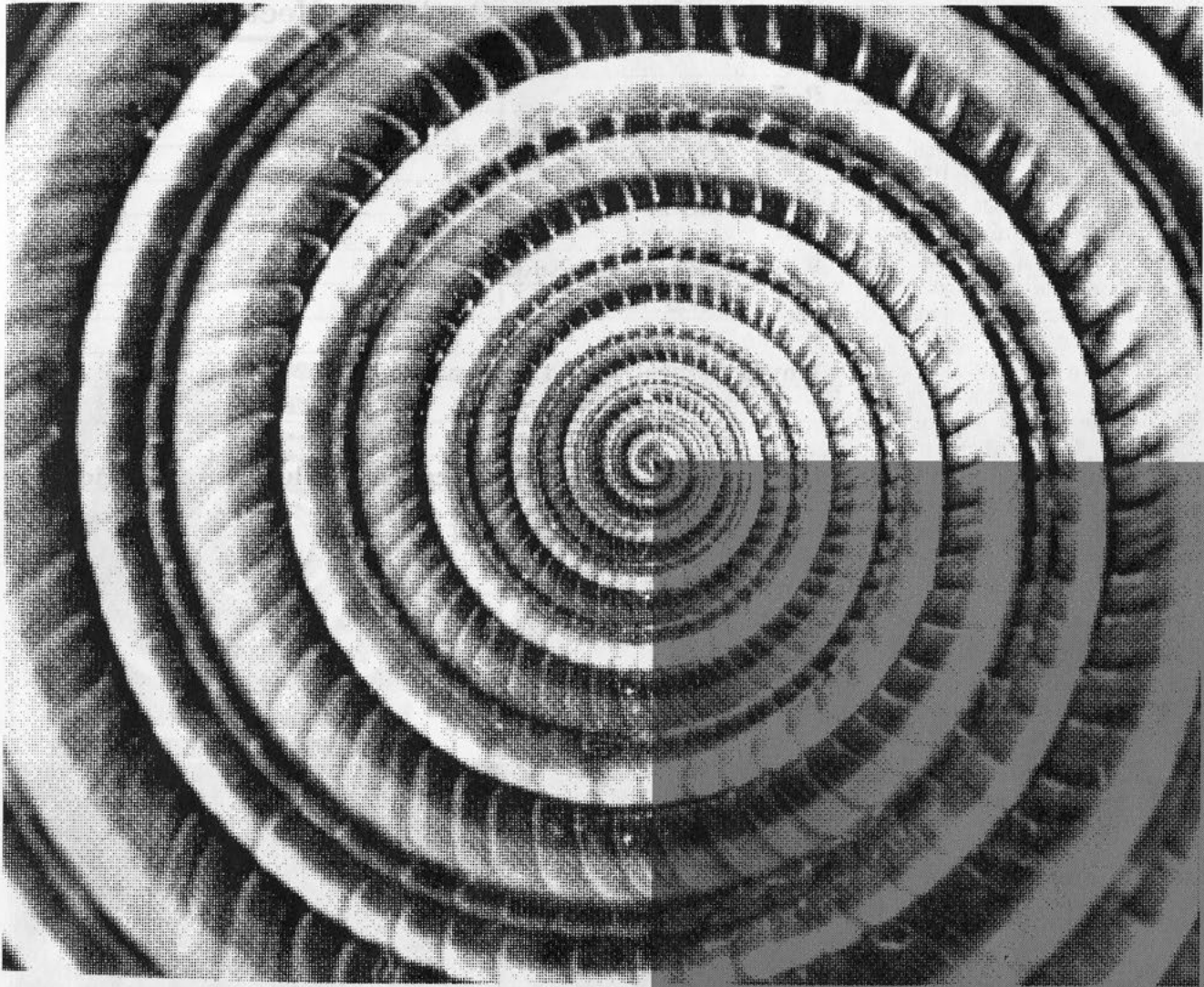


# ISSUES

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Summer 1991

Vol. 25, No. 2



*Continuing Education . . . . .*

**CE**

OPTION **OR** NECESSITY ?

Concordia College  
ARCHIVES  
Seward, Nebraska

# ISSUES

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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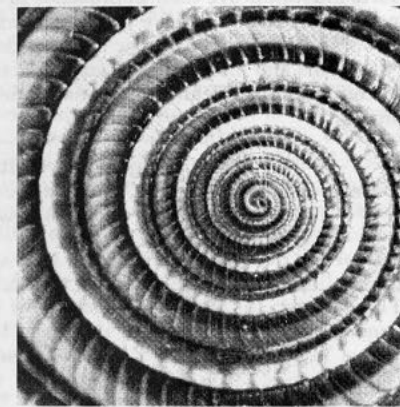
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# CE

## Reflections

**L**IVING IN THE LAST decade of the 20th century is hectic. Everyone seems too busy. There are only 168 hours in a week, and that is too little time in which to accomplish numerous assignments. I am writing this during the last week of a semester at Concordia College. Saturday is graduation day, and during slightly more than 100 hours in this week, my wife and I will be hosting 39 people for dinner in our home on two evenings, hosting 25 colleagues for a conversation and dessert another evening, attending a banquet with over 100 in attendance, attending the Baccalaureate service (complete with pre-service music and a mini A Cappella Choir concert afterward) followed by a reception, participating in graduation exercises (complete with a noon luncheon), attending a wedding, and participating in a brunch honoring a new colleague. All of this will occur outside what some call "normal working hours." Knowing the schedules of many colleagues in ministry, whether serving as DCEs, teachers, pastors, or in other ministries, I believe our 100 hours are rather typical of the kinds of schedules church professionals face today.

In light of such time constraints, dare one suggest the need for continuing education for church professionals? Norbert Oesch, in the second article in this edition, writes:

"To my chagrin I've heard thirty-year veteran teachers braggingly say, 'I teach no differently now than I did five years ago.' For shame! A pastor told me with a smug look on his face, 'When I left the Seminary I closed my books and said, 'That's the last of schooling I'm going to take! And I've kept my promise!' For double shame!"

Who needs continuing education? You do. I do. Every church professional serving Jesus Christ does. Continuing education is one part in the complete stewardship of the Christian's life of service. This edition of *Issues in Christian Education* will help each of us in ministry answer three basic questions: 1) What is continuing education? 2) Why is continuing education important? 3) Is there a blueprint available for continuing education? The question is not if today's caring ministers, whether DCEs, pastors, teachers, or other church professionals, need continuing education. Rather, the question, in the form of a prayer, must be: Lord, with my limited God-given talents, how can I use continuing education to be the most effective servant of Yours, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with redeemed souls?

**Orville C. Walz, President**



## Continuing Education: An Option?

Continuing education generally describes non-traditional educational opportunities. Its definition can include programs leading to academic credit and degrees, but more commonly, continuing education refers to in-service or individual interest programs yielding participation and completion certificates.

While some may debate formal continuing education as necessary beyond a certain level of certification, lifelong learning is not an option for Christians and is certainly not for Christian educators. Christian faith either grows and is expressed in Christian living, or it stagnates and dies. The notion that education and learning can cease legitimately at some age level or with a terminal degree is a false conclusion. No evidence supports this commonly accepted assumption. The very opposite evidence has resulted from research in developmental psychology and adult education. My observations of teachers, DCEs, and pastors during the past 37 years indicate a direct correlation between active, personal growth efforts, personal mental health, and fruitful professional ministry. A great temptation facing aging professional workers is bitterness and despair. Distressingly sad to observe are mature professionals in public or parochial settings who have lost their enthusiasm and been beaten down and defeated. Involvement in stimulating, renewing, lifelong learning activities provides growth, flexibility, adaptability, and support. Every professional educator, I believe, must have a personal plan of self-development. Such plans are especially true for Christian educators who are, above all, role models. They must engage in increasingly active and meaningful interaction with God's Word.

I think every Christian educator must develop and implement a plan of professional knowledge-base expansion, and, finally, every Christian educator must improve regularly leadership and teaching skills to become better teachers and leaders. Christian educators must continue to practice enlightened content delivery and application.

Responsibility for continuing education must be shared by local institutions. Each school, congregation, or association must accept responsibility for developing a coordinated, mission-driven staff development effort. The local unit is responsible for applying effectively the Word of God in specific locations. I am increasingly skeptical of "one size fits all" programs. Such packages purport to give universal answers for universal problems. Schools and congregations must adapt their approaches or stagnate and die. If schools or congregations have not discovered anything new and meaningful about what to teach, then, I believe, they have failed to be faithful to their opportunities. Continuing education must be characterized by dialogue among all agents, including the very experienced and

the beginner. The most experienced practitioners must interact and work with the beginning church professionals. Older students and younger students must work together in the schools, and older, experienced congregational members and new members must interact and help each other. The community of believers in local situations must adapt to meet current challenges.

A major obstacle of continuing education in all educational contexts is the increasing lack of practitioner confidence in higher education in-service offerings. Teachers, pastors, and DCEs lack confidence that out-of-the-field professionals can help them. Credibility can be re-established only through interaction among field practitioners and higher education and church leaders. We must develop cooperative programs with schools and congregations. Leaders in continuing education efforts must improve their approaches to continuing education. I believe they must look to field practitioners to discover adapted delivery systems and interaction areas for promoting continuous staff and institutional development.

**Eugene M. Oetting**  
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## Continuing Education in Perspective

Do professional church workers develop at the seminary or college/university all the requisite skills and knowledge needed to serve God's people effectively for a lifetime? The emerging answer to this question is "No!" As a result, professional church workers have more and more frequently sought out continuing education workshops, conferences, and seminars, as well as formal academic courses, in order to acquire or enhance new knowledge and skills applicable to their current ministry. The need for lifelong learning is not only grounded in the very nature of being a professional, but is also required of a church worker living in an information-change society.

A number of issues result from this recent development in the life of the church workers. First, motivational research has identified the reasons for workers attending continuing education events. The foremost reason is to enhance their professional skills. This reason is interpreted to mean that participants perceive a need to build upon or create new levels of skills to assist them in their current ministry. For example, pastors often attend events that assist them with their responsibilities such as preaching, counseling, teaching, and administration. Furthermore, motivation for

attending assumes application will be made to the personal context of the participant.

The second issue is that of quality continuing education programs. Quality is a somewhat ambiguous categorization which more often relates to individual feelings of benefit than to the actual content of the programs offered. The question is really: "Quality in what sense?" The criteria for making the judgment stem from at least three sources: the provider/institution/organization, the participant, and the beneficiary. It is not simply whether participants liked or disliked the program, or whether the participants were excited to action or bored with the topic. The quality issue is much more complex than a "happiness index" administered at the final meeting of the participants and then faithfully analyzed by the program committee. Quality often becomes in reality individualized judgments on the value a program has for that participant's perceived need.

A third issue is the trend toward requiring all professional church workers to attend continuing education events. The recognition of fulfilling that requirement is the award of continuing education units (CEU). What are the implications of mandatory CEUs? A set of questions requiring more discussion include: "What types of events are appropriate and fulfill the requirement?" "What type of participation is most beneficial for the learner: mandatory or voluntary?" "How will mandatory events be funded?" "What criteria will be used to validate the fulfilling of requirements?" "What events constitute the type of mandatory learning required of professional workers?" "Who will provide such events?"

The fourth issue is of increasing importance; namely, the funding of continuing education. This issue is critical because one identified barrier to participation is the cost of continuing education programs. At least three sources of funding are available for continuing education: participants, provider, and third sources to include grants and those who are beneficiaries of the new knowledge or skills developed through a program of continuing education. Funding also involves the pricing of events. A correlation exists relative to funding which is of significance for event planning: price high and assume low attendance; price low and assume high attendance. While not always a valid correlation, this guidance generally is assumed when programs are planned.

The fifth issue is the type of educational delivery method to be used for continuing education programs. New information about learning, the use of learning and teaching styles, and the new concepts of processing learning are all considerations required when planning continuing education events. At the core, however, is the issue of how adults learn. This is an emerging field within education and provides exciting alternative ways to deliver and package information for consumption by the potential adult learner.

The final issue of importance to the church

is the definition of what is continuing education for the professional church worker. In the broadest sense continuing education has been defined as any new learning acquired after post-secondary education. A sub-set of continuing education is continuing professional education; for example, continuing medical education or continuing legal education. It may be helpful to define continuing education within the church more narrowly as continuing theological education (CTE). As yet no definition of what is and what is not CTE exists, except to say that events under the sponsorship or in the context of or offered by the church are generally considered CTE. Clearly, LCMS professional church workers require unique programs that are confessionally and Scripturally grounded.

In conclusion, continuing education already is taking place to a large extent among our church professionals. It is based often on the needs of the individual workers, offered by a variety of providers, and varies in quality and quantity.

**Arthur D. Bacon**  
Director of Continuing Education and  
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## Continuing Education: For Everyone?

Continuing education is not for everyone. It is only for those who are aware of the increased ministry demands placed upon them, who take seriously their responsibility to serve faithfully and effectively, and who desire to develop and strengthen the gifts God has given them. I would hope that those reading *Issues in Christian Education* are in the latter group. Not to be involved in an intentional program of continuing education is to invite frustration and, perhaps, incompetence into one's professional and personal life.

What is continuing education? Most church professionals define continuing education too narrowly. It is often seen as a purely academic endeavor directed at a specific task. While this dimension of growth is an important part of continuing education, more is involved. Continuing education engages the spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical dimensions of one's life, as well as the intellectual. Continuing education is a dynamic process of growth and enrichment. Broadly defined, continuing education is continuing growth. Growth is essential, particularly for those who have committed themselves to being growth agents in the lives of children, youth, and adults.

Personal growth in the areas of our spiritual, emotional, and relational life is essential. "Professional" church work can be hazardous to each of these dimensions of one's life. We so easily can become Scriptural "technicians" as we prepare lessons and sermons that the living Word does not touch us personally. We can identify our role so closely with our identity that the heart and soul of who we are as God's children becomes clouded. We so easily can associate our need for significance with our work that we ignore those in our family whom we impact as powerfully as those in the congregation or school. Continuing education and growth include intentionally seeking and finding the experiences, discipline, and opportunities which will enhance our spiritual, emotional, and relational health.

Closely related, but often neglected, is continuing education in the area of physical health. Granted, we are earthen vessels into which the riches and beauty of God's grace and power have been poured. However, this doesn't mean that we should neglect the vessel. Vessels need care. Little good can be drawn from a vessel that is fractured, spilled, or bone dry. Continuing education and growth include intentionally seeking information about the proper care and feeding of the temple of the Holy Spirit and acting positively on it.

Finally, continuing education and growth, though not a means of grace, is a means through which we more effectively and faithfully can carry out the ministry we have been called or contracted to do. I believe we have a responsibility to give to our people the very best that we can. Would we expect less from a doctor, accountant, mechanic, or salesperson we engaged for a specific purpose? Continuing education and growth should focus also on increasing our ability to equip people, under the Spirit's blessing, to love and serve God and one another. The carrying out of this task has implications in curriculum development, pastoral care, parish administration, community building, communicating law/Gospel in ways that pointedly and clearly speak to people's needs, and a host of other areas of church life. We dare not assume that we will be equipped for our ministries simply by virtue of the training and good intentions we had when we began. Rather, let us continually be aware of areas of needed growth in our own lives and in the lives of our people. Then let us seek ways to maximize that growth in such a manner that God will be praised, His people served, and our lives enriched.

**William B. Knippa, Ph.D., Pastor**  
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Growth and Support of the LCMS

# What is Continuing Education?



David Zersen

**A**DULTS HAVE ALWAYS been lifelong learners! The challenges facing parenting, working, and aging individuals continually require new insights, skills and knowledge. However, the pace of social and technological change within the last decades has been so rapid that normal coping and adapting techniques, whether acquired through formal or informal learning experiences, make it increasingly difficult for adults to maintain their needed competencies. As the following graph shows, it is not useful for education merely to transmit what is known, because rapid change quickly makes some aspects of past knowledge obsolete.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, "continuing education" (CE) has arisen not only to provide ongoing learning opportunities for maturing men and women in a rapidly changing world, but it has developed a discipline of its own with appropriate philosophy and methodology.

## Continuing Education Revolution

Millions of adults now attend classes provided by schools, employers, churches, high schools and colleges, hospitals, social service agencies, and private entrepreneurs. Many of the growth experiences are credit free, but the College Board says that six million, or 45 percent of all the students studying for credit in United States colleges and universities, are adults 25 years of age or older. This figure jumped 79 percent within the 15 years from 1969-1984, and within a few years the adult students will be in the majority in institutions of higher learning.<sup>2</sup> These startling figures represent a revolution in U. S. society. Never before have so many adults been involved in so many formal and informal ways to equip themselves for present and future challenges.

The reasons this educational explosion has taken place are three-fold. The "baby bust" of the previous decade has provided a shrinking pool of high school graduates. Schools of higher learning, therefore, must now count on the over-25 set to fill lecture halls and coffers. Additionally, the shift toward industrial and advanced technology removed jobs for common laborers, making continuing education an attractive option for those needing to

upgrade or retool their skills. Finally, the growing numbers of early retirees blessed with longevity and affluence in U. S. society see continuing education as a means to provide long-delayed self-fulfillment.

## Changed Learning Styles

The challenges of the new, rapidly changing society along with the needs of an adult clientele have changed higher education as well. Seventy percent of those adults who study for credit also work full time.<sup>3</sup> This means that adult students cannot be expected to fit molds used for traditional students. They will be available for learning experiences only at certain times, and they will expect concessions from educational delivery systems in the way of flexible schedules, longer business and book store hours, on-site day care, and more aggressive job counseling. Most interestingly, given who they are and what they have experienced, they will expect a different kind of education with less emphasis on instructor input and more opportunities for self-directed learning.

## Obsolescent Professionals

Such observations about adults and continuing education within the United States have implications for the professional church workers in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Perhaps not so self-understood is the fact that these workers are also adults who profit better from educational delivery systems tailored for their unique needs and experiences. The changing social structure in U. S. society has placed great demands on individuals and families with which pastors, teachers and DCEs may not have been trained to cope. After all, colleges and seminaries provide, at best, an entry-level training for various aspects of ministry, and over the course of a 40-year ministry, changes take place which no one could have envisioned during one's undergraduate or pre-professional years. One scholar believes that a professional's need for continuing education results from two kinds of obsolescence—rustiness resulting from lack of use of professional knowledge, and failure to keep up with new developments. Without continuing education, he says, a professional's half-life may be only six or seven years, which means that within seven years after completing initial professional training, a professional's competency will decrease by one-half if that individual has not taken any continuing education.<sup>4</sup>

## Need for LCMS Worker Continuing Education

Professional workers in the LCMS may challenge the applicability of such statistics in a ministerial profession established on unchanging truths. Occasional grumbling comes from those who fear that MCE (mandatory continuing education) may deprive ministers of some entitled freedom. However, a recent survey conducted

with a random sampling of synodical pastors says that 62.5 percent of pastors believe that "the LCMS should require its ministers to do a certain amount of continuing education each year" (No available statistics for teachers who, for purposes of certification, have traditionally done much more than pastors).<sup>5</sup> Objections to continuing education among ministers (whether teacher, DCE, or pastor), on the other hand, probably should not be raised too loudly within Lutheran circles when one considers the *kataphatic*<sup>6</sup> heritage on which Lutherans build and when one thinks of the continuing education modeling of some of our spiritual ancestors. It would, in fact, be good to review some of that tradition as a basis for sharpening the focus on the place of continuing education among LCMS professional church workers today.

## Lutherans as Learners

It is interesting to imagine what support for ongoing growth among church workers might look like if the Lutheran tradition had been more *apophatic*. Questions about the place of secular knowledge or intellectual pursuits generally have been raised by representatives of mystical or *sola fide* traditions from Thomas Muntzer to Tertullian with his famous "What is there in common between the philosopher and the Christian?"<sup>7</sup> Despite strong misgivings about reliance on the human mind in spiritual matters, however, the tradition upon which Lutheranism has built most strongly has prized competency in such cerebral activities as exegesis, philology, and catechesis.

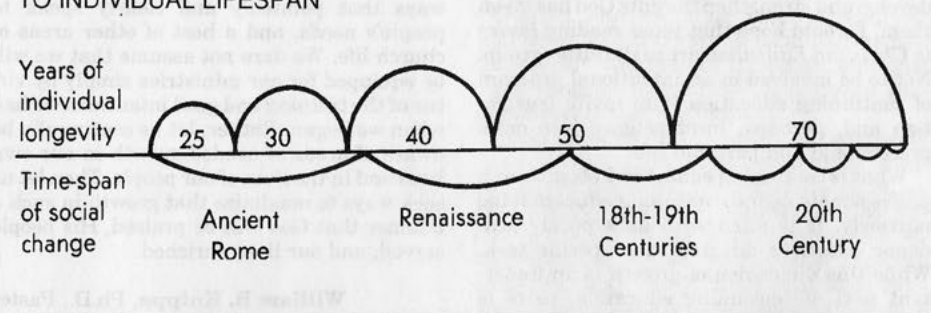
Such a tradition also prizes Jesus of Nazareth, the mentor who provided ongoing growth for a traveling band of disciples and the teacher who challenged people's minds with his regular "You have heard. . . but I say." It appreciates Paul who in addition to his visions used his scholar's knowledge of the Old Testament and the Greek world to fashion to his contemporaries a profound appeal rooted in the Incarnation. It heralds Augustine whose conviction was "to grasp the truth, not by belief alone, but also by understanding."<sup>8</sup> And it cherishes Luther who respected not only his inner call, but also his doctorate:

"I would not take all the world's goods for my doctorate, for if I did not have this great, heavy responsibility which rests upon me, I would surely be driven to despair and to doubt whether I had not begun this cause without call or command, like a sneak preacher. But now God and all the world must bear witness that I began publicly, in possession of my doctorate and my preaching office, and that I was led to it by God's grace and help."<sup>9</sup>

## Luther's Continuing Education

With this kind of appreciation for the gift of mind and all that the mind can produce, Christians should not readily abandon ongoing learning even when formal

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE TIME-SPAN OF SOCIAL CHANGE TO INDIVIDUAL LIFESPAN



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entry-level study is complete. Although the phrase "continuing education" was never used in previous generations, the Lutheran record of commitment to lifelong learning has been an impressive one. Luther himself, after he had received his doctorate in 1512, taught himself Hebrew with the use of Reuchlin's grammar as he lectured on the Psalms from 1513-15 (the first months he used only the Latin text); and in 1519, using Melancthon as tutor, he first learned how to write the Greek alphabet so he could improve his competence in Greek exegesis.<sup>10</sup>

### Early Lutheran Continuing Education

Luther's modeling gave rise to some fascinating episodes in early Lutheran continuing education. Consider those first pastors in the process of becoming Lutheran in Ernestine Saxony. Most of those who were later to call themselves pastors were former Roman Catholic clerics, many of whom had little theological understanding and only rudimentary concerns for pastoral care. Although many had received some university training (in their early teens) without having graduated, gradual improvement resulted only from the "church's insistence that clerics study regularly throughout their careers, increase their knowledge (and live morally)."<sup>11</sup> To help equip them to be preachers and teachers of the new faith, Luther prepared a number of in-service training works. Robert Rosin recognizes them as "16th century alternative and continuing education."<sup>12</sup> In 1528, "The Visitor's Instructions to the Pastors in Electoral Saxony" offered expositions of doctrinal matters as well as items of pastoral care. In addition, Luther's postils explained the texts from the gospels and epistles. The publication of the *Large and Small Catechisms* in 1529 provided more help for the maturing pastors. This well-known challenge from the preface to the *Large Catechism* makes clear the seriousness with which Luther took lifelong learning:

"Therefore, I once again implore all Christians, especially pastors and preachers, not to try to be doctors prematurely and to imagine that they know everything. Let them continue to read and teach, to learn and meditate and ponder. Let them never stop until they have proved by experience that they have taught the devil to death and have become wiser than God himself and all his saints."<sup>13</sup>

Such valuing of the intellect and its place in increasing professional competency can be identified again and again in the Lutheran church's history. Three other examples will suffice to make the point. Martin Chemnitz regularly gathered large numbers of pastors in Braunschweig from 1554-1585 to explore a variety of doctrinal and pastoral topics in a remarkable early form of in-service training.<sup>14</sup> When in 1855 the editor of *Der Lutheraner* heralded the soon-to-be-published *Lehre und Wehre*, theological journal of the eight-year-old

Missouri Synod, he made it clear that the publication was not only to report what was happening in the church in the various homelands of the emigrants, but attention would be given to the needs of contemporary preachers, to the struggling pastoral counselor, and to the students looking for recommendations of classic and current books for their library.<sup>15</sup> Ten years later, the sister publication for teachers, the *Evangelische-Lutherisches Schulblatt*, introduced itself to readers who needed "daily to learn, to master more completely the subjects, to become wiser in handling them, and to study more resolutely the ways of children and their actions." "Only a fluffoff," trumpeted the *Schulblatt*, "a belly server, a conceited dude ('ein eitler Geck'), with no inkling of his incompetence, is satisfied with his performance!"<sup>16</sup>

### Understanding Who Learners Are and How They Learn

Inspired by such a witness to lifelong learning (limited as it often was to the cognitive realm), it would be helpful to attempt to define continuing education within the context of contemporary worker needs, to clarify the theological rationale for having the church develop learning experiences, and to provide a listing of growth areas and methods appropriate for use among professional church workers in the 1990's. The focus, in this discussion, will be placed on the individual or group responsible for developing programs in conferences, districts, and institutions. In order to develop a definition of continuing education, it is appropriate to begin with a discussion of who adult learners are and how they learn. Such a discussion is necessary in order to identify the proper content and form for an adult learning setting.

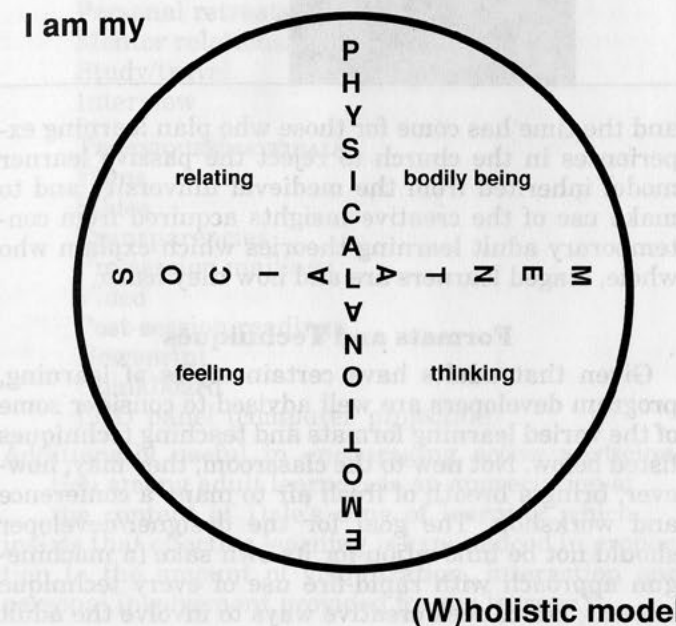
### Wholistic Learners

Adult learners are whole people who are in process. The implications of this statement for a discussion about content in adult learning settings are significant. Two parts of this discussion are first, wholism; and second, stages of development.

The strongly *kataphatic* nature of the Lutheran tradition encourages one to define continuing education as a largely intellectual process. Some scholarship has challenged this perception by reminding ministers that Hebrew and early Christian concepts regarded a person as an indivisible whole. Gary Harbaugh, for example, says that "while a person may be addressed in terms of body, mind, emotions, or in a variety of other ways, when God or the believing community speaks, the appropriate response is that of the whole person with. . . heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:29ff)."<sup>17</sup> Harbaugh's wholistic model shows four personal dimensions (physical, social, mental, and emotional), all centered in the letter "L" (symbolic of the Hebrew "El" for God). His contention is that while no specific spiritual dimension of the person is identified, "there is a God-

question implicit in every experience of the minister as a bodily, thinking and feeling person, and a God-question implicit in every interpersonal encounter as well."<sup>18</sup>

### A Biblical Model of Wholeness



Continuing education for those ministering in Christian settings is, therefore, surely not merely a matter of a cerebral exploration of theological abstractions. Given the physical, social, and emotional dimensions of the minister, a discussion of homosexuality or women in ministry (to choose two current debates) involves more than a presentation from a dogmatician. Additionally, the problems associated with conflict or poor use of interpersonal skills in the parish (to name two other popular issues) may need analysis from an internist, a theologian, and a psychotherapist. It is always self-understood, in constructing a learning environment around such or other issues, that wholeness recognizes the psychophysical unity of the person as well as relationships with the community (e.g., Jesus telling the lepers to show themselves to the priests—Luke 17:14) integrated by wholehearted love of God (Mark 12:29-31). The fear of some that discussing social/emotional/physical concerns in continuing educational settings for ministers will be somehow superficial is not a theological concern so much as a concern for format. If a growth setting is properly constructed, the "God-questions" cannot help but be raised by ministers in the process of becoming self-directed learners.

### Stages of Growth

The other issue dealing with content at continuing

education events concerns the stage of life in which learners find themselves. Significant studies by Erikson, Kohler, and Fowler are well known and have applications to the range of professional church workers. While there are a number of differences between the growth needs of pastors and teacher/DCEs, the following needs identified for teachers in three stages of development have some mutual application.

In the early years of teaching, growth experiences should provide clear direction and emphasize expectations. Among the needs are a desire to

- know what the experts do,
- learn what to do when,
- find useful examples, anecdotes,
- master technical skills (lesson plans, discipline, teaching strategies),
- have a mentor and
- discuss professional aspirations.

In the middle years, teachers have a desire to

- analyze, explore, clarify teaching styles, methods,
- formulate personal philosophies,
- evaluate career changes (administration, college),
- assess mid-life problems (family, alcohol, etc.) and
- choose between offerings on what and how to learn.

In the later years, teachers have a desire to

- practice self-assessment,
- deal with adult-development issues (guilt, self-worth),
- do retirement planning, stress counseling, and
- pursue non-directive in-service programs.<sup>19</sup>

Important conclusions for program developers from such a review include the need to recognize differences in professionals and the importance of seeing continuing education as a way of increasing professional competence. Often, district presidents tell stories about their reeling at the criticism of some layperson, incensed about a worker's presumed incompetence, who thunders, "Don't they teach them that at the college/seminary?" The answer, of course, has to be that it is not possible to learn everything in pre-professional training. The length of time available, cost factors, and the rapid pace of change in society are certainly involved. However, the insight that a student is not psychosocially prepared to receive all his/her training with a "front-load" approach is crucial. If the LCMS invests annually approximately \$9 million (30 percent of its total budget)<sup>20</sup> in higher education which includes preparation of professional church workers for ordination/certification, one might ask, recognizing the human need to learn in stages, how much should it be prepared to expend for the lifelong learning of professional church workers? The question is not a criticism of existing

# A

Active learners celebrating God's good gift of grace

policy as much as it is a challenge to the church to recognize its larger responsibility for training beyond the entry level—as well as to question what kind of training should be taken when. An important question in pastoral training, for example, not seemingly being addressed by many, is whether courses in parish administration, pastoral practice, educational methods, or crisis counseling are not better taught as required continuing education courses within the first years of practice, when novices must for the first time wrestle with the importance of such areas. Likewise, those responsible for teacher/DCE training may/should be asking which courses (in discipline, learning styles, outcome testing, team ministry, etc.) should become part of a program of in-service training. Important to all such concerns is the issue that in defining continuing education—and in planning content for learning experiences—one needs to consider the implications of adults as whole persons in varied stages of development.

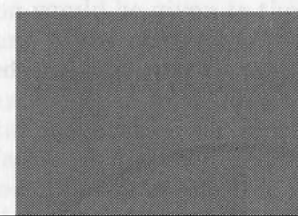
## Adult Learning Styles

Not only must the one planning learning experiences consider who adults are as whole and staged learners, but he/she must understand how they learn. Such understanding is valuable for designing both the content and format for a learning experience. While adults share learning styles with other age groups in a number of respects, research has identified a number of prominent characteristics of adult learners which program developers should keep in mind. Adults, for example,

- learn throughout life,
- learn with diverse styles,
- appreciate problem-centered learning approaches,
- seek immediate application,
- value their past experience,
- have a maturing self-concept and
- are in the process of becoming self-directed learners.<sup>21</sup>

If it is valid to say that they learn with diversity of style, through problem-centered approaches, and with a need to apply learning and to share experiences, then learners should be involved in needs diagnoses, goal formation, and outcome evaluations as learning events are developed. At least as much time needs to be spent discussing how learning outcomes will be assured as is spent determining who will be asked to speak and on what topic. Adult learners need to be able to choose the topic which fits their learning style, to share insights in small, non-threatening group settings, and respond to assignments to prepare for a learning experience and to continue it upon its conclusion. Unfortunately, the learning paradigm most often experienced by adults is that of the dependent learner focusing on a podium hiding half the frame of the one presumed expert in the room! The long-term value of such pedagogy is questionable,

can make "continuing education"



a sign of hope  
in the church.

and the time has come for those who plan learning experiences in the church to reject the passive learner model inherited from the medieval university and to make use of the creative insights acquired from contemporary adult learning theories which explain who whole, staged learners are and how they learn.

## Formats and Techniques

Given that adults have certain styles of learning, program developers are well advised to consider some of the varied learning formats and teaching techniques listed below. Not new to the classroom, they may, however, bring a breath of fresh air to many a conference and workshop. The goal for the designer/developer should not be innovation for its own sake (a machine-gun approach with rapid-fire use of every technique known), but to seek creative ways to involve the adult participant in the learning process. Listed without definition, these formats and techniques are fully explained in resources listed in the endnote.<sup>22</sup>

### FORMATS/TECHNIQUES FOR GROUPS

Seminar  
Clinic  
Workshop  
Forum  
Institute  
Lecture  
Demonstration  
Modular units  
Field trip  
Socratic method  
Value clarification  
Colloquia  
Round table discussion  
Audio/visual cassette  
Telelecture  
Closed circuit conference  
Telephone access  
Computer assisted instruction  
Case study  
Role-playing  
Simulation  
Team teaching  
Project building  
Cooperative learning  
Distance interview

### FORMATS/TECHNIQUES FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

Guided readings  
Home study booklets  
Audio/video sets  
Educational software  
Sabbatical  
Internships  
Personal retreats  
Mentor relationship  
Study/travel  
Interview

### TECHNIQUES/MATERIALS

Films  
Slides  
Transparencies  
Pre-session mailings  
Video  
Post-session readings  
Newsprint  
Chalkboard  
LCD panel (computer projection)

Additionally useful in encouraging active participation among adult learners is an appreciation of the content of Dale's cone of learning which insists that effective learning is experienced in proportion to the amount of visualization, interaction and personal involvement provided for the learner.<sup>23</sup>

## Theological Rationale

In the ongoing attempt of this article to provide the background necessary to define continuing education for adult professional church workers, the context for the discussion (the church) inevitably presses the subject matter beyond lifelong, varied, wholistic, staged learning for adults. There are theological dimensions to the learning of adult professional church workers—and these dimensions broaden the discussion. Within the LCMS Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, continuing education has focused on the three areas of theological growth, ministerial effectiveness, and personal wholeness/wellness.<sup>24</sup> While these three areas correspond well to a typical encyclopedia definition of continuing education (growth in "professional competence, self-fulfillment, and health, welfare and family living"),<sup>25</sup> it is helpful to see what additional contributions to professional church worker continuing education these three terms bring.

## Sanctification

Theologically, continuing education has its locus in the doctrine of sanctification and the doctrine of the public ministry. Theological growth does not consist merely in learning more about a subject. It involves the privilege born in the grace of Baptism of "growing up to the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). Such growing involves the growth of the whole person, the person

whose faith embraces his physical/emotional and social being. Faith nurtured by grace presses the Christian to seek growth and to prize it.

## Ministry

Effective ministry, a concept rooted in the doctrine of the public ministry, implies that continuing education for ministers always involves those to whom one is called in service. There is a place for that learning and growing which is entirely personal (as stated above). Ministers, however, are to be regarded by their parishioners as "servants of Christ" (I Corinthians 4:1).<sup>26</sup> The very word "minister," in its Latin rootage, means "to serve." When, therefore, professional church workers talk about continuing education, they will consider the growth needs of those to whom they minister in order to seek to grow in skills and knowledge which edify them. To want to be effective and competent belongs to the grace of serving well. While newer translations of II Timothy 2:15 no longer use the word "study," the implications for the growth of the professional church worker remain. No Christian servant/steward should want the shame of being ill-equipped when opportunities for growing in effective service abound.

## Wholeness/Wellness

Personal wholeness/wellness is surprisingly often neglected as a growth area by dedicated and effective servants. Putting "me" last can become as non-Biblical as putting "me" first. It is Biblical for ministers to believe that they have as much need to be served as to serve those to whom they are called (St. Francis's Prayer notwithstanding). The symbolism in these words of the Song of Solomon warns the overly zealous servant: "They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept!" (Song of Solomon 1:6, KJV). Jesus' words to "love your neighbor" are to be kept in the context of "as yourself" (Matthew 19:19).

## Defining Continuing Education

With this background it is now possible to attempt to define continuing education for professional church workers. As a personal or professional experience, it is a lifelong process, increasingly self-directed,<sup>27</sup> spurred by the Spirit of God, leading to theological/spiritual growth, effective ministry, and personal wholeness/wellness. As a program of the church, rooted in its *kataphatic* tradition, it is a means to edify professional church workers together with the whole people of God, helping them to grow wholistically according to their needs and varied styles. Through such growth, windows are opened and horizons broadened so that stress can be reduced, competency can be increased, and joy in the ministry can be shared between workers and laity. If continuing education is to bring such blessing, then the passive paradigm of the authoritative podium faced by dependent learners needs to be replaced with active

metaphors like body-building, home building, forging metal, marathon, childbirth, springboard, even playground.<sup>28</sup> Active learners celebrating God's good gift of grace can make "continuing education" a sign of hope in the church.

Twenty-five years ago when continuing education as a discipline was in its infancy, Jesse Ziegler, then president of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), prophesied ominously:

"The one thing that has become crystal clear is that, if the minister is to cut ice in the culture to which he ministers, he must be a continuing learner. At a time when more people are enrolled in adult education programs than in all the colleges and universities, the continuing education of the minister can be ignored only at great peril to his own effectiveness and to the peril of the church."<sup>29</sup>

Twenty-five years later, with the pace of social change intensifying, his words are even more poignant. Set within the context of grace, however, they need not provide a negative ring. Learning and growing are not just necessary. To sinners celebrating their redemption, growth is a privilege. It makes glad the heart!

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, ©1980, p.41. Reprinted by permission of Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

<sup>2</sup>S. Tift, "The over-25 set moves in," *Time*, October 24, 1988, 90.

<sup>3</sup>Tift, 91.

<sup>4</sup>Stanley Grobowski, "Continuing Education in the Professions," *Preparing Educators of Adults*, ed. Stanley Grobowski (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981), 85.

<sup>5</sup>John O'Hara, *1990 Continuing Education Survey* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, December 6, 1960), 5.

<sup>6</sup>Urban T. Holmes, *A History of Christian Spirituality* (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1980), 4. See also Allan Sager, *A Gospel-Centered Spirituality: An Introduction to our Spiritual Journey* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1990). *Kataphatic* (Greek=affirming) refers to approaches of teaching, knowing, meditation, etc., which accept the God revealed in concepts, images, symbols, etc. *Apophatic* (Greek=negating) approaches de-emphasize speculative/cognitive theology in place of simple trust and action.

<sup>7</sup>Tertullian, *Apology*, trans. T. R. Glover (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1931), 205.

<sup>8</sup>Augustine, *Against the Academics*, trans. John O'Meara (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1950), 43.

<sup>9</sup>Martin Luther, *Werke* 30 Zweite Abteilung (Weimar: Hermann Bohlaus, 1909), 640. This letter to the anonymous "N" was not included in the American Edition of Luther's Works. While Luther was actually celebrating the teaching office of his Call, he respected the learning symbolized by the doctorate he had at one time regarded as papistic nonsense.

<sup>10</sup>Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 123.

<sup>11</sup>Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *Luther's Pastors: The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1979), 21.

<sup>12</sup>Robert Rosin, "The Reformation, Humanism and Education: The Wittenberg Model for Reform," *Concordia Journal* 16 (October, 1990), 313.

<sup>13</sup>Martin Luther, preface, "Large Catechism," in Theodore G. Tappert, *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 361.

<sup>14</sup>J.A.O. Preus, telephone interview, 11 April 1991. Every two weeks some two-to-three hundred pastors from the area were required to attend these in-service programs. Sessions could not be adjourned until any issues of disagreement, doctrinal or pastoral, were settled. German records available only in P.J. Rehtmeyer, *History of the Church of Braunschweig*. 4 Vol., 1705.

<sup>15</sup>"Lehre und Wehre," *Der Lutheraner*, 16 January 1855, 86.

<sup>16</sup>J.C.W.L., "Vorwort," *Evangelische-Lutherisches Schulblatt*, September, 1865, 1.

<sup>17</sup>Gary L. Harbaugh, *Pastor as Person* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 19.

<sup>18</sup>Reprinted from *Pastor as Person* by Gary L. Harbaugh, © 1984 Augsburg Publishing House, 20. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.

<sup>19</sup>Judith Christinsen, Peter Burke, Ralph Fessler, and David Hagstrom, *Stages of Teachers' Careers* (Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse, 1983), 7-9.

<sup>20</sup>Michael Stelmachowicz, telephone interview, 11 April 1991.

<sup>21</sup>Knowles, 45-54.

<sup>22</sup>Peter Franz Renner, *The Instructor's Survival Kit: A Handbook for Teachers of Adults*, Second Edition (Vancouver: Training Associates Ltd., 1989). See also Donald H. Brundage and Dorothy MacKreachen, *Adult Learning Principles and their Application to Program Planning* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1980) and Anthony S. Jones, Lawrence W. Bagford and Edward A. Wallen, *Strategies for Teaching* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1979).

<sup>23</sup>Bruce Nyland, rev., from material by Edgar Dale, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1954), 42.

<sup>24</sup>"Growth in Excellence in Ministry" (St. Louis, LCMS Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, May 1990).

<sup>25</sup>"Adult Education," *Encyclopedia Britannica: Micropedia* 1986 edition.

<sup>26</sup>David Scaer, "Sanctification in the Lutheran Confessions," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 53 (July, 1989), 178. Scaer makes the same point with respect to Christians generally.

<sup>27</sup>Barbara Wheeler, "The Educated Preferences and Practices of Talented Ministers: Report on an Exploratory Study," Auburn Theological Seminary, 1984. The study demonstrates that the more talented, sophisticated, learned a minister is, the less likely he/she is to participate in prepared programming and the more likely to be a committed, self-directed learner. Continuing education developers need to remember such individuals by proposing guided readings, independent studies, and other strategies.

<sup>28</sup>Russell F. Proctor II, "Metaphors of Adult Education: Beyond Penance Toward Family," *Adult Education Quarterly* 41 (1991), 68-69.

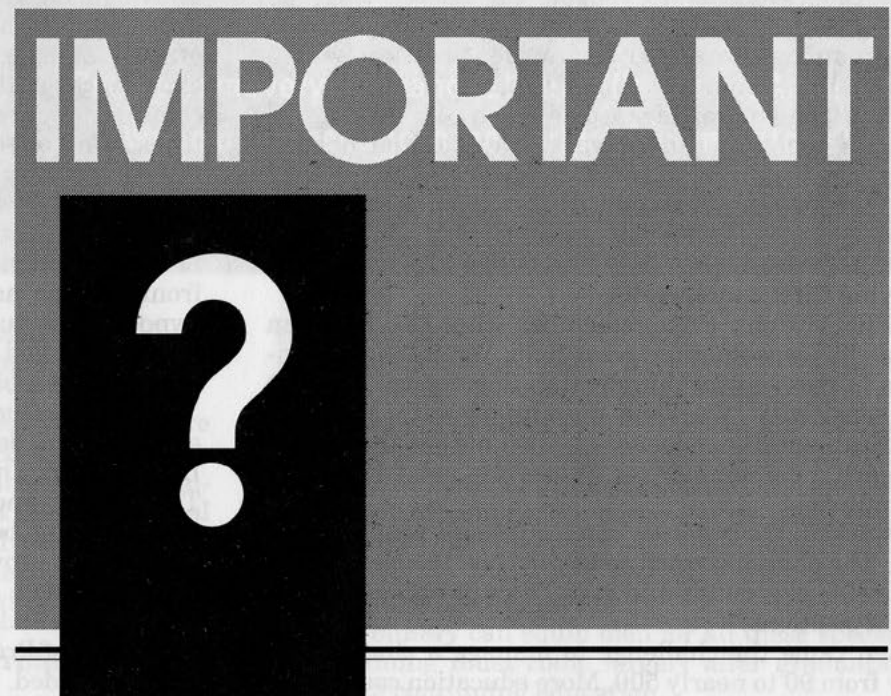
<sup>29</sup>Jesse H. Ziegler, *Journal of Pastoral Care* XX (June 1966), 72.

## WHY IS CONTINUING EDUCATION

*Why is continuing education important? Because I'm not sure one can effectively survive without it!*

**T**he accent of the previous statement is "effectively." Oh, professional workers in the church can survive—indeed maybe too many of them do. Having learned little to nothing new since they graduated, they repeat many times what they did when they first got out. To my chagrin I have heard thirty-year veteran teachers braggingly say, "I teach no differently now than I did five years ago." For shame! A pastor told me with a smug look on his face, "When I left the seminary, I closed my books and said, 'That's the last of schooling I'm going to take!' And I've kept my promise!" For double shame! They are surviving, but are they ministering effectively? And even if they may think they are effective, do they have any knowledge of how much more effective they could be had they made learning a lifelong venture and continuing education the vehicle for such learning? I offer my life-story romance with continuing education as a witness to its necessity. My life has been changing continually. These changes demanded new learning. In this article I will urge each person to develop a carefully thought-out growth plan because of 1) changes in the professional ministry, 2) changes in congregational and individual needs, and 3) changes in the demands on professionals. Continuing education, in my opinion, is mandatory for effective ministry.

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### My Story

Thoughts about continuing education became serious my last year at the seminary. I passionately desired to be a seminary professor some day. "That would require a doctorate," I thought. So I applied for the German equivalent of a Fulbright Scholarship. When I was rejected and a classmate accepted, I was, to put it mildly, upset!

However, "Call Day" arrived, and my assignment was to Texas—San Antonio to be exact. Eager to win the world for Jesus, I set off with bride beside me to the place where quickly the people would recognize the astute mental capacities of their new pastor. I just knew they would appreciate how capable I was, preaching sound doctrinal sermons and developing outstanding Bible lessons based on an exegesis of Greek and Hebrew texts.

However, when the Chairman of the Board of Elders one month after my ordination asked when our meeting would be and wondered what we would do in it, I could only wonder the same thing. When the Sunday school teachers asked for training in disciplining the children and planning a lesson to hold their attention, a creeping

realization came over me: "Maybe I didn't learn at the seminary everything one needs to know." When a sister congregation closed and asked to merge with us and brought twenty families of different ethnic origin with them (I had been told, and I believed it, all Hispanics were Catholics), I knew I was in trouble.

Crash. Oh, not crash like in "bail out" or "die," but crash as in "crash course." I knew I needed help. I clamored for it. I scrambled. Seminars. Workshops. Cross-cultural events. Kennedy's *Evangelism Exploration*. Four Spiritual Laws training. Mission Life workshops. Elder training workshops. The list was long; the pattern was need-oriented. Whatever need pressed the hardest and whatever course provided practical help to meet that need found me a participant.

Even Spanish language was a crash course. I signed up for a school in Cuernavaca, Mexico, and headed down there knowing only *Buenos Dias*, and not sure I said it right. Six weeks flew by. I started dreaming in Spanish, but had to pull out of Senora Madrid's casa too early. So I headed south of the border the next year, studying three more weeks.

LIFRS (I don't even remember what the acronym stands for) was another great help. Week-long experiences in cross-cultural understanding opened my eyes and sensitivity. Weekend encounters with Mexican-American and Black leaders helped me see the issues. To reach a community for Jesus, one must know the community.

It worked. We began to reach out to **all** people in our area. The church council reflected this. People of three cultural backgrounds and racial groups obtained leadership positions.

Then came the challenge to manage a church that grew from 90 to nearly 500. More education could help. The University of Texas offered graduate seminars for clergy, so off I went to study management, marketing, and advertising. Back home I used what I learned by putting on retreats for leaders. And we continued to grow.

The move to Bakersfield, California, interrupted the plan to begin doctoral studies in multicultural ministry at the University of Texas. The congregation to which I was called would have had to bus people from across town to get a multiethnic mix. Consequently, different skills were needed. They especially needed and wanted to learn how to exercise the priesthood of all believers. I took more courses. I led many leadership training experiences involving members.

Then across my desk came what I had hoped (and yes, prayed) for—a doctoral program that would allow me to keep on shepherding the congregation while doing systematic, intentional learning. I enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry course offered by Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Since our LCMS Concordias did not offer such a program yet and PLTS was a mere 300 miles north, I signed up for their first class. What a joy—and what work! The syllabus stated, "Read the following

twelve books before your first course begins on campus." The course began in two months! But how good it felt. These books were relevant to daily ministry.

The degree demanded more than reading and course work. We had to utilize and involve our own congregational members. An advisor group was selected. They studied with me, and they held me accountable. Most important, the dissertation had to be on a project we developed together and implemented in the congregation. It was to have implications for other churches. My project was called "Developing a Caring Congregation," and included training experiences for laity and a shepherd program not unlike Kenneth Hauck's *Stephen's Ministries*. This program provided 22 different training experiences in the congregation. The members were in continuing education as I learned! Here are a few course titles: "How to Minister to the Lonely"; "How to Care for Shut-ins"; "How to Help Those Going Through Relocation Loss"; "How to Befriend the Dying."

Having hung my diploma on the wall, I asked, "What's next? Education does not end when a "Dr." is written in front of your name, does it?" The timing was right. Synod's continuing education committee launched a program called "Developing Your Personal Growth Plan." What a blessing it was to me.

My plan included intentional development of spirituality. It meant deliberate and disciplined time for prayer, Bible reading, and meditation, as well as journaling. Time, place, and resources were set aside. Growth on another plane began.

Likewise, growth in the congregation dictated that staff be added, with a Youth Minister, a Minister of Evangelism and Stewardship, a Minister of Music, and a Director of Preschool being called. Parastaff personnel were added. I needed skills in team ministry. I read self-teaching materials and listened to tapes. I reviewed "Systems" planning and management books. Continuing education comes in many packages. I had to learn new preaching skills. The people were aching for Bible study in a worship setting. Could I learn how to preach in an expository style? Could I **teach** the Scriptures in a worship setting? The need demanded that I learn. So I learned. And God blessed us with growth.

The ministry at Bakersfield, too, was interrupted. A call sent me packing to St. John's Lutheran Church of Orange, California. The membership at Bakersfield had grown to 1,700, but the Orange congregation had a membership of 3,100! How could I learn to shepherd a church that size? Continuing education was the answer. "This church needs a VISION," I was told. So I aligned myself with people who had vision. Change was needed, so I read books on being a change agent. Conflict arose, so it was right to take seminars in conflict resolution and management.

Soon I was invited to join a network of senior pastors of large congregations. Cross-denominational training experiences were especially useful. Useful, too, has been the experience of taking my whole staff to another

congregation significantly larger than ours in order to experience leadership. As you can perhaps sense, continuing education focused more and more on specific questions, such as "What is the role of the Senior Pastor?" "What are twelve keys to an effective church?" "How can team building take place among busy staff in large congregations?" Specific needs were driving us to seek specific educational events.

Now I have to ask, "Where will I go from here? I'm fifty-one. I suppose I have only forty more years or so to continue to learn on this earth!" So it is time to develop another personal growth plan. I am not sure of all that I will write down as part of my plan for the next five years, but no doubt some of it will include mastering Spanish. There are, you see, Hispanics all around this congregation. If I wish to be effective, I must be better able to share the Gospel in their language. In addition, I want to begin training in consulting work. I am beginning to believe I have something to share with others about large congregations.

Does it sound as if I like continuing education? I more than like it—I love it. It's my romance. But it is based on more than feelings. My conviction concerning continuing education is based on the truth that the professional nature of ministry, congregation and people's needs, and the demands on church workers keep on changing. Every professional needs to keep growing.

### The Changing Nature of the Professional Ministry

Not everyone may agree, but I believe the day of "Herr Pastor" and "Mrs. Classroom Teacher" is nearly over. There was a day when nearly every congregation needed only one pastor, and he was the center of all the ministry. "Herr Pastor" was an appropriate title. But the way of the future (and the future is here) is team ministry—multiple staff situations.

As for "Mrs. Classroom Teacher," who sees her ministry as teaching twenty-five students, I believe such a focus will become as archaic as the family therapist who ignores family systems. The hope for better education *in* the classroom is ministry to families with children *apart* from the classroom. Shepherding will be the relevant word (and perhaps the only valid word) for teaching in the future, at least in church schools. For children are part of family systems, no matter how that family is configured. The more we experience dysfunctional family units, the more most excellent teachers will focus on family problems as well as academics.

Then, too, large churches are the future. Carl George, noted authority on church movements and professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, noted in a recent address to 200 LCMS leaders that 35

percent to 50 percent of our congregations have a viable life span of less than twenty years. They are aging rapidly. Twenty-five percent of all LCMS congregations recorded no adult confirmations or baptisms! Those that will survive are large; in fact, in general the larger churches are experiencing the most growth.

This means team ministries and specialization are the order of the future. More and more congregations will be looking not for generalists as pastors, but for specialists. For example, we do not have assistants to

People from every clime and nation are flooding to America.  
We scarcely need go to the world; it is coming to us!  
But are we equipped to minister?

the pastor at St. John's in Orange. We do not even refer to ourselves as associates. We simply have titles that relate to what our specialties are: Senior Administrative Pastor, Pastor of Adult Nurture and Equipping, Minister of Pastoral Care, Minister of Music, Minister of Youth, Minister of Children's Ministries, and soon we will have a Minister of Support Services. Other churches I know have staff members with titles such as Minister of Discipleship, Minister of Outreach, Minister of Small Groups, and the list goes on.

No seminary can equip men for all these specialties; this training must come largely after graduation by means of continuing education.

This trend is by no means an exclusive movement among clergy, but is found also in other professional ministries in the church. Directors of Christian Education may specialize in youth or adult education, and even in evangelism and church growth. But they will be called on to refine their skills as specialists, too, and they must do so with dispatch. Understand, too, that the criterion of a vital congregation may well be shifting from how many people worship to how many parents of preschoolers are active in the congregation.

If I am right about the future of effective teaching taking into account family systems, then nearly every elementary school teacher in the LCMS is going to need some retooling. Continuing education will not be just important; it will be a necessity.

### Congregations are Changing

Consider some of the changes happening in congregations, and assess if these changes demand continued learning.

In the last twenty years there has been a strong movement away from denominational loyalty. Why? Because people are choosing to go where they feel their



needs are being met. Consequently, the family with preschoolers looks at what is offered for their child AND what looks good, clean and suitable to them as parents. How clean and well organized is the nursery? How well staffed is it? Do I want my child to play there? Will it be safe for my child? These are the significant questions.

When a family has children five to thirteen years old, needs change. So the questions they ask are: "What does this church provide to help my child?" "How good is the school?" "What extra-school activities are available for them?" Last year one of our new enrollee's parents told us they visited twelve schools before choosing ours. People are particular. They are selective.

When the children become teenagers, they will look for a church with a vital youth program.

The adults want to grow, too. Adult education is in. So are specialty groups. A congregation addressing the needs of people these days probably cannot ignore the need for support groups such as divorce recovery, merging families, and chemical dependency groups. Maybe this is the concern of only larger churches, but I doubt it. More likely it is everyone's concern, because in today's more open society, problems are more likely to surface. People are admitting their pains.

The above changes all relate to loyalty; meeting needs has replaced loyalty. There are many other changes, too.

I have stated already that LCMS congregations are getting larger (if they are growing at all), and there is an increasing need for team ministry. Not too many pastors are trained for team ministry. DCEs are way ahead here.

The role of music is becoming much larger than twenty years ago. If I were to start a new mission congregation, the first staff person to be added would be a Minister of Music. That person would need much more than classical training. (By way of illustration, in Los Angeles and Orange counties where population numbers in the millions, only one radio station is classical! What does this say about the appeal of a church that utilizes only classical organ and German chorales?)

People desire less formal settings. The word in the mind of those seeking a church home is "comfortable." "Will I feel comfortable there?" Warmth, friendliness, and caring are qualities sought. This should put some change demands on those who want everything to be formal and proper.

Still further, people flock to places where they feel they are learning rather than where they are preached at. Thus, expository sermon style and teaching methods that utilize an open Bible are parts of the forward movement.

Major changes are happening in the area of schools. As recently as the early 1960's, few, if any, articles could be found regarding evangelism through schools. Indeed, it is correct to say that schools were viewed as safe places for our own children to go and be kept free of the world. LCMS schools were basically for LCMS chil-

dren. There were exceptions, of course, but in 1991 the exceptions may be the rule. In the church where I pastor, the school is our Number 1 evangelism agency. In the first three months of 1991 we have baptized forty-five people, both children and adults. About half of them came via the school ministry. Even greater is the movement towards early childhood education. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has 770 preschool centers now; 328 existed just ten years ago. Related are other changes, specifically changes in society or community.

### Society and Community Change

Let us begin with the breakdown of families. It is no longer surprising to have children tell you about their mom, their biological father, their stepfather, and their ex-stepfather, and not yet name all who have been primary caregivers in their lives. A classroom easily has 33 percent to 50 percent of the children from broken homes. The impact is overwhelming. Holistic approaches must be sought. Again I make my case for teachers to learn how to be shepherds of families. The argument that the student will be the loser will not wash. The student is a loser if the teacher does not take into account the family situation and address it.

In our school 80 percent of the children come from homes where both Mom and Dad work outside the home. This means much more than fatigue on the part of parents when it comes to helping with homework. Bigger issues are child care before and after school. Two questions are: "What programs are needed?" "What training is mandatory to run such programs?"

Perhaps because these parents are away from their children so many hours, there is a marked demand on the school for increased excellence. Parents expect the program and the environment to be above average. Affluence in some neighborhoods could contribute to their expectations. With two incomes there is more money, and parents will pay higher fees if the program and facilities are superior. A case also can be made for greater sophistication throughout society. Mediocrity is not acceptable to many.

Of major significance in urban and suburban areas is the continuing increase in ethnic peoples. Most communities are multiethnic, and the make-up is not only Anglo, Black, and Hispanic, but also Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, East Asian Indian, and people from Muslim countries. Demands for cultural understanding and language diversity are increasing.

How about the significant increase in healthy, experienced and learned retirees? People retire earlier in many communities, and life expectancy is soaring. (One analyst predicted an average life span of ninety by the year 2000, up twelve years in one decade!) Here is a tremendous pool needing retooling and needing to be challenged to be in ministry in and through the church. Continuing education is also for laity.

People and communities are changing. It only stands

to reason that professional workers will have increasing and changing demands put on them, too.

### Changing Demands on Professionals

Let us consider first the professional teacher. I see three areas demanding continuing education among teachers.

First, more and more people are going back to school, even after graduating from college. Continuing education is in. Community colleges are bulging with older people and younger adults enrolling in courses. Advanced degrees are sought in our schools, too. Many schools tip the salary scale to advanced credits and degrees. The pressure is on!

Second, and more important, if teachers are going to move toward shepherding families, there will be, as I stated earlier, a necessity for more training in family issues. They will need to learn how to detect family dysfunction, abusive situations, and chemical related symptoms. Basic counseling skills and referral skills will be needed, as well as crisis intervention skills. Perhaps, too, additional courses should be taken in active listening and dealing with family conflicts.

Third, learning deficiencies are being discovered (seemingly at a higher level than ever before). What once passed for a child being a slow learner is now receiving another look. Dyslexia is only one of many reading problems. Retention disabilities, hypertension, and a host of other ills need diagnosis. The classroom teacher will not be able to send all children with learning problems to the principal, and the principal cannot send them all to public school. Continuing education is a must.

Directors of Christian Education face the same pressures to continue learning. We are a long way from knowing just how adults learn best. Studies continually are being made to investigate how people learn, adult learning cycles, and faith cycles. DCEs, too, need to learn more about family systems. Even if their prime focus is the adult, their work still spills over to the children, just as a teacher's prime focus on the child also will need to involve the parent. Youth development cannot all be learned in undergraduate classes. Parent/teenager conflict resolution is best learned in the laboratory of actual ministry or in-service training. Leadership skills, too, are best learned after one is recognized as a leader. There will still be plenty to learn at the time a DCE recognizes he or she is sixty-five and considering retirement.

Is it any different for pastors and deaconesses? I believe not. Even though each pastor was declared "fit for ministry in every way" when graduating from the seminary, I argue differently. We were fit only to begin to learn ministry. We may have had our theology straight and possessed some techniques for putting together a sermon or Bible class, but ministry skills were a long way from honed. Consider specifically specialization skills: ministry to families, ministry to singles, disci-

pliship training, specialization in evangelism and church growth, and ministry to senior adults. Few courses, if any, zeroed in on these concerns.

I have already mentioned team ministry, its dynamics and inter-relationships. How about the recognition and affirmation of spiritual gifts, leadership style, and management concerns? How many pastors or deaconesses have training in being a change agent or are skilled in conflict resolution?

One critical area of pastoral leadership is developing vision. I did not know what a mission statement was when I graduated, or recognize that a parish needs a vision, or else it will perish! How does a congregation develop a vision? How can a church be organized to carry out the Great Commission rather than maintain its own self?

Diversity is so important in congregational life. People seek options. Pastors, teachers, DCEs, and deaconesses dare not keep everything the same way it always has been. Diversity demands new skills.

Finally, we are in the age of world-view Christians. We no longer are isolated and insulated. If we do not broaden our view, we will be eliminated! For most of us, the world is at our back doors. People from every clime and nation are flooding to America. We scarcely need go to the world; it is coming to us! But are we as called ministers of the Gospel equipped to minister to these people and share the Gospel?

What is the answer? Continuing education is critical in our day. If there are many things for a DCE to learn when retirement nears, the same generalization applies to all church workers.

Think of the joy! There is great joy in expanding horizons and new areas of expertise. As new worlds open, new potentials are realized.

So what can you **do**? What can you **do new**? What can you **do new now**? You can start immediate work on a growth plan. You can get a form or a course guide from Synod's Professional Growth and Support Commission. Or you can simply sit down with a trusted friend, talk about ministry, where the needs are, what your strengths and weaknesses are, and what would be helpful for you to do a better job. Plan to work on making one strength you have better (you will have fun that way), and isolate one weakness you would like to change into a strength in the next three years. Then discover your resources and go to it. It will be wonderful—especially when you discover how much more effective you are in ministry.

Why is continuing education important? Because you can do more than survive. You can be effective.

# PLANNING FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION: A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

Stephen J. Carter

IN OUR RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD, every professional worker needs a planned approach to continuing education so that faithful, joyful, and competent ministry results. This article will first describe a personal learning plan approach, useful in preparing an annual growth plan. Second, you will glimpse The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod blueprint for continuing education as coordinated by the new Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support.

## ■ PART I: THE LEARNING PLAN APPROACH

### NEED IDENTIFICATION

Explore your current ministry in the parish. Take a look at yourself as preacher, worship leader, counselor, visitor in the home, teacher of children and adults, educational planner, minister to youth, administrator of the parish, evangelist, community leader, and leader in your home as spouse and parent. Identify your areas of strength and weakness. Consult with key lay leaders and get their assessment of the same personal and professional ministry areas.

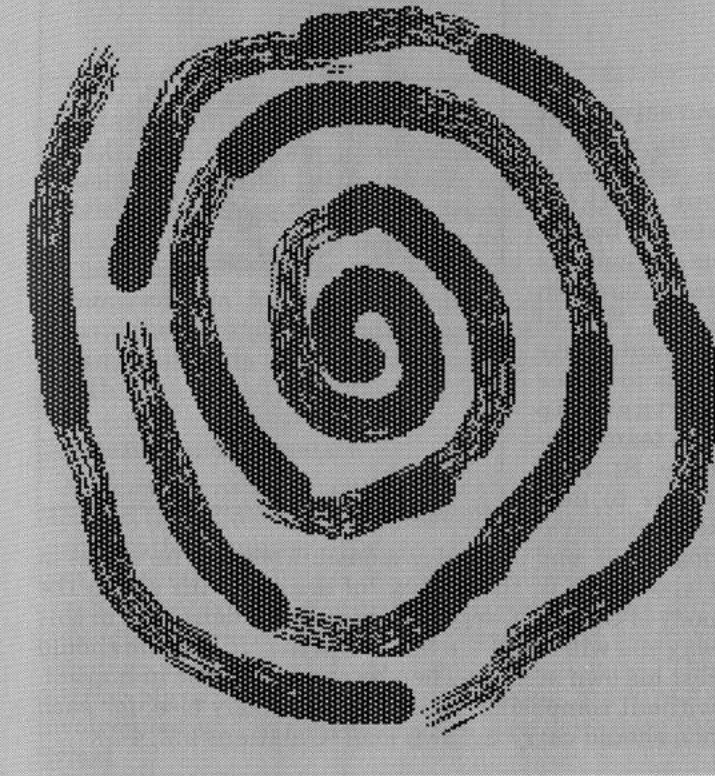
Select at least one strength area for further development and one problem area where you are motivated to grow because of the priority needs of the congregation.

Make these two areas the subjects for your personal learning plan. Begin to ask yourself what knowledge, skill, and qualities or attitudes you would need to improve in order to grow in your two learning plan choices.

Your selection of continuing education areas may include personal or professional concerns. Many ministers have selected personal devotional life, constructive use of leisure time, personal time management, and marriage and family growth to go along with sermon delivery, adult education, premarital counseling, working more effectively with volunteers, teaching confirmation classes, and ministry to the elderly. The growth areas selected should be uniquely appropriate to your own ministry needs and to the current situation in your parish or school context. The more specific your identification of the need, the more meaningful you will find the personal learning plan and the results of your efforts.

### GOAL SETTING

After you have selected two growth areas based on identification of your needs, the next step calls for development of a goal statement or two for each area. The goal needs to be specific, measurable, and achievable. For example, if you are working on preaching, you might write as a goal: "To improve my sermon delivery within the next six months by eliminating the need for a manuscript in the pulpit." Goals are not easy to write. Taking the time to develop them will greatly increase your chances of accomplishing your learning plan. You will know, for example, whether you are using a sermon manuscript in the pulpit after six months. You would not choose this goal unless you had determined that you were so chained to the manuscript that your preaching



delivery was impaired. You also would have decided that one month would not allow you enough time to wean yourself from the manuscript and that one year was too long.

Your chosen goals may need midcourse correction. You may find that four months were adequate to reach your goal or that eight months were required. But setting a measurable goal for yourself starts you in the right direction toward growth without letting you become either frustrated or bored. Most of the workshops to develop learning plans give you the opportunity to get feedback from colleagues on your goal statements as a help to you in formulating measurable and achievable objectives.

### RESOURCE SELECTION

With needs identified and goals stated, you move on to the next step of selecting appropriate resources for your personal learning plan. This step is extremely important. You need, first of all, to be sensitive to your learning styles. If you are primarily a structured learner and feel most comfortable with teacher-directed learning, then you will want to choose formal courses or degree programs that are available to you. Your learning plan will guide you to choose those formal courses that are most helpful to your needs for growth. If you work better alone, you will seek out a bibliography of books, periodicals, correspondence courses, or independent studies that will help you meet your needs. You may also investigate computer-based learning and/or audio- or videocassettes for learning. Other resources such as drama, music, travel, and physical exercise programs may also be helpful. If you learn best through interaction with others, you may want to identify resource

people in your community—a congregational member skilled in administration, education, or computers; a local counselor, human resource development manager, audio-visual expert, or youth worker; a colleague in ministry who excels in preaching, evangelism, or teaching adults. Many people will share willingly of their time and expertise when asked. Your desire to interact with others may also lead you to make full use of your local pastoral or teacher conferences, workshops, and seminars that teach skills through a group process.

Second, in addition to considering your learning styles, you need to become familiar with the available resources in your geographical area. What colleges and seminaries offer courses nearby or have extension programs available to you? What programs does your church body sponsor? What independent providers offer workshops and seminars? What libraries and resource centers are in your area? Do you have hospital or mental health center programs available to you? Do government, education, and human service agencies in the community provide resources to help you in your growth? How about business and industry? The list goes on and on. Many times as you explore resources, one contact leads to another in an exciting chain reaction.

Your resource selection, therefore, ties in closely with your need area and your goal statements. Your resources reflect your unique learning styles, your time and money limitations, and their accessibility to your geographical location. By considering a wide variety of resource possibilities, you expand your horizon of growth and find new ways to become more effective in ministry.

### TIMETABLE

With needs identified, goals stated, and possible resources selected, you need to establish a workable timetable to accomplish your goals. This timetable considers your work load in ministry and tries to chart a realistic, achievable course for your learning experience. You will probably start with a short-range timetable of six months unless you are choosing a degree program or a particular sequence of courses.

Make your timetable as specific as possible. For example: I will read one book a month for the next three months. I will select those books by the 15th of this month. Or: I will enroll for a course in the spring semester at the local college and select that course within the next three weeks. Or: I will make an appointment to meet with the district education executive within the next month to explore further resources. Try to work in natural contacts in your ministry schedule as opportunities for growth. For example, if you want to use a colleague as a resource, make arrangements to visit with him or her at the regularly scheduled pastoral conference. If you are working with a lay leader, tie in your meeting with monthly board activities. When you know you will be busy with special Advent-Christmas or Lent-Easter services, do not schedule heavy continuing education experiences, or else choose growth

experiences that will help equip you for those events.

In short, regular growth experiences as part of your learning plan can be a natural outgrowth of your daily ministry. A carefully worked out timetable will serve as a monitor for this continual growth. You will find much more satisfaction and much less frustration if you plan realistically and carefully.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

The personal learning plan is based on your taking responsibility for your own professional growth. Based on your ministry needs and the needs of your parish, you identify growth areas, set clear goals, select resources, and establish a timetable. But experience has demonstrated that we also need an accountability structure—other people to support and encourage us toward completion of the learning plan. Otherwise we may be tempted to abandon the project in frustration. Other pressures and demands for our time can stand in the way. When we clearly announce our intentions to other people and ask them to keep us honest, we are more likely to follow through on our plans.

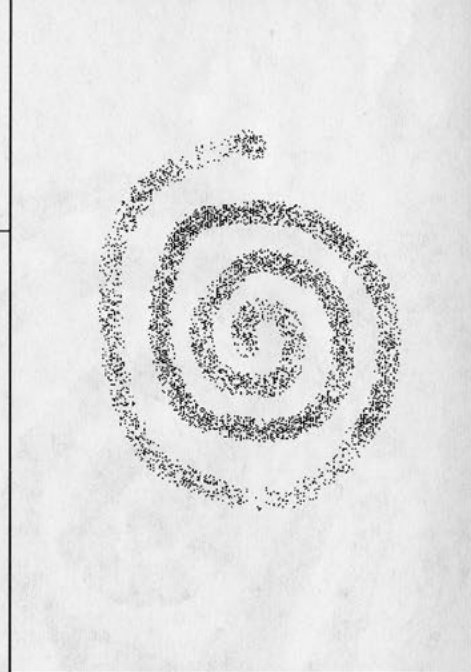
One level of accountability can be our colleagues in ministry. If we work out our learning plan in our local pastoral conference or faculty, it can provide an ongoing area for reporting and feedback. Perhaps one or two colleagues with whom we have a close relationship might serve as support on a more frequent basis. We in turn can help hold them accountable for their learning plans. When we work on the same growth areas with colleagues, the possibilities for mutual encouragement are even greater.

A second level of accountability involves the laity in our parish. Since we intend to grow in order to be more effective in the parish, the laity have an important stake in our learning plan progress. We may have one of the official boards hold us accountable—elders, education, stewardship, or whatever is appropriate. We could ask individual lay leaders to help us. They could give more individual and regular attention to our progress. In cases involving a major continuing education endeavor, such as a Doctor of Ministry program, the whole parish through its governing body may be asked to hold us accountable. We are much more likely to follow through on our personally designed learning plan if we know that laity are encouraging our progress. They are also more likely to support us with time and financial resources if they are holding us accountable.

A third potential level of accountability is our own family. When we choose personal areas of growth, such as personal devotional life or marriage and family growth, the family stands in the best position to hold us accountable. They live with us day after day and are in a position to encourage us. But even when we select professional areas for growth, our spouse and children can support us in the undertaking.

Accountability may hold the key to successful learning plan implementation. We bear responsibility for

ourselves at every stage of development, but others stand beside us to help us reach our own goals. Mutual accountability leads to better partnership and team ministry. St. Paul seems to deal with this paradox of self- and mutual responsibility when he writes in Galatians 6 in the context of dealing with sin in the body of Christ: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. . . Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load (Galatians 6:2, 4-5).



## ■ PART II: CONTINUING EDUCATION PLAN FOR LCMS

### BACKGROUND

Over the past five years an LCMS Continuing Education Committee developed a national coordinated approach to ministerial growth and support, focused on the professional church worker at the local level. A Learning Plan Workshop to help pastors identify areas for growth and develop a specific personal learning plan was introduced in the districts of the Synod. The training phase brought personal contact with district presidents, executives, and a core of local pastors in each district who, in turn, led the Learning Plan Workshop in circuit conferences. The workshops themselves uncovered grassroots needs throughout the church body and focused attention on the importance of growth in excellence in ministry. More recently the Learning Plan Workshop has been introduced to commissioned teachers and other church professionals of the LCMS. The LCMS committee also made available need-based print/video courses for use in the local circuit conference as part of a Professional Development Series.

The committee organized a system of six regional and thirty-eight district continuing education representatives in the United States and Canada with the responsibility for building and improving continuing education programs for all church workers. The committee also developed a handbook for district continuing education efforts including guidelines for offering and recording continuing education units (CEU). In addition to initial training and orientation of the regional and district representatives, the committee conducted an

orientation for continuing education leaders from all the LCMS colleges and seminaries. They represent a valuable resource to help meet the needs of individual districts. A catalogue of offerings from these schools has been developed for use throughout the LCMS.

The 1989 convention of the LCMS established a Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support to expand the work of the Continuing Education Committee and to include the preventive aspects of ministerial health.

### COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

A comprehensive program of continuing education includes the following eight elements: motivation, need identification, support system, resourcing, coordination, credentialing, financing, and standards for workers. Simultaneously, continuing education begins with individual workers in the local church and receives direction and support from the synodical level. The district plays a vital role in encouraging grass roots involvement and implementing the directions from the Synod.

At one end of the spectrum, a continuing education program works at the level of motivation for workers and parishes. Awareness of strengths and weaknesses and of parish needs for ministry can stimulate all professional workers to seek help in growing toward more effective ministry. The willingness of district leadership to listen to the unique needs of individual workers will contribute a great deal toward building motivation.

A second related element of continuing education involves need identification. As the parish and the workers are encouraged to identify their needs, they gain a clearer focus for their growth. The district becomes aware of and seeks to provide continuing education resources to meet individual needs.

A third element of continuing education involves building an effective support system for the workers. In the case of pastors, the local circuit conference offers a natural setting for mutual encouragement and accountability. Lay leaders can be helpful to pastors by working with them to decide on effective continuing education programs. The individual family of the worker likewise can be involved in this process. In the case of teachers and other professional workers, the appropriate conferences can serve as support, and lay and family elements would again be appropriate.

A fourth element of continuing education involves resourcing at the district and synodical levels. The district continuing education group serves as a broker of resources. As the needs are identified, providers are found for the necessary services.

Synodical colleges and seminaries are likely candidates. Synodical boards may provide workshops and seminars. The district itself may devise various resources and programs to meet the needs. The district can serve a valuable function by communicating closely to the sponsoring organization the needs of the profes-

sional workers so that the programs will be need sensitive. A network of resources—printed, audio-visual and personal—needs to be developed for use by workers throughout the Synod.

A fifth element of continuing education involves coordination. The district stands in a good position to monitor the many types of continuing education opportunities provided with the district from official and outside providers. In this way the resources can be used in the most helpful manner, avoiding unnecessary duplication and filling gaps where they exist. The synodical continuing education leadership also needs to provide coordination on a broader level involving synodical boards and agencies and synodical seminaries and colleges.

A sixth element of continuing education involves credentialing. The synodical leadership has developed standards for offering continuing education units (CEU). Districts are able to offer CEU if they adopt synodical standards and report on a yearly basis to synodical leadership. Concern for CEU and graduate credits can help to elevate the importance of continuing education and serve as a positive motivator. Appropriate recognition needs to be given to the workers in the district who complete various continuing education experiences.

A seventh element of continuing education involves a financing plan. The financing of continuing education needs to be shared by Synod, districts, congregations, and the professional workers. Continuing help and encouragement along financial lines will contribute significantly to the participation of workers in continuing education.

An eighth element involves the communicating of standards for continuing education in the Synod. These standards will be based on an agreed-upon definition of effective ministry in measurable terms and some guidelines for a job description of effective ministry. These standards for ministry and appropriate continuing education growth need to be developed on a synodical basis. The standards will provide guidelines for individual parishes and workers to structure an ongoing program of continuing education.

These eight elements—motivation, need identification, a support system, resourcing, coordination, credentialing, financing, and standards—combine to generate a comprehensive plan for continuing education in a partnership arrangement among Synod, districts, circuits, congregations, and workers. Each unique district program should keep these elements in mind. It needs to be understood that at every level of operation, evaluation and reporting procedures are to be in place so that the program may grow and become increasingly effective. Districts receive evaluations from workers and parishes and evaluate the growth of workers. Synodical leadership receives evaluation from workers and parishes through the districts and evaluates the effectiveness of district and local programs. Together the continuing education effort gains momentum.

■ **GROWTH IN EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY (GEM PROJECT)**

Under the direction of the new Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, and through the support of Lutheran Brotherhood, a new project has been launched to implement the synodical vision of continuing education. This GEM (Growth in Excellence in Ministry) project aims to accomplish the following outcomes:

**Each Professional Church Worker**

- Develops an annual growth plan with congregational leadership for more effective ministry
- Commits 25 hours annually to study/learning activities which accumulate CEUs, academic credit, or responsible accomplishment of stated goals in a growth plan
- Sets aside the necessary time/money with congregational-district assistance to reach growth goals
- Seeks the necessary support from peers, laity, and family to reach growth goals (using conferences and regularly scheduled events for church professionals)

**Each Congregation or Agency**

- Participates in and supports the worker's annual growth plan
- Provides the necessary time/money for the worker to reach growth plan goals

**Each LCMS District**

- Develops an ongoing structure for ministerial growth and support
- Establishes a functional CEU system
- Builds a growing resource bank of people and offerings
- Oversees a full usage of growth opportunities in circuit and district conferences (including Professional Development Series and resource tools for theological discussion in the church)
- Implements an integrated approach for new college and seminary graduates during their first three years of ministry

**The Synodical Commission**

- Stimulates ongoing needs assessment
- Helps build the district structures
- Assists colleges and seminaries in providing resource people and offerings responsive to the needs of professional workers
- Provides a plan for financing ministerial growth and support
- Coordinates resources on all levels
- Provides help for new graduates and ongoing conference resources
- Assists districts to establish and maintain a workable CEU system

The three major areas of the GEM project are as follows:

First, the focus on the church professional at the local level needs to be strengthened by encouraging each worker to develop an annual growth plan, by firming up district continuing education structures, by beginning the CEU program in a coordinated, quality manner, and by linking the resources of colleges, seminaries, districts, and local expertise to meet the felt needs of workers. This program operated on a regional level in stages will provide quality offerings in the broad areas of theological growth, effective ministry, and personal wellness.

Second, professional church workers will be supported upon entrance into ministry with emphasis on the first three years of service. As part of a larger plan developed by the Standing Committee on Pastoral Ministry of the Board for Higher Education Services and endorsed by the Council of Presidents, the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support will provide workshops on the transition process for seminary graduates at the six and eighteen month stages of service. These workshops will utilize both seminary personnel and district leadership for a balanced growth experience combining theological study with process components for personal well-being and more effective ministry.

Third, the Commission will encourage a full usage of growth opportunities in circuit and district conferences by continuing to provide the Professional Development Series with basic offerings for pastoral ministry such as preaching, personal spiritual growth, leadership, and education. The Commission will also assist districts with broad based tools and resources for promoting grassroots theological discussion in the church. Pilot district offerings will be supported, and a networking journal/newsletter will be studied.

A specific program thrust in each of these three major areas will help the synodical continuing education effort to take a significant next step in reaching the needs of professional church workers in the local church so that congregational ministry will be strengthened and grow.

**Resources**

Part I is adapted from Chapter 4 of Carter, Stephen J. *Pastors on the Grow*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986. Reprinted by permission from CPH.

Part II is adapted from materials of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (GEM Proposal and *Continuing Education Guide*).

MINISTRY WITH FAMILIES IN FLUX: THE CHURCH AND CHANGING PATTERNS OF LIFE by R. P. Olson and J. H. Leonard, Jr. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990.

This succinct, straight-forward, non-technical book is about the changing American family, the wide diversity of family types in our society and congregations, and the mission of the church to these families. What are the facts about families in America today? What are the Christian responses to the facts? How does one apply the Scriptures to the multitude of familial scenarios? This book will assist church professionals and laity to answer these vital questions.

The authors believe that the Scriptures lead to the perspective that "Christian churches should do everything they can to hold high the covenant of marriage and family and to equip people to marry healthily and permanently" (p. 17). On the other hand, they also hold the conviction "that the work of our creating, redeeming, resurrecting God may be seen in changing families" (p. 18). These statements infer the tension many of us experience in ministering to the diversity of families today, and these statements also reflect a theological perspective informed by the Gospel.

A number of important topics are addressed in this book: the effect of changing employment patterns, the single-parent family, remarried families, families with religious or value differences, couples without children, issues of space and time, families with members who have disabilities, diversities of family membership, and the caring church's response. Are these topics of interest to you? Would you like to learn how two pastors bring their scholarly work and parish experiences to bear on these issues? This book, then, may be for you. Further, if you are looking for some of the good, more recent resources concerning the aforementioned topics, you will appreciate the section on Resources and References at the end of each chapter.

The closing statement of the book captures what Olson and Leonard want to do in supporting us in our ministry to families in the church. "We are convinced that, both actually and potentially, the church is the best friend the family ever had!" (p. 183). Their book is about how the church can be more family-friendly.

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THE PROMISE OF PARTNERSHIP: LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY IN AN ADULT CHURCH by James Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead. San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1991.

The Whiteheads provide a provocative, optimistic, contemporary description of a model for ministry. The theological, sociological and psychological foundations are well documented. The examples and illustrations are from within the Roman Catholic Church; however, this book is illuminating and practical for all Christian ministers—lay and clergy, male and female. Their authentic concept of partnerships is exhilarating, and the reader benefits from the excellent organization. The content is reverently presented, skillfully edited, and is an excellent resource for in-service team development within congregations.

The premise of the book is that Christian life is about embraces or relationships. The authors postulate that the parenting model utilized by churches must be replaced by a partnership model. The former model fosters and reinforces passive expectations of the laity. Paternalism is an authority of false love. Paternalistic leadership shields Christians from the dangers of growing up. In their view, the Roman Catholic Church has perpetuated a perception among Christians that there is a scarcity of the Power of the Spirit. They believe the sincere effort of the church hierarchy to control the profligate outpouring of the Spirit has manufactured scarcity. They argue that if lay people are not permitted to preach, then the Good News suffers scarcity. If a church restricts ordained leadership to unmarried men, it guarantees that the Sacraments will be in short supply. In their judgment, the invention of scarcity reached its height with the theological judgment that "there is no salvation outside the church" (that is, the Roman Catholic Church, ed.). Parenthetically they add, "Imagine God's surprise in hearing about this."

A significant chapter presents a description of the problem within the Roman church re-

garding authority. It is the contention of the authors that the laity is largely responsible for enlarging the authority of religious leaders. Lay persons want their pastors to be larger than life. These unreal expectations reinforce or invent the sense that professional church workers are not like ordinary Christians and are worthy of authority over the laity. The authors contend that over time many professional church workers also accept this false assumption. True partnership includes the embrace of authority by laity and clergy. The root meaning of authority is *augment*; "to make more of." All genuine authority, in the Scriptural view, expands life-making power. This genuine view of religious authority calls all Christians to greater responsibility.

The book presents an excellent strategy, complete with tactics, for moving the laity beyond the wounded images of authority. The authors suggest that the laity must go through a series of steps: withdrawal, disbelief, self-scrutiny and authority making. They contend that this process of personal transformation in the Roman Catholic Church is vital to the health of the church. Unfortunately, past reforms have simply replaced new hierarchical authority systems for the old. Transformation is necessary. "Partners in faith yearn for fruitful embraces that lead to mutual influence and shared control."

The authors' treatment of conflict is extremely helpful. They compare partnerships to a dance. When conflict surfaces, we can respond by saying, "I don't dance. Dancing is for sissies." To avoid conflict, we sacrifice partnerships. The controller of conflicts says, "Let's dance. I'll lead." We enter conflict with an edge that leaves us in control. The third response to conflict is to give in immediately, roll over, and play dead. The Whiteheads challenge partners in ministry to engage in conflict as Jacob did when he wrestled with the Lord. "We must be courageous enough to lay hands on the church even in dissent and conflict and not let it go." Partnership in ministry, as the Whiteheads envision it, is part of our obedience. Partners must hold firm—neither attempting to control or to flee—and by that

Continued from page 23

embrace become mutual partners in the search for renewal of a community of faith.

The Whiteheads' four chapters on leadership are excellent. They present state-of-the-art applications of leadership theory. They rigorously analyze these theories in light of their theology.

The final chapter is sure to raise conflict. The Whiteheads suggest that God approached creation as play rather than work. They use the portrait of Sophia and Yahweh found in the book of Proverbs (Proverbs 8:30-31). They contend "Creation's enjoyment was too rich to be private, too delightful to be simply work." Creation was not the achievement of a solitary God, but the fruit of partners in play. "The Christian doctrine of the Trinity celebrates a partnership within God. This ultimate mysterious Power must be greater than an individual, more than merely masculine." From my perspective, the last chapter is not helpful in promoting partnership in ministry. I believe the introduction of the concept of play in the closing chapter distracts from the message regarding partnership.

I found the book to be exciting and believe congregations and their ministers should engage in partnerships which will lead those congregations to new levels of productive service and mutual support.

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**U. S. LIFESTYLES AND MAINLINE CHURCHES: A KEY TO REACHING PEOPLE IN THE 90'S** by Tex Sample. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990.

The author digs deeply in sociological studies, research, and evaluations of religious life styles, doing so with the determination to convince mainline churches that without serious understanding of the Cultural Left, the Cultural Middle, and the Cultural Right, their churches will continue to shrink in membership. The 90's present the church with the baby boomers who opted either for self-fulfillment or self-denial as a way of life, with various choices in between.

The Cultural Left, committed to lasting relationships and a just and peaceable society, brings along a tolerance in personal moral choices, little tolerance for those critical, and little tolerance of churchly indifference to great social issues. Consequently, mainline churches will not win the Cultural Left with ease, but will find them the most difficult to reach. New Age theologies find their biggest membership within the Cultural Left. To reach such, parish strategies are suggested.

The Cultural Right, suggests the author, is less career-oriented, more concerned to have a satisfying life than to achieve greatness. This group tends to gravitate to Fundamentalist and Evangelical churches, responding to the values highlighted by the leadership within such groups; e.g., family, home, neighborhood or community, faith, and flag. Sample places popular religion and folk theology within the Cultural Right. Again, suggested strategies for reaching the Cultural Right are identified. The Cultural Middle seeks to combine the

best of both extremes, but in terms of the analyses of Niebuhr's *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, the values and religious values distinguish them significantly from the social concerns of the Cultural Left and from the private and social concerns of the Cultural Right. Strategies are again suggested. The final section examines implications for the local parish in attempting to identify the local demographics and to develop staff, programs, and outreach ministries sensitive to the lifestyles at hand.

The research, humor, pathos, and sociological research are commendable. His strategies and observations regarding the mainline churches' failure to reach large populations within cultures are commendable. The reviewer cannot commend the author's theology, but I take seriously his word that mere "tinkering" with programs or the worship service will suddenly fill the churches. In fact, the study would imply that major battles between Evangelicals and Lutherans, "Entertainment worship" versus Historic Lutheran Liturgical worship, and "Community Mega-Churches" and Lutheran Churches, is a struggle to win a very select and narrow segment of the American population, sometimes not from paganism but from one congregation to another, from one "sheep pen" to another, while the "unreached" remain so.

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