2:9-10.

Historians generally agree that in the four and one-half centuries that have transpired since the Reformation there has been some tension between persons who have sought to emphasize the legitimate implications of both the Biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers and of the Biblical concept of the office of the public ministry. Historically the pendulum has swung back and forth. Initially Luther articulated the Biblical position concerning the priesthood of all believers against the Roman Catholic emphasis that only priests, nuns and brothers had religious vocations.

Luther recognized that Baptism makes people part of the people of God and that Baptism offers the call to the priesthood for all believers. Because God is with His people, wherever God's people go there ministry can and ought to happen. Thus there is no longer any need to separate in an unhelpful way the sacred and secular spheres. The Gospel is capable of empowering God's people to live life as Christians in an intentional way.

Luther emphasized that the people of God as priests had three functions to fulfill. The most important task of God's priests is to teach and proclaim the Gospel. The second function is to pray on behalf of others. Finally, the third function is for the priests of God to offer their bodies as a living sacrifice as St. Paul directs in Romans 12:1.² The content of this article assumes acceptance of Luther's insight that in the daily work of Christians they will make their faith active in love in a very practical way.

If Luther's directives are taken seriously, and if clergy and laity alike perceive that the primary lay functions are to teach and proclaim the Gospel, pray for others and offer their bodies as living sacrifices in the service of others, it would appear that many congregations would need to rethink their priorities and revamp their practices of how laity are involved in the life of the parish. Traditional roles, which at least imply that laity are present in the church merely to support the work of clergy and that the clergy are the people who really do ministry, may need to be realigned. The laity must be allowed, enabled and encouraged to do ministry along side of the clergy.³

The well-being of ministry in its total meaning happens best when the concept of ministry is carried out in light of both of these Biblical foci rather than by emphasizing one or another of them. Where the pendulum hangs presently is difficult to evaluate.^{4, 5}

Historical distance in time will probably allow for more objectivity than is present at the moment. One's evaluation of where the pendulum hangs, whether it seems to point in the direction of the public ministry or in the direction of the priesthood of all believers, may say much more about the person offering the opinion than about the reality of the situation.

Shall Laymen Serve Church or World?

Agreement on the proposition that all of the people of God, laity and clergy alike, are set aside for ministry in God's Vineyard does not answer all the issues and questions that currently are being raised relative to the issue of the ministry of the laity. As soon as the proposition is accepted: "laity as people

of God are legitimately included in ministry," the next questions which surface are, "Where is that ministry to be done and why is it to be done there? There are at least two aspects to these questions to consider before formulating an answer to them.

Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton made a distinction in their book, *God's Frozen People*, between "churchy" laity and "worldly" laity.⁶ Most clergy and congregational leaders identify "churchy" laity as active laity. "Churchy" laity teach Sunday school classes, sing in choirs, serve on committees and boards in congregations' structures, attend voters' assembly meetings and do all the other things that help the congregations to continue to function. Without these "churchy" laity much of what is considered to be God's work would not get done. On the other hand, "worldly" laity are often labeled inactive. They may be judged as parasites feeding on the labors of others who are serving the congregations' structures. Their names are not included when lists of dedicated Christians are compiled even though their faithfulness in service to God may be exemplary as they use the gifts and talents God has given them to function in their calling. Since their service is ignored or not even recognized, congregational worship services are planned, sermons written, Bible classes offered, retreats organized, and devotions conducted that fail to address the legitimate spiritual needs of these "worldly" Christians. As a result of this oversight Christian congregations need to be confronted with their myopia and challenged to be responsible stewards of the gifts the Holy Spirit has poured out on these "worldly" Christians and urged to exploit these gifts in the service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Mark Gibbs has written:

We have too many laity who neglect business, political, labor union or local community meetings because of church demands on their spare evenings. If "mission" is to take precedence over "maintenance," then local churches and national synods too — may sometimes have to say, "We cannot expect X to serve on that committee: he is busy three nights a week on political affairs, and he must have some time for family and leisure."⁷

These are troubling concepts for many lay leaders of congregations and clergy to consider. Gibbs and Morton are "upsetting the apple cart" for us. They are using different criteria and values to make decisions about what behaviors and actions to applaud and acclaim and what behaviors and actions should be discouraged and ignored. Implicitly they are saying that the institutional church is using the services of God's people in a selfish manner. The church is using the service of God's people on itself rather than directing that service to the unsaved people of the world.

But, in addition to the issue of how Christian

service and ministry is to be directed and evaluated another debate has surfaced recently which impinges on what has been written above. The nature and content of this debate and the answer one selects to resolve the debate also affects how God's people think about and act out the roles of laity and clergy in the modern church.

It is fascinating to note that in the 1960's churchmen from the more liberal denominations raised questions about the institutional church. At that time some observers of the social scene suggested that the challenges they were raising about the institutional church were part of a larger societal questioning of all institutions. However, in more recent days it is the evangelical Protestant community which has been raising the questions about the institutional church. Some evangelical authors argue with much determination that in the New Testament the church is viewed as an organism and not as an organization. Henrichson and Garrison have written:

The Church is not any single institution or organization. It is an organism brought into existence by Jesus Christ. There are examples of the institutional church in the New Testament, but there is no command to institutionalize the church. The church as an organization is descriptive, not prescriptive, in the Bible.⁸

Proponents of the view that the church must be seen as an "organism" argue that their position more accurately represents the view of the New Testament. They feel that the organizational model of the church is a model that has been imposed on the church from non-Biblical sources.

This insight into the nature of the organism-organization debate is instructive as one reads the recent literature which pours from denominational publishing houses. It is easy to note that one type of literature emphasizes the need to apply modern managerial and business administration models to the church. The authors of these materials assume that congregations are organizations, and as organizations they need to be managed using the best management and organizational principles available.⁹

On the other hand there are authors whose books emphasize that the local congregations are the body of Christ. As the body of Christ the local congregations are organisms rather than organizations.¹⁰ Authors who employ the organism model rather than the organization model tend to be much more emphatic about the important role lay ministers play in the life of the organism. Clergymen in this model of the church are facilitators and equippers and are not set apart from lay persons. Authors who emphasize that the local congregation is an organization assign the clergyman roles such as manager, technician and motivator.

There are three logical resolutions to the organization-organism debate. These resolutions are:

1. The church is an organism.
2. The church is an organization.
3. The church is both an organism and an organization.

Granted, the option chosen will affect how one goes about carrying out ministry, yet it is probably accurate to say that no matter which option is selected, the people of God who are laity will be encouraged in greater or lesser degrees and in varying settings to do ministry in God's Vineyard.

Qualities Laymen Should Cultivate

In order for laity to be enabled to respond to the possibilities that are all around them to speak and live out the Word of God in every aspect of their lives in God's Vineyard, through the Spirit's power they must have assimilated into their beings three major qualities.

First of all, laity must have come to the point where they accept the idea that their Christian life and piety is not limited to what they do in their churches and in their homes. Laity need to accept that their Christian faith applies to all the aspects of their lives.

Observations about the present business climate in respect to the cutthroat competition that is present both in the United States and abroad as well as the power of the multi-national corporations and the constant merging of large companies suggest that the work-a-day world is in constant flux. The dishonesty of some business and labor leaders, the equivocation of politicians, and the day to day stress of keeping up with the competition can cause the most honest people, the people who are most sensitive about the ethical dimensions of life and the people who recognize that we cannot build eternal kingdoms here on earth, to withdraw from the heat of battle in the board rooms, in collective bargaining situations and in hammering out compromises with political leaders.

Edmond Burke once said: "For evil to triumph, it is only necessary for good men to do nothing." It is precisely in these difficult situations that the message of God's law and God's gospel are the most relevant. It is imperative that the teachings of the Law be used as a measure over against which to evaluate actions, decisions and policy. At the same time the gracious powers of the Gospel are available to forgive, to strengthen, to accept ordinary, sinful, bewildered, depressed men and women so that they can function on His behalf in the world.

It is a mistake both in terms of theology and in terms of effective strategy to suggest that good Christian people should gravitate to occupations in

which they basically serve and care for people and do not have to taint their fingers with the dirty work of the world. Although persons are needed for the service occupations, just because individuals serve as teachers, nurses, pastors or social workers does not mean that they are functioning in more God-pleasing occupations. In fact, Jesus once warned: "He who seeketh to save his life shall lose it." God needs workers in every part of His vineyard, not just "nice places" in that vineyard.¹¹

Secondly, laity have to be willing to think through how the gospel of Jesus Christ interfaces with their jobs, occupations and professions. This means that clergy probably cannot provide a theology for laity who are doctors or social workers or agronomists or any other vocation because clergy do not have all the facts about the ins and outs of these vocations. Clergy can be most helpful as they assist laity to "do theology" so that laity can make informed theological, ethical and moral judgments in their day to day activities.

As one contemplates lay people doing theology it is instructive to listen carefully to how individuals apply to words of the great commission as it is recorded in Matthew 28:18-20. Most people emphasize the words "make disciples of all nations baptizing them." Certainly these are important words, and God fearing people will want to respond obediently to them in whatever calling they find themselves. However, the familiar words quoted above from Matthew 28:19 are printed between two additional statements of God which are equally important and to which Christian people will want to respond obediently.

The first statement is that "all authority in heaven and earth has been given" to Jesus (Matt. 28:18) and the second command is that converts are to "observe all that I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:20)

The words of the 18th and 20th verses are important contextual material which must be employed to understand the implications of the words of the 19th verse. Jesus, the speaker of these words, is the Lord of lords who is in total and complete control of all that exists in heaven and earth. That truth suggests that we ignore him at our own peril and loss. Once people have been baptized, this Lord directs us to teach the converts to respond to all that Jesus has commanded His disciples to do while He was with them. That includes not only what Jesus had taught about personal religion, but also what Jesus taught about interpersonal, economic and ethical concerns.

Jesus' commission clearly directs all His disciples to honor what He had commanded. That honoring will come about as people live out their lives using God's directives as their guidelines for pursuing the sanctified life.¹²

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Since Jesus did not limit His teaching to the relatively narrow concepts of "personal religion" or "churchy religion," our concept of lay ministry will need to embrace not only proclamation evangelism (the gospel said from the pulpits and lecterns or in the Sunday school or Bible class classrooms), or persuasion evangelism (the gospel spoken to individuals on a one to one basis in homes, offices and shops) but also presence evangelism (the gospel imperative lived out in the day to day activities of peoples' lives as they make decisions, set policy and spend their income). It is through all these means that Christians teach people to observe all that Jesus commanded His people to do.

In order for lay Christians to be assisted in carrying out their ministry it is obvious that most adult Christians need more opportunities to experience Christian education and Christian fellowship. However, even in the best of circumstances the adult educational process is less than perfect in Christian churches. What is more, Christian education is perceived as a leisure time activity. On the job training is assumed by most companies and corporations. It is usually company policy to invest in advanced training for personnel, especially management personnel. Since Christian education is perceived by most people in the church as a leisure time activity, it should come as no surprise that children, women who are not employed outside the home and retired people constitute a high percentage of the individuals who participate in Christian education programs offered in local parishes. The men and women who are making and carrying out policies are not as likely to be involved. This fact of life has serious implications for the church and for the people who cannot or do not choose to be involved in traditional settings in which adult Christian education is offered.

Thirdly, Christian laity have to be willing to really look at themselves and what they are doing. Are they really different from other people who work for their corporations, teach in their schools, or draft legislation in legislative bodies of which they are a part who do not claim to be Christians? Christian laity must be willing to make an honest analysis of their situations and then commit themselves to any changes deemed necessary because of the data supplied to them in their analysis.¹³

The New Testament Christian is called to fulfill many functions or tasks over against people who love God or those who reject God. "We are called as God's people to celebrate God's mighty deeds, to grow in grace as individuals and as communities, to be model communities to the world, to bear one another's burdens, to pray, to heal bodies, to comfort the bereaved,"¹⁴ to carry out justice, feed the hungry, visit those in prison, clothe the naked, honor

government, pay taxes, function as neighbors to all manners of people, etc.

It is obvious that as single individuals we cannot practically carry out all these and the many other directives we are given in the New Testament literature. Therefore, it is a great comfort to know that the Holy Spirit has endowed His people with all the necessary gifts and abilities that are needed to carry out the total work of ministry that needs to be done in God's entire vineyard.

Christians who have been called to the vocations as construction workers, corporation leaders, labor union organizers, politicians, sanitation engineers, machinists, assembly line workers, farmers and appliance repairmen have also been given gifts by the Spirit to edify fellow believers and serve as the evangelists for those who do not yet know Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.

The Layman to Layman Ministry

A very important function that lay people can perform very helpfully is to meet one another's needs. The New Testament uses the word normally translated with the English words "one another" 58 times. Christian people are directed to love one another, be devoted to one another, encourage one another, serve one another, accept one another, admonish one another, bear one another's burdens and care for one another.

This emphasis on Christian concern and care should be the logical development which can be expected once people are evangelized, are taught the Christian faith and are made disciples. However, one of the most frequent complaints heard in churches is the lament that individual Christians do not experience the love, care and concern they expected to feel within the Christian congregation.

This ministry of meeting the fellow Christian's needs is not the responsibility or the special burden of the pastor or the elders of a congregation. This ministry is the responsibility of all Christians. Frustration of lay persons' expectations that their unique needs will be met by a given congregation is one of the many items which church dropouts identify as significant factors for causing them to become disillusioned with their former parish.¹⁵ Therefore, the organized church desperately needs people with the ability to minister to potential dropouts and thereby function as very effective workers in that part of God's vineyard which we call the institutional church.

It is imperative that Christians recognize that the contributions that lay Christians make are not limited to the more traditional roles such as teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir and serving as an usher. The ideas contained in books like *Tools for Active Christians*,¹⁶ *Lay Shepherding*,¹⁷ *The Whole*

Lay Ministry Catalog,¹⁸ and *Comprehensive Pastoral Ministry*¹⁹ make some helpful suggestions about how laity can be involved in vital ministry relationships with fellow members.

The Potential of Using Laymen's Gifts

One of the most powerful forces that has assisted lay persons to evaluate their potential for ministry and has enhanced the ministry of the laity in recent years has been the growing awareness of the Biblical materials concerning the gifts of the Spirit, sometimes called spiritual gifts. Even though mainstream Protestantism has been cautious to avoid what they perceive to be the extremes of the Pentecostal movement, Protestant churches have been made more and more inclined to apply the Biblical witness concerning the gifts that the Holy Spirit provides to the Church to the ongoing need to clarify the ministry of the laity. In some ways the recent emphasis on helping lay persons identify their gifts and providing means through which those spiritual gifts can be used in the service of local congregations and in mission to the unchurched in the community has provided a specific methodology to carry out what writers such as Hendrik Kramer and Elton Trueblood offered in theory almost 20 years ago.²⁰

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Trenton, Michigan, is an LC-MS congregation that has made positive use of the gifts of the Spirit concept. After members designated the five highest congregational priorities as worship, Christian education, discipline, fellowship, and evangelism and the 15 specific spiritual gifts they wanted to emphasize, they developed an 85 statement questionnaire to assist in the identification of the spiritual gifts of members.

The congregation has also prepared a "Development and Use Form" which lists more than 200 ways for people to use their gifts in the life of the church. According to the content of an article printed in *Leadership* the program is very successful in meeting the priorities of the congregation.²¹

It is evident in reading this account of the St. Paul situation that the congregation's program was structured to meet the five specific priorities the congregation identified for itself. The gifts identified and the 200+ service areas in which members may volunteer to serve support the priorities of the congregation. Obviously congregations may choose to identify other priorities, additional spiritual gifts and different areas of service to emphasize, but it is crucial that this preliminary work be done carefully prior to initiating this kind of program in a parish to enhance lay ministry. The leaders of St. Paul Lutheran Church designed their program to meet the needs of St. Paul Lutheran Church. As a result it

would be a mistake to impose this congregation's program on another congregation.

In Conclusion

The answer to the question asked by the editorial committee, "Can the Laity Be Effective Workers in God's Vineyard?" may be answered with a resounding "Yes!" The Biblical witness clearly attests to the truth that laity and clergy alike are called through their baptism to become part of the people of God. Since all of God's people are set aside for ministry, the critical issues become:

1. How shall God's people, the laity, be assisted to determine what gifts the Holy Spirit has given them?

2. How shall God's people, the laity, be enabled to do the ministries to which they have been called and gifted?

3. How shall the clergy assist God's people, the laity, to "do theology" so they might carry out their ministries effectively? and

4. In what areas of life, church and/or world should God's people, the laity, carry out their ministries?

The ideas and considerations prescribed above have suggested some possible alternatives for answering these questions. Hopefully, the content of this article will stimulate many meaningful discussions in parishes throughout the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Footnotes

¹Thomas W. Gillespie, "The Laity in Biblical Perspective," *Theology Today*, 36, 3 (October 1979), p. 316.

²Herman A. Preus, "Luther the Universal Priesthood and the Office of the Ministry," *Concordia Journal*, 5, 2 (March 1979), 55-62.

³Books that provide some helpful theological insights concerning the ministry of the laity include: Feucht, Oscar, *Everyone a Minister*, St. Louis: C.P.H., 1974; Ayres, Francis O. *The Ministry of the Laity: A Biblical Exposition*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962; and Haney, David. *The Idea of the Laity*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

⁴One author has suggested that there is often "an insidious double standard which speaks of clergy having a call to the ministry and other people getting a job." (Brown Zikemund Barber, *Laity Exchange*, No. 3, March 1978).

⁵The comment has been made by leaders in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that the pastoral ministry is an endangered profession. There are many variables which contribute to this perception. The impact of Oscar Feucht's highly popular book, *Everyone a Minister*, is probably a significant factor.

⁶Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton, *God's Frozen People: A Book For and About Christian Laymen*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 23.

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book reviews

ON THE JOB: THE CHRISTIAN 9 TO 5 by Fred Catherwood. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

Sir Fred Catherwood's material was first published in 1962. Subsequently the material has been updated, and this American edition has been revised and edited by Dr. George N. Monsma. Catherwood has served in management positions in various British industries, and he is presently a member of the European Parliament. Catherwood is also involved in numerous Christian organizations.

The content of this book, which addresses such topics as economics, politics, big business, labor unions, inflation, government policies and the stock market, reflects Catherwood's breadth of experience. He cites numerous illustrations from American, British, European, and Japanese industry and government to make his case.

The author assumes that his readers possess some sophistication in respect to topics like economic theories, social contexts, historical development, management principles and labor relations. He traces what he perceives to be cause and effect relationships in business activities, industrial developments, government policies and the international monetary system that go well beyond the kinds of analyses one reads in even the better popular business magazines and newspapers.

No matter what the reader's monetary, industrial, political, labor relations or other ideologies may be, the reader will find his ideologies and the programs and policies which grow out of the ideologies challenged by Catherwood. Throughout the book Catherwood encourages his readers to function as Christians. He offers many words of practical advice to Christians who wish to live their work-a-day lives with integrity and honesty.

It would be fun to sit down and study this book with lay persons who work in leadership positions in management and in labor unions. Significant learnings could happen on the part of the full-time church workers as they listen to the evaluations such people could offer about Catherwood's analysis of their work and his prescription for how Christians might best function as they earn their livelihood.

Alan Harre

LAYMAN, LOOK UP! GOD HAS A PLACE FOR YOU by Walter A. Henrichson and William N. Garrison. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

The authors seem supportive of the premise that the Church is undergoing a second Reformation. They quote approvingly the words of a layman who said, "We are in the midst of a second reformation. The first had to do with getting the scriptures into the hands of the laity. This one has to do with getting the ministry into the hands of the laity." (page 9)

The authors offer an ecclesiology which revolves around a number of major tenets. These assertions include the views that: (1) the Church, or the Body of Christ, is an organism rather than an organization; (2) Jesus Christ will build His Church; (3) there is no Biblical command to God's people that they institutionalize the Church; (4) when Church leaders assume they are to build Christ's Church they frustrate Christ's plan and His timetable; (5) the role of the laity is misunderstood in the life of the Church; and (6) as a result of this misunderstanding, the ministry of the laity is frustrated by the institutionalized Church. The authors divide laity into two groups. The first group is "the sheep" who need to be led because of their spiritual limitations. The second is "the disciples" who stand shoulder to shoulder with the clergy to lead "the sheep."

With this particular ecclesiology as their launching point, the authors describe how God's people are to minister in the world and within the Church. Some may read the content of the book as reflecting anti-institutional and anti-clerical biases. Such a judgment is probably too harsh, yet many pastors and lay leaders will find themselves feeling defensive as they read the book.

If it is indeed true that it can be a profitable intellectual and spiritual exercise to read materials with which one disagrees because such reading assists one to reflect upon and evaluate long-held assumptions and opinions about the nature of things, then this book will have value even to such persons who have strong inclinations to support an institutionalized view of the nature of the Church.

Alan Harre



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⁷Mark Gibbs, *Christians With Secular Power*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 36.

⁸Walter A. Henrichsen and William N. Garrison, *Layman, Look Up! God Has a Place For You*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), p. 11.

⁹Examples of books which emphasize the congregation as an organization and clergy as managers of the organization include: Adams, Arthur Merrihew. *Effective Leadership for Today's Church*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978; Bingham, Robert E. *Traps to Avoid in Good Administration: Practical Counsel Based on Experience for Pastors and Church Staffers*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979; Engstrom, Ted. W. and Edward R. Dayton. *The Art of Management for Christian Leaders*, Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1977; Engstrom, T.W. and Edward R. Dayton. *The Christian Executive*, Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1979; Engstrom, Ted W. and Edward R. Dayton. *Strategy for Leadership*, Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1979; McDonough, Reginald M. *Keys to Effective Motivation*, Nashville: Boardman Press, 1979; Shawchuck, Norman and R. George Sarauskas. *How to be a More Effective Church Leader*, Downers Grove, Ill.: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1981; Shawchuck, Norman and Alvin J. Lindgren. *Let My People Go: Empowering Laity for Ministry*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1980; Shawchuck, Norman and Alvin J. Lindgren, *Management for Your Church*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1977; Worley, Robert C. *Dry Bones Breathe!*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1978.

¹⁰Examples of books which emphasize the congregation as an organism include: Budna, Don and Sarah Ricketts. *Building People*, Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1978; Eller, Vernard, *The Outward Bound: Caravaning as the Style of the Church*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980; Henrichsen, Walter A. and William N. Garrison. *Layman, Look Up!* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983; Richards, Lawrence O. and Clyde Hoeldtke. *A Theology of Church Leadership*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1980; and Wofford, Jerry and Kenneth Kilinski. *Organization and Leadership in the Local Church*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

¹¹Fortress Press is presently publishing a series of books under the title of "Laity Exchange Books." Four books have already been published. Mark Gibbs, who has written in the field of lay

ministry for the last 20 years and is an employee of the Audenshaw Foundation, is the editor for the series and author of one of the four books (*The Christians with Secular Power*, 1981). Other authors are William Diehl, a major sales manager for the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and active LCA layman (*Thank God It's Monday*, 1982). Professor Richard Mouw is an evangelist (*Called to Holy Worldliness*, 1980), and Daniel Jenkins teaches systematic theology at Princeton Seminary (*Christian Maturity and Christian Success*, 1982). Although the author of this article does not necessarily agree with all the emphases of the authors of these books, he believes that the content of the books could provide the necessary stimulus for helpful discussions among lay and clergy people of God to enable all to grow in living the Christian life in the work-a-day world.

¹²Richard J. Mouw, *Called to Holy Worldliness*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980, p. 9.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁵A much more thorough treatise on this matter will be available in *Closing the Back Door*, St. Louis: C.P.H., 1984.

¹⁶Herb Miller, *Tools for Active Christians*, St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1979.

¹⁷Rudolph Grantham, *Lay Shepherding: A Guide for Visiting the Sick, the Aged, the Troubled and the Bereaved*, Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1980.

¹⁸Barbara Kuhn, *The Whole Lay Ministry Catalog*, New York: The Seabury Press, 1979.

¹⁹Samuel Southard, *Comprehensive Pastoral Care: Enabling the Laity to Share in Pastoral Ministry*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1975.

²⁰Howard A. Snyder, "Why the Local Church is Becoming More and Less," *Christianity Today*, 25, 13 (July 17, 1981), 67.

²¹Daniel W. Pawley, "Gifts and Growth: A Case Study," *Leadership: A Practical Journal for Church Leaders*, 3, 1 (Winter 1982), 92-99.