

BOLSTERING MINISTERIAL INFLUENCE AND RECRUITMENT AT AREA LUTHERAN  
HIGH SCHOOLS FOR FULL-TIME PASTORAL MINISTRY IN THE WISCONSIN  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

BY

JASON M. WILLIAMS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

ADMINISTRATOR PAUL PRANGE, ADVISOR

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

MEQUON, WISCONSIN

18 FEBRUARY 2015

## **Abstract**

The issue of pastoral recruitment is an on-going one. The numbers at the synodical schools of WELS are constantly in flux. How does WELS get a handle on it? How will WELS continue to fulfill Christ's mission if its pool of candidates for pastors shrinks? Should area Lutheran high schools change something in their program? As the synod tries to make sense of the numbers, the Lord Jesus continues to be the Lord of the Church. He continues to call young men into this noble task. The WELS will certainly never answer these questions definitively. Yet, leaders will want to use all of the institutions in WELS to help sustain the ministerium. The area Lutheran high schools can be part of that equation. They can be utilized to a higher degree than they are presently in recruiting young men to prepare for full-time ministry in WELS as a pastor.

# Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background.....	2
Mission Statements of Area Lutheran High Schools.....	3
An Historical Interlude: Winnebago Lutheran Academy and the Moussa Report .....	9
Relevance: Area Lutheran High Schools’ Statistics .....	12
Relevance: Preparatory Schools’ Statistics.....	12
Relevance: Pastoral Supply and Demand in WELS .....	14
Goal and Techniques.....	16
Thesis Statement .....	17
<b>Literature Review .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Relevance: God’s Word.....	18
The Schmeling Paper: A Critique .....	22
<b>Case Studies.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Case Study 1: Fox Valley Lutheran High School.....	29
Case Study 2: Lakeside Lutheran High School .....	35
Case Study 3: Wisconsin Lutheran High School.....	39
Case Study 4: St. Croix Lutheran High School .....	41
Case Study 5: Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School .....	42
Case Study 6: Winnebago Lutheran Academy .....	43
<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>44</b>
What can be replicated? .....	44
Review of Importance.....	46
Methodology Deficiencies .....	47
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>48</b>

<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>51</b>
Appendix A – FVL’s MLC Recruitment Plan.....	51
Appendix B – Ministry Recruitment at FVL .....	55
Appendix C – 2013-2014 Lakeside Recruitment for Ministry .....	57
Appendix D – The Schmeling Paper .....	59
Appendix E – Research Documents .....	71

## **Introduction**

The Apostle Paul certainly had a love and joy for serving the Lord Jesus. Even when he was in prison for proclaiming the name of the Lord, the book of Acts displays his joyful attitude and disposition: “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25). This love for the ministry was shared with many others with whom he had contact. The Ephesian elders, Barnabas, Silas, Aquila and Priscilla, Titus, even John Mark, were encouraged by and emulated Paul’s love for the ministry.

But, perhaps one would think especially of Timothy. It was Timothy who was a disciple in Lystra where Paul preached on his first missionary journey. It was Timothy whom Paul took under his wing during his second missionary journey as he stopped in Lystra once again. Paul appointed Timothy to stay in Ephesus as he journeyed throughout Macedonia. Paul addressed Timothy as “my true son in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2a). He gave young Pastor Timothy several qualifications for a minister of the gospel. Qualifications Paul, no doubt, saw in his young apprentice. Paul started those qualifications with the foundation for serving in the ministry, “Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task” (1 Timothy 3:1). “Desire,” and “setting one’s heart on,” are the two phrases Paul used to indicate a man entering the noble task of being a Called minister of the gospel.

There have been many young men who have followed in Paul and Timothy’s footsteps as they prepared themselves for ministry in Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). Certainly they prepared themselves to emulate Paul and Timothy by studying their ministries. But first and foremost, they had their hearts set on serving as a pastor. They desired this noble task. However, throughout the history of WELS, the number of candidates for the pastoral ministry has always been in flux. Some years there are more than enough candidates to fill the pastoral vacancies; other years many pulpits are left open. Nonetheless, recruitment for ministry in WELS never stopped, nor should it have. But, could the recruitment and influence toward pastoral preparation be carried out in other ways? Could more young men be influenced to enroll at Martin Luther College (MLC) and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS)? Could the area Lutheran high schools of WELS influence more young men to prepare for full-time ministry in WELS? All of these questions are legitimate as WELS continues to make ministerial education a priority. One should ask the Lord of the Church for his blessing as he contemplates his role in recruiting, training, and influencing the next generation of pastors in WELS.

## ***Background***

On Sunday, June 4, 2000, Wisconsin Lutheran High School (WLHS) held its commencement service at Wisconsin Lutheran College. Sixteen of the 235 graduates had one thing in common. They were enrolled at MLC for the next semester starting in the fall of 2000. Of the graduating class from WLHS, the largest high school of WELS, only 6.8% of the students were considering full-time work in the ministry of WELS. Of those sixteen enrolled at MLC for the 2000 fall semester, only one of them, originally, was enrolled in the pastor track.<sup>1</sup>

It just so happened that two of the young men changed to the pastor track in the middle of their freshman year at MLC; however, one of them changed back to the teacher track shortly thereafter. Because the students changed in the middle of the year, MLC required the students to take five years to graduate in preparation for WLS. The student that remained in the pastor track graduated from MLC in the spring of 2005 and WLS in the spring 2009. After returning to MLC as a tutor for two consecutive years, he is now serving as a pastor in Northern Michigan.

The other student's story is a bit more complicated. After changing back to the teacher track, he continued to prepare himself for that position and calling until he graduated in the spring of 2004. He received a Divine Call into the teaching ministry of WELS at St. John Lutheran Church and School in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. He was called to teach grades 1-3 and serve as assistant principal. After two years of serving in that capacity, his position changed. The change was planned. When he was assigned to Wrightstown, the present principal, Mr. Ronald Zahn, was nearing his retirement. Zahn was to groom the new MLC graduate for the principalship. When Zahn retired in June of 2006, the apprentice took over the reins of the school. Along with the principalship, he also would teach grades 6-8.

However, pastoral ministry was still in the back of this young man's mind. For the next two years, he served St. John faithfully, but wondered if he really made the right choice seven years prior. After many phone conversations with the recruitment director at MLC, after many conversations with his wife, the young man decided to return to MLC in the fall of 2009. He was enrolled in the seminary certification program to prepare himself for full-time work in the pastoral ministry of WELS. That young man is the author of this thesis. A rather interesting side note: the other WLHS class of 2000 graduate who switched to the pastor track with the author also returned to MLC in the fall of 2009. As mentioned earlier, he was assigned as tutor after he

---

<sup>1</sup> Email correspondence with Administrator Paul Prange.

graduated from WLS. So, both students were once again united on this campus of ministerial education of WELS.

Presently, the author is in the process of completing his senior year at WLS. God-willing he will complete his studies in a satisfactory manner, graduate, and receive another Divine Call into full-time ministry in WELS, this time as a pastor.

But what does the author's story and the 2000 graduating class from WLHS have to do with this thesis—everything! Consider the numbers once again: 235 graduates from WLHS in 2000, WLHS is statistically the largest secondary education institution in WELS, 6.8% originally enrolled at MLC from the 2000 graduating class, 0.4% originally enrolled in the pastor track at MLC from the 2000 graduating class, and ultimately only 1.3% of the WLHS graduating class of 2000 will serve in the full-time pastoral ministry of WELS. Then, using the same high school fourteen years later, only seven graduates enrolled at MLC this past spring from WLHS. None of them enrolled in the pastor track.

To the author, the numbers are staggering, humbling, and somewhat embarrassing. But should they be? What does it matter? “WLHS’s main purpose is not ministerial education,” many will argue. “They have a different purpose than our preparatory schools (Luther Preparatory School and Michigan Lutheran Seminary),” others will suggest. Many will point to the fact that WELS supports four ministerial educational institutions, and WLHS and other area Lutheran high schools are not in that list. The relevance for this topic will be discussed later. But, first, consideration to different area Lutheran high school mission statements is in order.

### ***Mission Statements of Area Lutheran High Schools***

When looking at the mission statements of several area Lutheran high schools, one might say, “We shouldn’t even begin to look at area Lutheran high schools for pastoral candidates.” Consider six mission statements from area Lutheran high schools. First, we will view WLHS’s: “*Compelled by Christ's love, guided by the Great Commission, and rooted in God's Word...Wisconsin Lutheran High School prepares youth in a diverse world for productive, Christ-centered lives.*”<sup>2</sup> The mission statement is Christian. The gospel of Christ compels all that the institution does. The school desires to prepare youth to thrive in a diverse world with a Christ-centered life. The mission statement is Lutheran. The school is rooted in God’s Word;

---

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Lutheran High School, “Our Mission,” <http://www.wlhs.org/about/information.html>, (accessed 15 November 2014).

*sola scriptura* rings in the ears of those whose heritage is the Lutheran Reformation. The mission statement is not focused on ministerial education. Certainly, ministerial education is not omitted, but it is also not a main goal of WLHS based on its mission statement. In a short outline of the school's history by Dr. Carol Krause, one finds that the school's mission has always been to educate the layperson with ministerial education as only a byproduct.

The purpose of Wisconsin Lutheran High School has always been to educate the layperson. While not a worker training school, it meets a need in giving a Christian secondary education to the youth of our congregations. Through the years, many of our students have also gone on into the public ministry. As a comprehensive high school we train students for whatever comes after graduation, whether that is the work force, college, or the military.<sup>3</sup>

Next, we will read Fox Valley Lutheran High School's (FVL) mission statement: "Fox Valley Lutheran High School, in partnership with families and Federation churches, provides students with a Christ-centered education preparing teens for lives of service and for eternity."<sup>4</sup> Once again, the mission statement is Christian. Students are provided with a Christ-centered education. They are encouraged and comforted with the reality of their heavenly inheritance. Ministerial education is perhaps hinted at with the phrase, "preparing teens for lives of service." However, it is written in general terms since a Christian desires to serve the Lord in any occupation in which he finds himself.

The third school mission statement that we will assess is Lakeside Lutheran High School's (LL): "Lakeside Lutheran High School is committed to assist parents and our WELS/ELS congregations nurture the faiths of our students through curricular and co-curricular programs centered on Christ. Lakeside Lutheran's mission is solely dedicated to God's glory. Our blessings come from God alone and our ministry is a response to his love."<sup>5</sup> LL is currently in transition concerning their mission statement and vision for the future. The newly proposed and updated mission statement for LL is: "Motivated by the love of Jesus, Lakeside Lutheran High School partners with families to educate, encourage, and equip students for life and for eternity." ("Equipping students for life and eternity.")<sup>6</sup> The new mission statement has components similar to WLHS's and FVL's mission statements. The motivation of the school

---

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Carol Krause, "A History and Tradition of Christ-Centered Education," *Wisconsin Lutheran High School Website*, <http://www.wlhs.org/about/schoolhistory.html>, (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Email correspondence with Mr. Steven Granberg.

<sup>5</sup> Email correspondence with Mr. James Grasby.

<sup>6</sup> James Grasby, "Lakeside Lutheran High School: Strategic Plan," Provided by the author, 11 November 2014.

and its faculty is the love of Jesus. The outcome for the students is education, encouragement, and becoming equipped for life and eternity. The eternal focus is shared with FVL. Ministerial educating is more blurred in this mission statement than it was in FVL's. On the one hand, the school doesn't intentionally omit it. On the other, it is certainly not primary based on the mission statement. However, the school does have a ministerial education recruiter who is quite active in this area, Pastor Clark Schultz. In correspondence with him, he indicated his yearly focus on ministry recruitment, "I am attaching my recruitment plan for ministry that I use on a yearly basis."<sup>7</sup> We will take a closer look at his document entitled *Lakeside Recruitment for Ministry* later.

St. Croix Lutheran High School's (SCL) mission statement is next: "Educating the total student, spiritually, intellectually, and physically in a caring, Christian family community."<sup>8</sup> One understands this mission statement more when they consider the motto of SCL, "The Global Leader in Christian Education."<sup>9</sup> SCL has many students that attend from overseas, more than any other WELS area Lutheran high school. To the author, this explains why the mission statement has a different ring and emphasis in relation to the other statements we have looked at so far. Yet, it is still Christian and has a goal of educating the spiritual side of the student as well as the intellect and physical sides. However, this mission statement has the least focus on ministerial education out of the entire group. The focus is on the Christian education of the entire student. It fits well with the institution's focus on global Christian education.

Fifth in the comparison and analysis of area Lutheran high schools' mission statements is Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School (KML). Its mission statement: "Empowered by God's Word, Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School educates, encourages, and equips God's people for life and for eternity."<sup>10</sup> This statement might sound familiar. LL's newly proposed mission statement uses many of the same terms. The statement begins with the same Lutheran emphasis on the Word of God that we realized in WLHS's statement. The familiar eternal focus is also in view here as with many of the other mission statements. KML's website also provides a philosophy and purpose statement that gives us more concerning ministerial recruitment and influence, "The curriculum of KML is designed to prepare our youth to become dedicated

---

<sup>7</sup> Email correspondence with Pastor Clark Schultz.

<sup>8</sup> Email correspondence with Mr. Richard Gibson.

<sup>9</sup> St. Croix Lutheran High School, <http://www.stcroixlutheran.org/>, (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, <http://www.kmlhs.org/home/mission-a-philosophy>, (accessed 15 November 2014).

Christian adults. An academic program is available to those students who wish to continue their education in any secular school or college, as well as those who wish to prepare for full-time work in the church as pastors or teachers.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, KML does have a clause for ministerial education as a byproduct of “preparing [the] youth to become dedicated Christian adults.”

Finally, Winnebago Lutheran Academy’s (WLA) mission statement: “Winnebago Lutheran Academy exists to glorify God by nurturing the growth of every student to live as Christ’s child within their families, congregations, and communities.”<sup>12</sup> Again, the statement marks the school as Christian. There is a focus on having the students identify themselves as Christ’s children. The students will be compelled to live as Christians no matter where they go. However, the WLA 2020 document also provides more rationale for the mission statement. “WLA is a strong and well-rounded high school education in the Lutheran Tradition—solidly based on a firm trust in Jesus Christ, our only Savior from sin.”<sup>13</sup> The plan indicates that this school is strong and committed to the Lutheran Tradition. Ministerial education is only alluded to on the surface of the mission statement; but, the rationale has a more focused statement in the same way that KML has: “Our graduating seniors are well prepared to pursue college or technical school education beyond high school. WLA graduates who want to enter called service as pastors or teachers are well prepared for admission to the WELS School of Ministry at Martin Luther College.”<sup>14</sup> In correspondence with Principal David Schroeder he admits, “Now that I think about it, we are pretty intentional at WLA about how we recruit for the ministry, but we are lacking strategic planning for this vital area.”<sup>15</sup> The desire to recruit for ministry is noticeable to the principal at WLA. One could imagine it is at many of the area Lutheran high schools in WELS, even if it is not clearly noted in the actual verbage of their mission statements.

Clearly, the main purpose of the area Lutheran high school is not ministerial education or recruitment. Former professor and president of WLS, Carl Lawrenz, identified a biblical philosophy of secondary Christian education:

A person’s life will be as his heart directs. Well may we therefore say: The heart of education is the education of the heart. Christian education, also on the secondary level,

---

<sup>11</sup> Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, <http://www.kmlhs.org/home/mission-a-philosophy>, (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>12</sup> David Schroeder, “WLA 2020: A Vision. A Plan.” *Winnebago Lutheran Academy Website*, <http://www.wlavikings.org/about-us/vision-2020/>, 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Email correspondence with Mr. David Schroeder.

purposes to give earnest consideration to this divine admonition addressed to us in the book of Proverbs: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs). *Christian education purposes to help our adolescent Christians so to guard their hearts that a life as God would have it may issue forth from them.*<sup>16</sup>

Now, this is true of all secondary education in WELS, preparatory school or area Lutheran high school. Yet, the definition for “a life as God would have it” or better the emphasis or influence at the two different types of institutions is different. This is seen clearly by comparing the six mission statements of area Lutheran high schools with those of the prep schools. Luther Preparatory School (LPS) provides this statement: “The continuing mission and purpose of Luther Preparatory School is to prepare and **encourage** young men and women for the full time ministry in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.”<sup>17</sup> Michigan Lutheran Seminary’s (MLS) mission and purpose is similar: “Train students for the public ministry of the gospel and **to enroll** them upon graduation at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.”<sup>18</sup>

When compared to the area Lutheran high schools, the goal and influence toward serving in full-time ministry and enrolling at MLC is clearly different. This paper is not to convince area Lutheran high schools that they must become like the prep schools. Nor should they necessarily be obligated to include ministerial education phrases or jargon into their mission or vision statements. Lawrenz continues to make the point that area Lutheran high schools and prep schools are different. “It ought to be a part of our philosophy of secondary Christian education that we shall want to offer such Christian training to all for whom secondary education comes into consideration at all. Hence our Lutheran or Christian high schools will of necessity differ somewhat from our synodical academies, which purpose to offer Christian training to students for service in the public ministry of the Church as pastors, teachers, professors, and missionaries.”<sup>19</sup> Yet, Lawrenz does not exclude the option that area Lutheran high schools can also provide influence and encouragement to its students to pursue full-time ministry in WELS. The schools do differ somewhat in purpose and mission; yet, every year there are students from preparatory schools who do not enroll at MLC, and there are students from area Lutheran high schools who do. The question then is how do we influence more young men to enroll at MLC in

---

<sup>16</sup> Carl Lawrenz, “The Philosophy of Secondary Christian Education,” *WLA Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1334>, 1. Emphasis his.

<sup>17</sup> Luther Preparatory School, <http://www.lps.wels.net/page>, (accessed 18 November 2014). Emphasis mine.

<sup>18</sup> Michigan Lutheran Seminary, “History of Seminary,” <http://www.mlsem.org/about-mls/history-of-seminary>, (accessed 18 November 2014). Emphasis mine.

<sup>19</sup> Lawrenz, 5.

the pastor track? The way this paper answers this question is described below under the section *Goal and Techniques*.

Lawrenz continues, “Hence the courses in our Christian high schools need to be sufficiently flexible and varied to make Christian training possible for every type of our youth in keeping with the individual gifts and aptitudes that they possess.”<sup>20</sup> Not every student is apt for full-time ministry. Therefore, our area Lutheran high schools have great relevance in and of themselves to provide Christian education for these students as they prepare for lives of service to their Lord in a different vocation than representative ministry.

That is why Pastor Richard Strobel is still correct today as he was some 30 years ago when he emphasized the vital role the preparatory schools serve in WELS.

Our prep schools must remain the chief source of supply for NWC.<sup>21</sup> The place that they have in our educational system, especially with reference to the training of pastors, could never be filled by the area Lutheran high schools. For two reasons: 1) With but a few exceptions the preministerial course at area Lutheran high schools doesn’t compare all that favorably with that of the prep schools...However, if an area Lutheran high school in its recruitment efforts offers a preministerial course as the same product that is given in the prep schools, then it should see to it that it is the same, or at least very close to the same. 2) Area Lutheran high schools would not be able to recruit preministerial candidates in sufficient numbers and keep them in the system...So while the area Lutheran high schools have been serving as feeders...they could not take the place of the prep schools. Nor should they be expected to. This is not their purpose.<sup>22</sup>

Yet, there are still young men in our midst who decide not to go to LPS or MLS today. They may even be interested in full-time ministry as a pastor when they enroll at the nearby area Lutheran high school. Clyde Kaminska makes the encouraging comment when answering the question the title of his article poses, *Where Have All the Young Men Gone?* “Young men have not “gone” anywhere—they are still out there, waiting to be recruited for God’s ministry.”<sup>23</sup> Granted, area Lutheran high schools are not situated or purposed to fill the need of training and preparing all of the candidates for ministry in WELS. However, the author is convinced that they are in a unique position to recognize and identify those students in their halls and

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>21</sup> NWC refers to Northwestern College. NWC used to be the undergraduate college of ministry for those preparing to be pastors in WELS. NWC was located in Watertown, WI. NWC amalgamated with Dr. Martin Luther College, WELS teachers college, in 1995 to form the present day college of ministry for WELS, Martin Luther College. The quote could be updated for today to read, “Our prep schools must remain the chief source of supply for MLC.”

<sup>22</sup> Richard W. Strobel, “The Role of the Prep School in Our Educational System,” *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3622>, 12-13.

<sup>23</sup> Clyde W. Kaminska, “Where Have All the Young Men Gone?” *Springfielder* 38, no. 4 (March 1, 1975): 318.

classrooms that do have the qualifications and interest to be a pastor and influence them appropriately to carry on their preparations for full-time work as a pastor in WELS at MLC and WLS.

### ***An Historical Interlude: Winnebago Lutheran Academy and the Moussa Report***

The last high school mission statement analyzed above was from WLA, WELS' first high school without any aid or assistance from another synod, such as WLHS's joint venture between WELS and The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). The story about the high school is unique and inspiring. Paul Waldschmidt relates the account in his paper entitled, *Winnebago Lutheran Academy 1925-2000: 75 Years of God's Grace*.

According to sainted Pastor G.E. Bergemann of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fond du Lac, the idea of Winnebago Lutheran Academy actually was planted by a young girl at her graduation from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade of St. Peter's Lutheran elementary school. The story goes that this young graduate, Viola Zimmerman (class of 1929), interrupted her prepared address to the assembly to plead, "Please give us another year of Christian education at this school!" Her plead was heard. Under the guidance of Pastors Bergemann and his associate H.K. Moussa, the congregation decided to provide a 9<sup>th</sup> grade school year for its students.<sup>24</sup>

Enter Hans Koller Moussa. "Regarded as one of the pioneers of the Wisconsin Synod's periodical, *The Northwestern Lutheran*, Moussa used that medium to promote the virtues of Christian secondary education to the synod's members on a regular basis."<sup>25</sup> Moussa was also part of a committee established by WELS in the 1925 synod convention to study the educational system of the synod. The emphasis was on ministerial education. Paul Voss writes, "If Hans Koller Moussa was known for just one thing, it would most likely be the report which has come to simply be known as the "Moussa Report."<sup>26</sup> A letter was attached to the report of the committee presented at the 1927 synod convention. "The committee's secretary, Hans Koller Moussa, signed the letter, and the name has stuck ever since."<sup>27</sup> The five recommendations that the Moussa Report gave to the synod at convention follow:

- 1) Every parish in our Synod should have a day school with the aim of providing eight years of instruction.

---

<sup>24</sup> Paul S. Waldschmidt, "Winnebago Lutheran Academy 1925-2000: 75 Years of God's Grace," *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3546>, 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Voss, "The Man with a Plan: A Biography of Hans Koller Moussa," *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3701>, 14.

<sup>27</sup> Voss, 14.

- 2) Our college at Watertown and our Teachers' Seminary at New Ulm should **not** continue as preparatory schools.
- 3) The Synod should authorize and subsidize the establishment of preparatory schools, or academies, in many different parts of its territory, preferable according to conferences.
- 4) The Teachers' seminary should extend and vary its normal course to meet the needs of our day.
- 5) Northwestern College, which now has reached the full standard of the American college, should likewise, as prudence dictates, offer college courses that would serve others than those who intend to prepare for the ministry. If the commercial department is retained, it should be open to those only who have finished a satisfactory preparatory course.<sup>28</sup>

According to the committee, ministerial education started at the elementary level. Every congregation was to have an elementary school. The committee wanted to design ministerial influence from the bottom up. Waldschmidt comments,

Already in 1927, Moussa not only proposed the plan for the separation of the synod's college and preparatory schools (a plan that was, of course, eventually implemented), but also saw a shadow of the Area Lutheran High School system as it stands today. The main difference, of course, was that Moussa and his committee had envisioned that the purpose of the area high schools would be the secondary education of future called workers, and that producing qualified laymen would merely be a byproduct of these schools. Hence Winnebago Lutheran came to be called an "academy" rather than a "high school."<sup>29</sup>

Even in the name of the secondary school, ministerial education and influence was evident. Voss sheds some more light on Moussa and the committee's thinking:

Hans Moussa saw a need to change the way the education system was currently operating. He recognized the poor situation that the colleges in New Ulm and Watertown were in. The dormitories were being used to house both college and high school students, and the professors were being asked to teach both levels of education. This was not ideal in Moussa's, and the committee's mind. Rather, they thought the campi should have a sole focus—the education of post-high school students—while separate high schools should be established around the synod. Ideally, Moussa thought, there should be one such high school in each district, which would cut down on the need for dormitories.<sup>30</sup>

Moussa knew and understood firsthand the situations at the colleges and high schools. He served as an assistant and then as the acting Inspector, today's Dean of Students, at Northwestern College.

Voss also reports the response of the floor committee at the 1927 convention:

---

<sup>28</sup> 1927 Synodical Proceedings, 28. Emphasis WELS.

<sup>29</sup> Waldschmidt, 6.

<sup>30</sup> Voss, 15.

1) Make the proposed Dakota-Montana academy a synodical school subsidized and controlled exclusively by the synod.

2) Subsidize the Fond du Lac academy with \$1200 per year, contingent on synodical supervision.

3) Refer the “Report” to the Synodical Committee.

4) Instruct the Synodical Committee to create a visiting team to deal with other academies in the matter of synodical supervision and support.

Three of the four proposals were accepted, with the exception being measure number 2. Many reasons have been offered ranging from the possibility that some thought Fond du Lac may not have been a legitimate source of called workers to a shortfall of cash. Whatever the case may be, Winnebago would not receive funding from the synod and would be left to support itself.<sup>31</sup>

“Struggling to come up with cash, the Wisconsin Synod had to forego the idea of establishing a new preparatory school in each district.”<sup>32</sup> What happened is really a reversal of what Moussa and the committee envisioned. The area Lutheran high schools tend to educate the Christian laity first with ministerial preparation taking a secondary, perhaps even unintentional role as we have seen when considering six different mission statements of area Lutheran high schools.

Had Moussa’s plan been carried out, one can only speculate how the school system and question about supply of pastors would be shaped nearly 90 years later. However, we now find ourselves with 23 area Lutheran high schools throughout the districts of WELS. Certainly Moussa would be impressed with that. The author assumes that if Moussa would be alive today, he would be calling for more influence from these wonderful gems of the synod for young men to study for full-time service as a pastor in WELS.

This episode of history from WELS reminds us that although we may have a plan or desire for the future of our schools, in reality, the Lord may end up doing the opposite. Certainly, Moussa and the other men on the committee trusted in the Lord and sought his guidance as they met and studied the educational system that their fathers had entrusted to them. We will follow Moussa’s example and approach this subject with the same humility and trust. Perhaps certain individuals have had great success when it comes to ministerial recruitment. Others might even be envious of other high schools or even our preparatory schools. Let us ask the Lord of the Church to forgive our self-seeking agendas, and seek his guidance to carry out the noble work of influencing and educating the next generations of WELS pastors.

---

<sup>31</sup> Voss, 15,16.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 16.

***Relevance: Area Lutheran High Schools' Statistics***

Even though some of the mission statements do not express a strong emphasis on ministerial recruitment and influence, it does not mean that WELS cannot and should not look to our area Lutheran high schools to produce strong and many candidates for pastoral ministry. There is great relevance to the importance for the area Lutheran high schools of WELS to influence more young men to pursue pastoral ministry. Each of the schools does put a strong emphasis on Christian education and Lutheran education. Many students attend and graduate from these high schools as well.

We thank God for all the young men that he has guided to prepare for the pastoral ministry; however, consider these numbers. When looking at the entirety of area Lutheran high school enrollees at MLC in 2014, 106 students enrolled at MLC in the fall of 2014 from the area Lutheran high schools. Nine of those 106, or 8.5%, are in the pastor track. When considering that there were 1245 total area Lutheran high school graduates from the spring of 2014, the total percentage drops significantly to 0.7%. This means that less than one percent of all area Lutheran high school graduates enrolled in the pastor track at MLC in the fall of 2014.

It should be noted that 97 young men and women also enrolled at MLC from the area Lutheran high schools in the teacher track. So, a total of 106, or 8.5% of the area Lutheran high schools' 2014 graduating class did enroll to prepare for full-time ministry in WELS. Still, the area Lutheran high schools are ripe for harvesting a higher percentage of pastoral candidates each year. Just think about a percentage raise from 0.7% to 2%. This year it would mean a total of 25 students, 16 more than the total that actually enrolled in the pastor track. Using our area Lutheran high schools to influence more boys to prepare themselves for full-time ministry in WELS has great potential.

***Relevance: Preparatory Schools' Statistics***

Before we continue on, it is fair to remember the questions posed earlier. Should the low numbers of the 2000 graduates from WLHS entering the pastoral ministry be staggering or embarrassing? What does it matter? "WLHS's main purpose, or any other area Lutheran high school's for that matter, is not ministerial education," many will argue. "They have a different purpose than our preparatory schools (Luther Preparatory School and Michigan Lutheran Seminary)," others will suggest. Many will point to the fact that we have four ministerial

educational institutions supported by WELS and WLHS and other area Lutheran high schools are not in that list.

The answer could be “yes.” WELS has an extremely high focus on ministerial education at those four schools. The synod budgets, receives, and uses large sums of money to operate these institutions on a yearly basis. WELS did not abandon the preparatory school system that it developed to support Northwestern College (NWC) and WLS. WLS Professor John Brenner comments on WELS’ on-going commitment to pastoral education,

“Already in the 1860s our forefathers recognized the importance of having a school system that would provide young men with the training necessary to do seminary level work. Historians have noted the advantage that the Missouri Synod had for many decades because of its ministerial education system, including prep schools, colleges, and seminaries.<sup>33</sup> Because the Missouri Synod has allowed that system to be dismantled, Missouri’s seminaries now have to provide remedial training for incoming students who consequently have limited ability to do thorough exegetical work on the basis of the original languages...The seminary’s ability to train the kind of pastors that confessional Lutherans have come to expect, however, will be compromised if that system is allowed to deteriorate or to be dismantled.<sup>34</sup>

Also, Pastor John A. Kelly concludes, “One day we might have to ‘let go’ of the prep school system. But let’s not do it for the reasons that Missouri did—economic or social reasons. Let’s do it because we found a better way to prepare better pastors and teachers. Until we find that better system, let’s keep our prep school system with its beautiful single purpose—to prepare ‘workers for the Harvest.’”<sup>35</sup> One could not agree more with Professor Brenner or Pastor Kelly. Those schools with that “beautiful single purpose” do supply the majority of pastors in WELS. Thanks be to God for that.

But that doesn’t change the fact that our preparatory schools are sending lower numbers to MLC in the last couple of years. Of the 159 graduates from both WELS preparatory schools in 2014, 66 freshmen enrolled at MLC, 44 from LPS and 22 from MLS. The percentage of 41.5% is quite higher than the area Lutheran high schools, as it should be considering their single purpose. Nonetheless, less than half of the graduates continued on with that single purpose after graduation in 2014.

---

<sup>33</sup> Professor Brenner mentions to WLS seniors in his Modern Christianity course regularly that the Missouri Synod had a real advantage and probably experienced as much growth as it did in 19<sup>th</sup> century America because it was operating two seminaries—St. Louis, MO and Ft. Wayne, IN—from its conception.

<sup>34</sup> John M. Brenner, “Commitment to Pastoral Education,” *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/235>, 17.

<sup>35</sup> John A. Kelly, “W.E.L.S. Prep Schools: Are They Practical in the 1980’s and Beyond?” *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/2692>, 21.

Then, when we consider the focus of just the pastor track, only eighteen of the 66 preparatory school graduates who enrolled at MLC, or 11% of the total preparatory schools' 2014 graduates, are in that course of study. Now, certainly the preparatory schools' 11% is far greater than the area Lutheran high schools' 0.7%. Yet, neither is outright impressive, statistically speaking.

It is fair to say that the preparatory schools do send more students to MLC in the pastor track. However, especially in years when the numbers are down from the preparatory schools, it is even more important to utilize WELS area Lutheran high schools to encourage and influence boys to prepare for full-time service in WELS as pastors.

***Relevance: Pastoral Supply and Demand in WELS***

That leads us to the question of the pastoral supply and demand of WELS presently. The question of the supply always begins with the candidates studying at MLC and WLS. When looking at the total numbers in general, there is a continuing need for more influence toward pastoral ministry among all of the boys in WELS whether they are in grade schools, area Lutheran high schools, or preparatory schools. The raw numbers indicate a low number of students enrolled in the pastor track of the freshman class at MLC in 2014. Prep schools supplied eighteen, area Lutheran high schools sent nine, one student came from another independent or religious school, and eleven entered the pastor track from public schools for a grand total of 39 freshmen young men enrolled in the pastor track for the 2014 fall semester. When considering attrition rates and the size of the present senior class at WLS, 30 students,<sup>36</sup> this freshmen class size is quite low and could end up dipping into the twenties or even the teens come graduation from WLS.

This lower number of students in the pastor track is not just in the freshmen class. The total enrollment in the pastor track at MLC in the fall of 2014 was 149 students, which averages just above 37 students per class at MLC. One may expect attrition in each of these classes until their respective graduation dates at the seminary. Consider the seminary's enrollment numbers. WLS reports 89 students on campus, 32 vicaring, and two students in emergency service this year amounting to 123 total students.<sup>37</sup> From 2003 until 2011, numbers at MLC and WLS trended lower and then stabilized, while the population of our country and the world is trending

---

<sup>36</sup> The senior class has gone through most of its gains and losses and is approaching graduation and ordination in the spring and summer of 2015. No other additions or subtractions are expected at this point.

<sup>37</sup> Email correspondence with Administrator Paul Prange.

higher, approximately 7.3 billion people.<sup>38</sup> It is essential that WELS uses all of its resources available to influence more and more young men to consider preparing for the pastoral ministry.

Now another factor in pastoral supply and demand is the number of pastoral vacancies in WELS. Vacancies occur when a pastor dies while serving, resigns, retires, or follows another Divine Call to a different parish or ministry in WELS. The leaders of WELS determine the annual vacancy rate each year before WLS Call Day. Administrator Paul Prange relates, “As of November 18, 2014, there are 68 pastoral vacancies in WELS. Five of them are part-time positions. We expect the number of pastoral vacancies not to exceed 140 (a ‘10% vacancy rate’) at any one time in the foreseeable future. We figure the ‘annual vacancy rate’ just before we assign the graduates from WLS every year. In May 2014, that number was 91.”<sup>39</sup>

Presently, there are 68 vacancies and only 30 WLS graduates expected to receive a Divine Call in May 2015. There usually are additional candidates who have taken time off from school after graduating in years prior to pursue other studies. Plus Pastoral Studies Institute graduates are also added to the number of candidates. However, the total number of candidates will not likely equal the annual vacancy rate in WELS in 2015. Also, the vacancy number will likely go up by the time Call Day at WLS draws near. If the annual vacancy rate is comparable to 2014’s, and the total number of candidates for pastoral ministry does not increase greatly, then only one third of the vacancies will be filled.

There are certainly positives and negatives to this. One of the greatest negatives to consider is the fact that some congregations will have long vacancies. The other pastors in the circuit, especially the circuit pastor, will spend extra time and effort offering worship services and other pastoral care along with serving their own congregations. The purpose of having multiple congregations in a circuit is to divide the workload of an area between multiple pastors; with long-lasting or multiple vacancies, this is not realized.

One positive to consider is the movement of pastors in WELS. It is good to have pastors accepting Calls and going to serve in other areas with their particular gifts and abilities. Another positive would be that young men preparing for ministry can likely assume that there will be a position available for them to serve come Call Day. It helps supply encouragement and influence to those students in our preparatory schools and in area Lutheran high schools to

---

<sup>38</sup> Worldometers, “Current World Population,” <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>, (accessed 24 November 2014).

<sup>39</sup> Email correspondence with Administrator Paul Prange.

continue study for full-time ministry. It also allows those who recruit for ministry to echo the words of our Savior to the boys and young men that they serve, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37,38).

### ***Goal and Techniques***

To encourage WELS to utilize area Lutheran high schools to influence more men to consider training for pastoral ministry is the goal of this thesis. The author will study several approaches from six different area Lutheran high schools. These particular schools were selected because there were years when they had four or more students enroll at MLC in the pastor track during the last fifteen years. The author contacted each of the schools to ascertain if there was someone directly responsible for ministerial recruitment, especially for entrance into the pastor track, at each particular school. The author then sent surveys to the men identified by the principal of each high school. The author also found the names of each of the young men who enrolled in the pastor track at MLC from the particular schools during each year that fit the criteria identified above. The author is indebted to Mrs. Gwen Kral for her assistance with gathering this information at the MLC records office. The author gave each of the students an opportunity to respond to survey questions.

The survey was kept simple and pointed. There were several background questions, three key questions, and then follow-up questions. What follows are the questions asked of the ministerial recruiters at each of the six high schools. Background questions: 1) How is recruiting for the pastor track at MLC accomplished at your area Lutheran high school? 2) Have you tried to imitate the prep schools? If so, how, and does it work? 3) Respond: Comparing area Lutheran high schools to prep schools is not very profitable. Key questions: 1) What personal connection did you have with the students (particular students by name and year) who enrolled at MLC in the pastor track? Please answer for each individual student if possible. 2) What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from your area Lutheran high school during the designated years? 3) What can be replicated from those specific years? Follow up questions: 1) What can WELS do to assist area Lutheran high school recruitment efforts for the pastor track at MLC? What could be developed? 2) What question(s) were not asked that you believe should be considered when defending or defeating this thesis?

The following are the questions asked of the students who enrolled in the pastor track from the six selected high schools during specified years. Background question: What specific things were done at your area Lutheran high school to recruit you to enroll in the pastor track at MLC? Key questions: 1) What personal connection did you have with the ministerial education recruiter at your area Lutheran high school? 2) What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from your area Lutheran high school during the designated years? 3) What can be replicated from those specific years? Follow up question: What question(s) were not asked that you believe should be considered when defending or defeating this thesis?

I did not employ the use of face to face interviews. Many of the individuals, especially the recruiters at the school, did offer a phone call if I wanted to verify something or ask more questions about their comments. If one had more time to dig deeper into this topic, that researcher might want to do a more in depth interview with a larger pool of people involved.

### ***Thesis Statement***

It is the intent of the author to disclose information and procedures to strengthen the ministerial influence at area Lutheran high schools while still maintaining their proper missions and purposes that the author stated and analyzed above. Different techniques will be determined based on the case study approach outlined in the section previous.

This topic is of great interest to the author because of his specific journey to become a pastoral candidate for full-time service in the mission and ministry of WELS. Being a graduate of WLHS gives him the perspective of a student who attended an area Lutheran high school and had a desire to serve in the ministry of WELS. The author enjoyed his experiences at WLHS, yet wonders if those who help recruit students toward full-time service in WELS as a pastor could have done more to encourage him and others in his class to pursue these preparations. The author was also interested to see what other area Lutheran high schools are doing to promote and influence young men toward the pastoral ministry of WELS.

With this intent and an understanding of the relevance of this topic in the light of God's Word, the use of case studies of various area Lutheran high schools, including original research with recruiters for ministerial education and recruited students, will support and defend this thesis: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its area Lutheran high schools make a more concerted effort to provide

continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

## **Literature Review**

This topic is unique to WELS. The synod stands out as it makes ministerial education and training a priority for its future pastors. WELS still operates preparatory schools and area Lutheran high schools in order to train and influence students for full-time ministry as pastors. WELS continues to make a strong commitment to pastoral ministerial education evidenced by the amount of offerings allocated to operate the four ministerial education facilities. One result of these efforts is that WELS has more men enrolled at the seminary preparing to become pastors as their first career than men who have left previous professions to prepare for ministry. Not many other church bodies in America can make the same claim as WELS does when it comes to educating its clergy.

Because of this very point, relevant literature on the topic of influencing men to prepare for the ministry outside of WELS circles is not abundant, especially when it comes to secondary education. Even within our own circles, the literature is limited to a few papers and essays, some that only have a loose connection to ministerial recruitment in the area Lutheran high schools.

As noted above, that is why the author decided he needed to spend more time surveying specific area Lutheran high schools and past students, while still reading all that WELS has produced related to this subject. One essay really stands out among the rest, *The Role of Area Lutheran High Schools in Worker Training*, by Dr. Daniel Schmeling. Since the author will use the survey responses below to develop the case studies, the literature review will deal primarily with an analysis of Dr. Schmeling's paper<sup>40</sup> and the conclusions he made along with a look at the relevance of this thesis in the light of God's Word. The review will begin with the latter.

### ***Relevance: God's Word***

So, what is the point? Besides statistical and theoretical evidence urging WELS area Lutheran high schools to influence more students to prepare themselves for full-time ministry as a pastor, God's Word provides relevance for this topic as well in a general way. Certainly, Paul did not urge parents in the early New Testament Church to send their children to Galatian Lutheran High School, Antioch Academy, or Jerusalem Prep. But, God's Word does have

---

<sup>40</sup> Dr. Schmeling's entire paper is included as Appendix D.

principles for us to consider when it comes to influencing young men to serve as pastors in WELS today.

It all starts with Jesus. “Ever since the Lord Jesus recruited the Twelve Disciples and told some of them, ‘I will make you fishers of men,’ (Matthew 4:19) he has been providing the pastors for his Church.”<sup>41</sup> As Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians, “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11). The risen and ascended Lord Jesus gives gifts to his Church, and here the focus is on gifts of people. Every pastor and teacher in WELS is a gift from the Lord Jesus. Every administrator and professor is a gift from the Lord Jesus. Every recruiter for the ministry, whether at the preparatory school or at the area Lutheran high school, is a gift from the Lord Jesus. Also, every candidate for the ministry; a senior at WLS, or a vicar, a young man in the pastor track at MLC, a Sextaner at Luther Preparatory School, or a freshman at WLHS, even a young boy identified in fifth or sixth grade; is a gift from the Lord Jesus potentially to serve his Church as a full-time worker in the future. Knowing that Jesus is the Lord of the Church and the one who ultimately provides the ministers and candidates for ministry is a comforting biblical fact. However, Baumler warns any and every recruiter to not fall into the fatalistic trap of saying, “Jesus provides the workers! That is it!”

Maybe we need to say no more. Jesus provides the workers. Jesus has provided an apparent surplus of pastoral candidates among us for perhaps the next four years.<sup>42</sup> He will provide again when the need presents itself. I suppose that sounds good, that is, if it isn't merely fatalistic thinking. Beware, because it can become a formula for complacency and slothfulness.<sup>43</sup>

The Lord Jesus' compassion and love for his people is so great. He noticed and developed a plan for those sheep who were without a shepherd. Again, we look at the words of our Model Recruiter to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37,38). The Lord Jesus, himself, identified a need at his time to shepherd and care for the flocks and flocks of people. But, more importantly he tells all of his disciples, then and now, to bring this request to him, the Lord of the Harvest, in prayer. Come to him in prayer to fill the void, but

---

<sup>41</sup> Gary P. Baumler, “Providing the Next Generation of Pastors in the WELS: An Essay on the Role of Pastors in Recruiting More Pastors,” *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/86>, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Pastor Gaumler was tasked to write for his pastoral conference in January of 1987 when the supply of pastors was good but a possible shortfall of candidates was in the forecast for WELS.

<sup>43</sup> Baumler, 2.

also ask him to use you and your gifts in his service to that end. Baumler gets right to this point concerning prayer for pastoral candidates in his paper:

What should you do after you pray? Let me ask you first: Do you pray for more members in your church and then fail to visit the prospects brought to your attention? Do you pray for missions and then refuse to give any offerings for mission work? Do you pray that the Gospel will work in the hearts of your members and then neglect to preach it? If you agree it is unconscionable to imagine any such praying and consequent neglect, then ponder this: Can you pray for workers and then not say anything about the possibility to the potential workers Christ has entrusted to your care?<sup>44</sup>

Perhaps most recruiters, pastors, and teachers would be cut to the heart by these words. Then recognize them as a preaching of the law and a call to repentance. But, also use them as a guide for your ever growing zeal for the Lord's ministry created and sustained by the Spirit through Christ's perfection and redemption for us.

Prayer has a vital role, but the principle that the Lord Jesus uses his gifts of people for the Church to answer prayers is also important to keep in focus. In relationship to that, Baumler offers, "We need to view virtually every young man in the congregation at some point as a potential prospect."<sup>45</sup> Now, that is not to say that you must give an individualized recruitment talk to every single male student with whom you come into contact. Rather, the recruiter should keep his eyes open and not rule out this student or that because of certain predetermined surface qualifications: not a pastor's or teacher's son, not academically intelligent, etc.

Yet, that does not mean that we do not follow any criteria. Paul speaks to Pastor Timothy in a remarkable way, "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." (2 Timothy 2:1,2). Timothy is considered to be a reliable man. "Paul's Timothy had two things going for him from the start: he was weaned on the Word of God, and he had earned a good report among his fellow believers as a faithful Christian."<sup>46</sup> So, just as Paul identified Timothy as a young man who had a foundation on the Word of God, so should we. We should also keep our eyes open for one who displays an "exemplary Christian character and conduct."<sup>47</sup> Paul tasks him with finding other reliable men who will also serve as pastors and overseers of the flock. "So also we, *In Search of Timothy* today, should exercise a

---

<sup>44</sup> Baumler, 3.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Gary P. Baumler, "The Pastor As Recruiter For The Preaching Ministry: (In Search Of Timothy)," *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/88>, 3.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 3.

sanctified degree of selectivity. God has provided certain standards by which we can identify potential ministerial candidates.”<sup>48</sup>

Even though there is not a specific form of the gospel ministry in Scripture that completely corresponds to the pastor in WELS, the Apostle Paul gives specific qualifications for those with a desire to serve in representative ministry.

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap (1 Timothy 3:2-7).

Certainly, not all of these qualifications can be seen and measured in a high school aged boy or even one in college. Pastor Baumler has summarized these characteristics of Paul from 1 Timothy understanding that most of the young men recruiters will influence toward ministry are not yet married with families.

- Does the individual show signs of being *able to teach*? This qualification presupposes an ability to learn. Keep in mind, however, that a person does not have to be an “A” student in order to be able to teach; nor does every “A” student make a good teacher. While you should look for gifted students, remember that average students also may make good ministers.
- Does this person *get along well with other people*? A minister must work with people. Look for signs of an even temperament, friendliness, loving concern and gentleness. Does the prospect enjoy a good reputation with authorities and with peers?
- Does the student demonstrate *faithfulness* to God’s Word and faithfulness in carrying out assigned tasks? Faithfulness suggests commitment and motivation. Such persons feel good about serving God and people. They are dependable.
- Does the young person reflect a *sense of propriety and of priority*? How does the individual respond to the temptations of drink, sex, and related “youthful lusts?” How much do money and other material things matter in this person’s life?<sup>49</sup>

As you start recognizing and identifying boys and young men, it is imperative to keep these qualifications in mind. However, the two characteristics seen in Timothy are the most vital—a strong foundation on and love for the Word of God and a Christian character that is appreciated by others.

---

<sup>48</sup> Baumler II, 2

<sup>49</sup> Baumler, 3-4.

But these men must be trained and sent. Paul wrote to the Romans concerning the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ,

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Rom 10:14,15).

It is part of the role of every pastor, teacher, staff minister, or administrator to encourage young men to prepare themselves to be sent by the Lord of the Church through the Church to serve the Church as a full-time pastor or missionary. That would include those who are surrounded by young men at our area Lutheran high schools. The ministerial recruiters play an important and specific role, but the entire faculty has a role to play in this important and vital influence toward ministry.

Let us never lose our focus when it comes to the question of the supply of ministers and the role of prep schools and area Lutheran high school in supplying candidates for ministry. The Lord Jesus is in control and will supply the gifts that his church needs. The Lord Jesus urges his people to ask him to fill the voids and supply us with shepherds for the sheep. The Lord Jesus gives his Church certain qualifications, through his Apostle Paul, to aid her in identifying the young men that he has set before her to encourage, motivate, and influence toward full-time ministry. The Lord Jesus urges his ministers to recognize the gifts and special situations where he has placed them to provide encouragement for work in his kingdom as a pastor in WELS.

### ***The Schmeling Paper: A Critique***

Dr. Daniel M. Schmeling in 1992 wrote a response on behalf “of the administrators of the Commission on Parish Schools and the Board for Worker Training<sup>50</sup> to the Association of Lutheran High Schools regarding ways in which they could take a more expanded role in preparing candidates for the public ministry.”<sup>51</sup> It was Dr. Schmeling’s hope to “further a God-pleasing commitment and spirit of cooperation toward developing strategies that will aid in encouraging young men and women into entering the public ministry of the WELS.”<sup>52</sup>

Dr. Schmeling addressed the needs and opportunities for the gospel ministry. He made reference to the changing of transportation and communication at his time. The author would

---

<sup>50</sup> The names of these two entities in WELS were changed when the synod underwent restructuring. Presently they are now called the Commission on Lutheran Schools and the Board for Ministerial Education.

<sup>51</sup> Daniel M. Schmeling, “The Role of Areal Lutheran High Schools in Worker Training,” *WLS Essay File*, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1674>, 1.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

point out that this has grown exponentially since 1992. Because of these advances, he indicated that ministers of the gospel can now advance to even the most “remote regions of the world.”<sup>53</sup> He made the point, “Such a climate for ministry should be moving the hearts of men and women in record numbers to enter the public ministry of the gospel.”<sup>54</sup> The author would agree that the times and needs now are still great. The fields are still ripe. The accessibility of the world and its people is even greater. Yes, the Day still draws near. But, just these realities alone do not move hearts. The Holy Spirit working through his Word and Sacraments will ultimately bring about action in the hearts of young men to prepare for service in WELS as a pastor.

Dr. Schmeling continued to follow his theme, “For Such a Time as This,” by drawing parallels between his situation and time with the time of Esther. Just as God, placing Esther in the royal position and equipping her to carry out his mission, would end up blessing her and the Jewish people, so God has placed the leaders of WELS in positions to evoke change and influence for area Lutheran high schools to expand their role in preparing candidates for public ministry. He told of the wonderful blessings and experience that the Lord has given to WELS. He explained how the Lord “has provided all that we need for ministry in times such as [these].”<sup>55</sup> Finishing his background and motivation for writing, Dr. Schmeling called for cooperation in ministry among all of the different schools and institutions in WELS: “Times such as [these] call for cooperation among our schools at every level so that God’s mission can be accomplished through us.”<sup>56</sup> Certainly, this is a point that must be in consideration still today. This, however, can be tricky. Area Lutheran high schools have a federation of churches that support them. The high school then takes opportunities to recruit through those churches. Yet, ministerial education institutions are supported by the entire synod. So, there will be an overlap. Ultimately, this does not need to be an issue. The pastor should take the lead and encourage respect for both institutions and show his support for the area Lutheran high school and preparatory schools. We ask for God’s guidance and pray for patience as WELS continues to work together in training future pastors.

Next, Dr. Schmeling focused on the environment and history of secondary education in WELS. He pointed out that there was a time when WELS had secondary educational schools

---

<sup>53</sup> Schmeling, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 2.

with the main purpose to train future pastors and teachers in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota. These states are the hub of WELS in America. It made sense to have these preparatory schools there. But, as WELS branched out more and more, other areas throughout these states and others recognized a need for secondary Lutheran education in their locations as well.

“They established these congregationally supported secondary schools in the major areas of our synod with the **dual purpose** of preparing young men and women for the public ministry and preparing them for service as laymen and laywomen in our synod... These schools are staffed by men and women who are committed to the mission of the WELS. The boards, administrators, and teachers in these schools have consistently reaffirmed their desire to serve as a part of our synodical worker training system.”<sup>57</sup>

The author contends that this is still true in 2014 as it was in 1992. In his research, Dr. Schmeling found, “All area Lutheran high schools’ boards expressed complete support for the training of called workers in their schools. *Most* indicated that was one of the purposes for which the school was established.”<sup>58</sup> Yet, our study of six mission statements of area Lutheran high schools and the statistical data from this past year show that the first of the dual purpose listed by Schmeling is certainly the little brother to preparing students to be Christian laypeople.

Other points that were uncovered by Dr. Schmeling’s research that deserve consideration here follow. The author has identified points that have commonalities and grouped them together. He then placed them in an order fitting for him to comment on them.

1. *Most* ALHS expressed a desire for financial support to better enable them to improve their worker training program. Suggested options included: support for student housing facilities, support for a faculty position, and increased subsidy to ALHS for graduates entering DMLC and NWC. Two board members from different schools identically summarized this by stating that their high school could only be a viable contributor to the worker training system if it was a financially strong and viable school.<sup>59</sup>

This is still a factor for many area Lutheran high schools today. However, it is not the same across the board. The budgetary issues are always a concern for WELS area Lutheran high schools and their federations. Each one has its own issues. It appears that the board members at these two particular schools would have liked to see more financial support from the synod to the area Lutheran high schools that routinely send students to MLC.

---

<sup>57</sup> Schmeling, 3. Emphasis mine.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 4. Emphasis his.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 4. Emphasis his.

2. *Several* boards expressed concern that their school was viewed as “inadequate” for the preparation of pastoral candidates. This view is communicated to graduates of ALHS attending NWC. It is upheld by some area pastors who were educated through the preparatory school system and reinforced by preparatory school recruiters. They felt that the synod needs to communicate a clear message that ALHS are full partners in the preparation of called workers and that they have a viable and strong curriculum which can do the job.<sup>60</sup>

3. Board members of schools located near preparatory schools cited the negative effects of the competitive spirit which existed between the schools. Superior facilities available at the synodical schools as well as the competition for students—especially athletes—were mentioned. The schools closest to Northwestern Preparatory School especially expressed the negative effect this relationship had upon their ability to encourage students to attend Northwestern College.<sup>61</sup>

Points two and three together relate back to the matter of cooperation within WELS. The author would agree that a unifying message from the synod needs to be communicated clearly and regularly. Perhaps some feel that this is already being done. However, WELS should never become complacent in communicating this message. When it does, students and parents might have a negative impression of the ministerial education system to which the area Lutheran high school recruiters are trying to influence and encourage them. It does not serve the mission of WELS appropriately to allow the competitive spirit to drive young men away from even considering the pastoral ministry.

4. *All* ALHS expressed a confidence that the recruitment potential was better than the past. They cited a variety of programs that have been begun recently which are aimed at encouraging men and women into the public ministry. They also recognized the need to do more than has been done in the past. The need for positive role models among pastors and teachers was frequently mentioned as a hope for the future.<sup>62</sup>

5. *Several* comments focused on the importance of providing “ministerial” experiences for students at both secondary and elementary levels. Activities such as “Taste of Ministry,” “Footsteps to the Ministry,” and “In His Service” were mentioned as practical examples of this approach. It was felt that such activities provided a positive introduction to ministry without the feeling of “recruitment.”<sup>63</sup>

Points four and five comment on the need to continue to identify ways that young men can become involved in ministry experiences while attending the area Lutheran high school.

Point four explains that several of these programs do exist and have made recruitment potential

---

<sup>60</sup> Schmeling, 4. Emphasis his.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 5. Emphasis his.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 5. Emphasis his.

better now than in the past. Point five gives titles to some ministerial experiences that should be maintained and promoted even more. These activities should be well planned and promoted especially to the students identified to have the characteristics and aptitudes outlined by the Apostle Paul as mentioned above.

The conclusion that Dr. Schmeling gave follows an outcome-based approach as he called it. He indicated the same thought as the author did above when considering the statistics of high school graduates entering the public ministry in WELS, “There must be significant increase in the number of Lutheran high school graduates entering the public ministry if the future needs of our synod are to be met.”<sup>64</sup> Turning his attention to the pastoral candidates, Schmeling outlined specific goals for each area Lutheran high school in his Appendix B for increasing the total percentage by 25% to NWC from 1992 until 1996 and then 10% annually from 1997 until 2000. He indicated that these increases would then “meet the desired synodical outcome.”<sup>65</sup>

Curriculum changes were also introduced by Dr. Schmeling. Administrator Paul Prange indicated that MLC has updated their entrance requirements and implemented courses to instruct students in the languages necessary for study at WLS.<sup>66</sup> The updated curriculum and entrance requirements that Dr. Schmeling hoped to have implemented are now in place. Related to curriculum is instruction. Dr. Schmeling suggested distance learning as an alternative to having Latin or German classes at the physical area Lutheran high school. Certainly, distance learning technologies exist today and are even being used. For example, the Commission on Lutheran Schools’ webpage offers this description of ALHS Online:

ALHS Online is another means the high schools use to carry out the Lord’s directive to do nurture and outreach. The online series of courses will be designed and taught from a Scriptural perspective. Every opportunity will be used to strengthen those who are Christians and reach out to those who do not as yet know and believe that Jesus is their Savior. Thus this program will, the Lord willing, strengthen the WELS’ ministry and also strengthen the high schools and the ALHS.

This online education program provides the high schools that comprise the ALHS with the opportunity to work together by sharing courses and instructors and thus make the unity even stronger.

---

<sup>64</sup> Schmeling, 5.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Administrator Paul Prange, Personal interview, 11 November 2014.

This online program will also give teachers who are not serving as a called teacher in a Lutheran school the opportunity to serve their Lord, high school students, and the church by teaching online courses.<sup>67</sup>

This new technology and opportunity may be a resource that will be helpful for influencing more young men to consider full-time ministry in WELS as a pastor. However, it will not be exactly in the way that Dr. Schmeling perhaps envisioned it in 1992. Since the curriculum requirements changed, the need for having Latin or German before entering MLC is no longer needed. Still, this mode of instruction could bring instructors who have a high passion for ministry recruitment and a great deal of influence, too, into the classrooms of every area Lutheran high school.

Again, Dr. Schmeling concluded that the climate and culture at all WELS schools must change in order not to impact recruitment for the public ministry negatively. Dr. Schmeling wrote,

Issues such as the drinking culture at our colleges, the anti-ministry attitude among many of our area Lutheran high school teachers, and the competitive spirit between the preparatory schools and some of the area Lutheran high schools need to be addressed by the responsible administrators. The Apostle Paul's attitude of self-effacement for the sake of the ministry of the gospel should serve as an example for us as we **seek to remove all obstacles** which might hinder young men and women from entering the public ministry.<sup>68</sup>

The author, again, agrees with Dr. Schmeling. The mission is to “go and make disciples of all nations by baptizing and by teaching” (Matthew 28:19). Anti-ministry attitudes will melt away when confronted with the gospel promise of Jesus, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Recruiting for ministry is recruiting for Jesus. Jesus' mission and purpose should always be our primary focus. Jesus established his Church and the Call for this exact purpose. By the forgiveness of Jesus, WELS will continue to strive to remove all obstacles and utilize preparatory schools and area Lutheran high schools to supply candidates for the pastoral ministry in WELS.

As the author was reading Dr. Schmeling's paper he tended to agree with many of the points he made and wondered what was really driving Dr. Schmeling. Therefore, the author arranged for a phone interview to gain a better understanding of Dr. Schmeling's views. When

---

<sup>67</sup> Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, “ALHS Online,” <http://www.wels.net/lutheran-schools/alhs-online>, (accessed 26 November 2014).

<sup>68</sup> Schmeling, 7. Emphasis mine.

the author interviewed Dr. Schmeling, the first question he asked was, “What was your ultimate goal? What did you envision would happen after delivering this paper?” The author wanted to get to the real heart of the matter as Dr. Schmeling saw it. Dr. Schmeling replied, “First, I wanted to encourage the area Lutheran high schools to take a more active role in recruiting people for ministry, especially young men as pastors.”<sup>69</sup> Dr. Schmeling was a graduate of WLHS, became a teacher, served as principal of WLHS, and as the administrator for the Board for Parish Schools. Ken Leverage, a long time teacher at WLHS, and Dr. Schmeling’s teacher, inspired him to become a teacher. However, no one ever mentioned the option of being a pastor to him while he was at WLHS. He thought this needed to change. He wanted the area Lutheran high schools to make this a part of their focus and mission.

Dr. Schmeling continued, “Second, I wanted to encourage synodical support for area Lutheran high schools as they accomplished number one above.”<sup>70</sup> Dr. Schmeling not only desired financial assistance, but also people resources as key for the area Lutheran high schools. He explained what he meant,

Prep schools have an important role in WELS. However, in my opinion, preps get the cream of the crop man and woman-power. Area Lutheran high schools get the leftovers. Provide more really quality man-power to the area Lutheran high schools. Please call men who are energetic, capable, and excited about recruiting for ministry. I wanted the district presidents to put such men on the call lists to the schools and make such assignments from DMLC<sup>71</sup> and WLS.

The author continued the interview with another question, “What were some tangible items that occurred in response to the paper?” Quickly, Dr. Schmeling named several high schools that called men to have recruitment for ministry part of their responsibilities. Also, “The discussion of what is our role in ministerial education got started again among various principals of area Lutheran high schools. Some inserted ministerial recruitment into their mission statements.<sup>72</sup> The schools set goals, numbers or percentages.”<sup>73</sup> As the case studies below unfold, the reader will notice that most of these high schools have identified a person to lead the recruitment for ministry process.

---

<sup>69</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview, 2 December 2014.

<sup>70</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview.

<sup>71</sup> DMLC at that time, now MLC.

<sup>72</sup> After studying the mission statements above, it appears that some of these high schools either never did do this or have either removed that focus once again or moved it to a more broad paragraph below the mission statement of the institution.

<sup>73</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview.

Along with the outcomes that did occur, Dr. Schmeling also commented on what did not happen.

My passion was not universal. Nobody openly disagreed, but many were not interested. The synod has never made the commitment to help area Lutheran high schools with recruitment as I had hoped, or as I envisioned it. I hoped that the district presidents would put a high priority on sending A+ guys, as he called them, to the area Lutheran high schools.<sup>74</sup>

The author finally wanted to know if Dr. Schmeling thought his paper succeeded or not. In his perspective, it succeeded to a small degree. “Part of the area Lutheran high schools was nudged to include leading men to pastoral ministry. It opened the synod’s eyes to a resource that was being untapped.”<sup>75</sup> These outcomes did alleviate “one of his greatest disappointments” that no one at WLHS ever encouraged him to be a pastor.<sup>76</sup>

Yet, it also did not succeed. Dr. Schmeling gave desired numbers that he wished to see enter DMLC and NWC from area Lutheran high schools, but they never happened. The author also realizes that the paper came at a time when the synod was about to amalgamate different ministerial schools. Just three years after this paper was delivered, MLC opened its doors to men studying in the teacher and pastor track as well as women preparing to be teachers. Luther Preparatory School then operated on the entire Watertown campus. Besides, the timing, Dr. Schmeling indicated that others did not share his vision. Perhaps he was even misunderstood to some degree. Dr. Schmeling’s paper did have an effect on ministerial recruitment at area Lutheran high schools to some extent, but not nearly to the degree that he was hoping.

## **Case Studies**

### ***Case Study 1: Fox Valley Lutheran High School***

For each of the case studies the author will relate the comments from several different respondents for the two key questions that we asked in the survey and recorded above: 1) What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from FVL during the designated years? 2) What can be replicated? Also, several of these schools have had great success in recruiting young men and women for ministry. When a particular high school recruiter sent more literature to indicate his ministerial recruitment approach, the author will relate and analyze some of the main points related to this thesis.

---

<sup>74</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview.

<sup>75</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview.

<sup>76</sup> Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Personal interview.

The first school that we will give our attention to is FVL. Pastor Dave Wenzel is the one who oversees the ministerial recruitment at FVL. Pastor Wenzel, with the help of the Holy Spirit, has done an exceptional job at FVL when it comes to influencing young men toward pastoral ministry. In the past 14 years, FVL has had 5 classes that fit the criteria of having more than three students enroll in the pastor track at MLC. In fact two years in a row they sent seven students to MLC in the pastor track, 2000 and 2001. Pastor Wenzel is very committed to ministerial recruitment, and works to get the entire faculty on the same page when it comes to this issue.

Pastor Wenzel has a specific plan that he has put together for ministry recruitment at FVL.<sup>77</sup> He has presented his approach to the faculty so that they can be involved in the process. Pastor Wenzel identified six keys for success:

1. Pray
2. School climate must be pro ministry
3. Identify candidates for ministry
4. Focus weekend
5. MLC's visit to your school
6. Taste of ministry<sup>78</sup>

### *Prayer*

Prayer fits right in with the biblical emphasis above. One should start the process and continue it asking the Lord of the Church and Harvest to provide workers for his kingdom. Pastor Wenzel, setting this key for success at number one, shows the emphasis and importance of prayer when recruiting future pastors.

### *School Climate Must Be Pro Ministry*

As mentioned above, Pastor Wenzel makes an effort to have the entire faculty on board with ministerial recruitment efforts. Wenzel writes:

The higher the percentage of teachers that exude a love for ministry, the higher the percentage of students who will consider ministry. The higher the percentage of faculty who participate in ministry recruitment, the higher the percentage of students who will consider ministry.<sup>79</sup>

Pastor Wenzel recruits specific teachers, coaches, and advisors to serve as mentors for those identified as potential candidates. He also encourages the faculty to “adopt an MLC

---

<sup>77</sup> Two documents that Pastor Wenzel provided can be found as Appendixes A and B.

<sup>78</sup> Dave Wenzel, “Ministry recruitment at FVL,” Provided by the author, 18 November 2014.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

student.”<sup>80</sup> Pastor Wenzel plans out the entire year’s focus on ministerial recruitment and starts with the faculty in-service meetings at FVL in August. He uses that time “to address faculty about the need for ministry recruitment. He encourages the faculty with four specific points:

1. Use report card comments that encourage ministry.
2. Put MLC’s visit to FVL on your calendar: send Pastor names and personally encourage student/athlete/advisee to see the MLC rep.
3. Encourage faculty to sign up to “sponsor” an FVL grad MLC student. They can send them emails, care packages, a small gift card, words of encouragement, etc. throughout the year.
4. Consider “adopting” an FVL student to mentor toward ministry.<sup>81</sup>

Having the teachers on the same page, supporting and joining in with the work of the ministerial recruiter, is very important to FVL’s process. This certainly helps the climate be pro ministry. Added to that, Pastor Wenzel actively displays MLC posters and attire. He also includes education and information to the entire federation and school parents that ministerial recruitment does and will take place at FVL. He specifically makes the point, “Educate students and parents so that they understand that encouragement for ministry is a compliment, not a command.”<sup>82</sup>

#### *Identify Candidates for Ministry*

Pastor Wenzel recognizes that he is not the only one who can identify candidates for ministry. On the first day of classes at FVL, all of the religion teachers survey the students on their particular career plans. All the students that indicate ministry are sent to him and he sets up a contact plan. He specifically targets the first semester juniors in the school’s Romans class, since they will be considering college options quite seriously in the junior year and it would be too late to wait for the senior year. One of the respondents to the survey adds, “There were general comments made to encourage me to be a pastor that came from a variety of teachers. If someone exhibited qualities for ministry, they were encouraged.”<sup>83</sup> Besides the identification process at the school, Pastor Wenzel also relies on federation pastors and teachers, faculty, parents, and other students at FVL.

---

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Dave Wenzel, “FVL’s MLC Recruitment Plan,” Provided by the author, 18 November 2014, 1.

<sup>82</sup> Wenzel, 1.

<sup>83</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 1, 3 November 2014.

### *Focus Weekend*

Pastor Wenzel plans these Focus Trips to MLC with great diligence and care. His goal is to make the trip “a high quality experience with a high quality group.”<sup>84</sup> Pastor Wenzel continues to foster a positive, pro ministry environment as he conducts these trips. Pastor Wenzel indicated that he will try to make use of FVL alumni while the students are on the trip. Along with that, clear expectations are discussed and the students have a chance to share their thoughts and experiences when they debrief after the trip is completed.

### *MLC’s Visit to Your School*

As mentioned above, Pastor Wenzel encourages the faculty to mark this date on their calendars and encourage students with whom they have contact to meet with the MLC representative. But he also uses students at MLC to help with this. MLC juniors from FVL are asked to recruit FVL senior candidates. Also, Pastor Wenzel uses this time to make a concerted effort to contact all of the juniors and seniors on his MLC list to encourage them to sign up to see the MLC recruiters. He even includes time for the MLC representatives to give a presentation to the freshmen Old Testament classes.

### *Taste of Ministry*

One key to making this a quality program is the assignment of pastor-mentors that the students observe and shadow. “Recruit good mentors” is at the top of Pastor Wenzel’s list regarding these experiences.<sup>85</sup> Pastor Wenzel looks for different kinds of ministry experiences for the students including activities in a grade school, church, or even at the high school. Once again, Pastor Wenzel plans a debriefing session with all of the students who participate in the program.

Pastor Wenzel has a very thorough and well thought out plan for ministry recruitment. Much is being done at FVL to influence young men to consider preparing for full-time ministry in WELS.

When considering the question about mimicking the prep schools, Pastor Wenzel admits that he does try to do this somewhat. He comments, “I try to imitate the prep schools’ commitment to hold ministry in front of all of their students. That is not FVL’s mission, so my goal is narrower. While I do my best, with God’s help, to model ministry to all of our students, I

---

<sup>84</sup> Dave Wenzel, “Ministry recruitment at FVL.”

<sup>85</sup> Dave Wenzel, “Ministry recruitment at FVL.”

try to talk ministry, encourage ministry, and recruit for ministry among the pool of viable candidates.”<sup>86</sup>

However, Pastor Wenzel does point out four advantages that prep schools have that FVL cannot duplicate.

1. Every student who enrolls at LPS/MLS agrees that they are open to the possibility of full time ministry. Not only aren't FVL students asked to agree to that, but there are many who are not realistic candidates for ministry. Furthermore, some who **are** good candidates have parents who will discourage MLC as a choice. The majority of LPS/MLS kids' parents encourage ministry. This is a significant factor.
2. LPS/MLS have a significant percentage of their students who commit to ministry. As a result, a student at LPS/MLS who is on the bubble about MLC experiences a good deal of positive peer pressure from classmates **and from upperclassmen** to strongly consider MLC. In my opinion, it is logistically unfeasible for area Lutheran high schools to duplicate that positive peer pressure.
3. The majority of prep school students live in the dorm. The guys' dorms are supervised by tutors who are usually WLS graduates. These young pastors model ministry 24/7 in the classroom, dorms, student unions, student activities, etc. FVL does not have a dorm. The faculty's influence is limited to school hours and co-curriculars.
4. FVL has 3 pastors on staff. Most prep schools have quite a few more pastors teaching a variety of subjects. We have more success recruiting males for the teaching ministry at FVL than pastoral ministry. I believe that one reason is that students see and identify with many English teachers, history teachers, phyed instructors, guidance counselors, coaches, etc. that are DMLC/MLC grads.<sup>87</sup>

Pastor Wenzel believes that it can be profitable to imitate preparatory schools where one can. He indicated several ways that FVL does that. Yet, he still makes the point, “the four factors listed above are going to always be significant advantages that the prep schools have that area Lutheran high schools find difficult, if not impossible to duplicate.”<sup>88</sup>

Pastor Wenzel also remarks about the personal connections that he had with the students who did enroll at MLC in the pastor track during the past fourteen years.

I had each of these students in class at least one semester of religion class. Most of them accompanied me on two Focus on Ministry trips to MLC. I worked with a number of them in preparing and delivering a chapel message. A number of them did a “taste of

---

<sup>86</sup> Dave Wenzel, Personal interview, 16 November 2014.

<sup>87</sup> Dave Wenzel, Personal interview. Emphasis mine.

<sup>88</sup> Dave Wenzel, Personal interview.

ministry” Saturday/Sunday with a local pastor. I talked to many of them after class, in my office, in the hallways, and in commons.<sup>89</sup>

Pastor Wenzel had much direct involvement with all of the students identified from the five specific years of sending more than three to MLC in the pastor track. He recognizes that he is blessed to have time in his schedule throughout the week in order to focus primarily on ministerial recruitment. The BME rewards a grant to several area Lutheran high schools that have a specific, organized plan for ministerial recruitment. Because of these funds, FVL was able to make that release time available for Pastor Wenzel.

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from FVL during the designated years?*

Pastor Shane Krause, one of the respondents, remembers and appreciates the time that the pastors on the FVL faculty took to encourage him toward public ministry. “It was a frequent topic of conversation,” he replied.<sup>90</sup> Another respondent makes the same point but also adds other pastors from the area with whom he was able to associate, “The quality pastors we had at FVL at that time—they were a good example of pastors who loved being pastors. I would also put my home church pastor and another area pastor I got to know well in the same category. They showed me what joy in the ministry looked like.”<sup>91</sup> All of the respondents from FVL related their appreciation of the time and conversations that they had with Pastor Wenzel and the other pastors from the faculty.

Another factor drawn out of the surveys was positive peer pressure. One respondent frankly states, “Peer influence. Strong student leaders in the class that studied to be pastors caused higher enrollment.”<sup>92</sup> One of his classmates added, “Also having a few young men the year ahead of us also helped to do this. Not only that, but (the students) were at the top of the class academically, and both great athletes. So, perhaps that helped to show that smart and talented students could want to be pastors, too.”<sup>93</sup> A different respondent from a different class also made this point. “I think that all of us were talking about MLC early on in our high school years. Perhaps having that group encouraged each other along.”<sup>94</sup> Pastor Wenzel makes this

---

<sup>89</sup> Dave Wenzel, Personal interview.

<sup>90</sup> Shane Krause, Personal interview, 27 October 2014.

<sup>91</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 1.

<sup>92</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 2, 12 November 2014.

<sup>93</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 1.

<sup>94</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 3, 29 November 2014.

comment as well. He struggles with the following inconsistency. He has done many things the same over his 20+ years at FVL with a variety of results. He finally answers the question, “Other than stating the obvious: the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of young men, the only thing I can guess at is that some years there was some very positive peer pressure.”<sup>95</sup>

Also, a very simple response one respondent gave should be remembered by all recruiting for pastoral ministry, “I can think of 3-4 who simply had been given a heart’s desire to do it and were encouraged by faculty at FVL.”<sup>96</sup> The young men who attend area Lutheran high schools with a desire to prepare for pastoral ministry must not be forgotten. They should not be neglected as students that do not need guidance. The encouragement is still useful for them as they are confronted with many good options for a career. If they already have this desire, recruiters should continue to fan the flame of zeal in their hearts so that it does not go out. *What can be replicated from those specific years?*

The teacher’s desire to serve, especially among the pastors at area Lutheran high schools, is extremely important and needs to be replicated. One respondent wrote, “Teachers that loved the ministry. You could see it in their demeanor and preparation and the way they spoke about the ministry.”<sup>97</sup> Along with the pastors and teachers as identifiers and influencers, the other students planning to prepare for pastoral ministry should develop personal connections. The respondent summed it up well,

Students with noted gifts and potential to serve as pastors could be given time with upper classmen who plan to attend MLC. Also, make sure those same students had ample opportunity to have some one-on-one time with the pastors on staff at FVL. These faculty members and peers would be the recruitment source in the area Lutheran high school environment with the closest relationships to the student (rather than a newcomer on the scene like an MLC recruiter). Those closer relationships might provide more specific and genuine encouragement toward the pastoral ministry.<sup>98</sup>

### ***Case Study 2: Lakeside Lutheran High School***

Pastor Clark Schultz was tasked with strengthening the ministerial recruitment at LL. He also has benefited from the BME’s grant to WELS area Lutheran high schools for ministerial education recruitment. Like Pastor Wenzel, Pastor Schultz has a written plan for ministry recruitment that he shared with the author. His plan has different action points that should take

---

<sup>95</sup> Dave Wenzel, Personal interview.

<sup>96</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 1.

<sup>97</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 2.

<sup>98</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 1.

place during each of the months of the school year. At the beginning of the year he sets up times to meet with all of the juniors and seniors who are interested in MLC. He also has a taste of ministry event where the students shadow a pastor. In addition, he gives the details for the MLC fall focus.

Pastor Schultz has all the trips to MLC and WLS on the calendar at the beginning of the year. Many of the schools indicate that they take a trip to MLC; Pastor Schultz works in two trips each year. He invites the MLC recruiters to LL and schedules time for them to enjoy lunch with students who are on the fence. In the past, he has brought Coach Doug Lange from MLC to talk to the students about the athletics program at MLC. He also has set up volunteering opportunities at Lighthouse Youth Center with Pastor Jim Buske. According to his schedule, Pastor Schultz focuses primarily on juniors and seniors. However, he does plan a sophomore trip to WLS as well.

Pastor Clark painted a broad and detailed picture of the ministry recruitment plan when he wrote,

One could be very specific in that every class we teach, we encourage ministry and continue to keep the thought of being a pastor or teacher as an option. As a religion department we meet and discuss post MLC recruitment visits and consider who are the students we should continue to encourage for ministry. I share with the faculty Laurie Gauger's emails about what's going on at MLC, encouraging the faculty and staff to print and display those in their classroom or work area. Throughout the year we encourage students, both pastor and teacher track to volunteer to write and conduct a chapel devotion. We also welcome LL Alumni at MLC to visit frequently, to EFE, to lead chapel, or just mix and mingle with current students. Equally, whenever the MLC recruiters are in the zip code for visits, formal, informal or just in the stands at a Warrior event, we help them to make any connection with parents and students. To wrap it up, we as faculty continue to model and display our love for our Lord and for the ministry. That is the best recruitment for our students: Love our Lord and love what you do!<sup>99</sup>

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from LL during the designated years?*

A really important aspect is understood when one looks at the responses from the 2001 graduating class. This class was not influenced by Pastor Clark Schultz because he was not serving at the school yet. When asked about the ministerial education recruiter at LL, one responds, "If you are asking about a recruiter who was on staff at my area Lutheran high school,

---

<sup>99</sup> Clark Schultz, "Lakeside Recruitment for Ministry," Provided by the author, 27 October 2014. This document is available as Appendix C.

I don't think there was one.”<sup>100</sup> Pastor Nathaniel Timmermann also responds, “I don't remember who our recruiter was when I was there.”<sup>101</sup> These students remember being involved in several different ministry activities, but there was no one person to whom they could point that specifically was in charge of ministerial recruitment. Pastor Jonathan Klein offers this reason for the higher number from 2001, “I think that's just where our passion was. Four out of the five who went up to MLC for pastor track saw it through to the end.”<sup>102</sup>

Yet, since Pastor Schultz came on the scene, a more pointed and intentional approach to ministerial recruitment has taken place at LL. “[Three of the young men] were in the first 10<sup>th</sup> grade class I taught. From there the seed was planted, as it is every year, to ‘think’ about ministry.”<sup>103</sup> Pastor Schultz explains that he tries to foster peer encouragement as much as possible. “If you have the ‘cool’ guys thinking driving 5 ½ hours is ok, and then having those guys come back and walk the halls and mingle with the next year's class of seniors, guess what, more people want to jump on that train.”<sup>104</sup> Peer influence is a common thread at FVL and at LL. Expanding upon peer influence, Pastor Schultz writes, “I feel constant communication with the alumni at MLC is important. Having them speak to classes or lead a chapel or be a face for the students to connect with becomes a major recruitment asset.”<sup>105</sup>

Pastor Schultz brought about a school climate that thinks about ministerial recruitment. He gives credit to the faculty and principal, “Again having the support of the faculty and our principal to allow the constant face of MLC to be in the face of our students has helped make this a fun ride.”<sup>106</sup> Matthew Proeber, a student at MLC, gave credit to Pastor Schultz, too,

Pastor Clark (as the students affectionately call him) has been instrumental in recruiting for MLC. Although we only had him for one year as a sophomore religion teacher, he made sure to stay in contact with us. God's truly blessed his work. He also was one of those teachers in high school that students could really relate to. Personally, languages were a concern for me, and it was comforting to know that Pastor Clark also shared in those struggles.<sup>107</sup>

Another student from Proeber's class responds with the same thoughts that Pastor Schultz was hoping to convey and accomplish,

---

<sup>100</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 4, 1 December 2014.

<sup>101</sup> Nathaniel Timmermann, Personal interview, 23 October 2014.

<sup>102</sup> Jonathan Klein, Personal interview, 20 November 2014.

<sup>103</sup> Clark Schultz, Personal interview, 27 October 2014.

<sup>104</sup> Clark Schultz, Personal interview.

<sup>105</sup> Clark Schultz, Personal interview.

<sup>106</sup> Clark Schultz, Personal interview.

<sup>107</sup> Matthew Proeber, Personal interview, 22 October 2014.

I think along with the prodding of Pastor Clark, one of the biggest things which added to a higher enrollment of pastor track students was a sense of comradeship between the four of us. From the MLC Focus on Ministry trips, we embraced the idea together, and we looked forward to the long term commitment we were making. Going to MLC seemed to be the cool thing to do our senior year.<sup>108</sup>

Another student shared the same sentiments, “I believe that peer pressure played a factor. The four candidates from my class all had a similar mindset our senior year of high school. We all took Latin together and bonded over our choices and decisions.”<sup>109</sup>

*What can be replicated from those specific years?*

When it comes to what can be replicated, the student responders give various points. Face to face time with the MLC recruiter and trips to MLC and WLS should be continued. Preaching for chapel, shadowing a pastor, and other involvement in the local congregations are cited.

What really comes forward at the top of the list when considering LL, is the involvement of the ministry recruitment director. A respondent from the class several years before Pastor Clark Schultz’s time offers this suggestion, “They could have had a person on staff who is responsible for identifying and encouraging people to attend MLC. Maybe they have this now. If they had someone like that when I was in school, it was not obvious as to who it was.”<sup>110</sup> This quote is remarkable to the author. Certainly LL does have this in place now in the person of Pastor Schultz. Yet, it is important to note that this is something identified as being important and vital in recruiting young men for the pastoral ministry. To add to this, one of Pastor Schultz’s recruits summarizes what can be replicated in two points:

1) I personally believe in the power of the student-teacher relationship and believe that teachers can positively shape a student’s future. I think that our senior class has a good relationship with Pastor Clark who really pushed MLC as a fun, rewarding option. This personal prodding paid huge dividends.

2) I also believe that the student-student relationship is even more powerful. If teachers can create a ministry orientated culture where MLC is ‘cool,’ the other students will do much of the recruiting work for them.<sup>111</sup>

Pastor Clark Schultz concludes with this thought: “Put the right people in the right places that set them up for success. By that I mean, a person who has a full class load, coaches, has a

---

<sup>108</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 5, 25 October 2015.

<sup>109</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 6, 31 October 2014.

<sup>110</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 4, Redfield.

<sup>111</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 5.

big family and has little time for the recruitment piece, is not the right person to be doing the encouraging of ministry.”<sup>112</sup> His point is well taken. The person should be intentionally identified and chosen to give a significant amount of time and energy to this important task at the area Lutheran high school.

### ***Case Study 3: Wisconsin Lutheran High School***

The chairman/director of the ministerial recruitment committee at WLHS outlines the basic procedure for recruitment at WLHS, “Surveys are taken, thorough interest given, efforts are made to match students with MLC recruiters. Focus trips are offered and taken. Guest chapel presenters/pastors are invited throughout the year. Continued gatherings of interested students are conducted throughout the years while at WLHS.”<sup>113</sup>

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from WLHS during the designated years?*

According to the recruitment director, the results of any particular year are not really a result of the school’s procedures or activities. “Most of the time the numbers increase due to the particular class make-up and not a change in process,” reports the ministerial recruitment director.<sup>114</sup> The committee does put together many events and opportunities for students who have already thought about studying for the ministry. Andrew Gerlach, a former WLHS student recruited for ministry, mentions several of these, “We met with MLC reps after filling out surveys about our interest in public ministry. Individuals made comments on report cards. Individual teachers gave personal encouragement. Chapel speakers mentioned public ministry. I think current MLC students came to WLHS to present/answer questions.”<sup>115</sup>

However, the personal touch that was mentioned and evident at FVL and LL seems to be missing at WLHS, or at least not being done to the same extent as it is at the other schools. When asked about what personal connection Gerlach had with the ministerial recruiter at WLHS, he responded, “None.”<sup>116</sup> Pastor Jeffrey Sonntag gave the same kind of response, “I don’t recall any specific person from WLHS having the specific job of recruiting or encouraging me to ministry.”<sup>117</sup> Now whether a school has a committee/recruiters or not, if the students, especially

---

<sup>112</sup> Clark Schultz, Personal interview.

<sup>113</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 7, 4 November 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 7.

<sup>115</sup> Andrew Gerlach, Personal interview, 31 October 2014.

<sup>116</sup> Andrew Gerlach, Personal interview.

<sup>117</sup> Jeffrey Sonntag, Personal interview, 12 November 2014.

those who have gone through the entire system and became a pastor, do not recall them, then they are not visible, effective, or memorable. Another student commented, “I don’t really remember too much of a connection. He continued:

I think I may have only had one teacher that actually told me I would be a good pastor, while all the other teachers that thought so would just write a statement on the report card, ‘Has gifts which could be used in the ministry.’ Yet, this isn’t really much encouragement. It seemed pretty cold and devoid of feeling. If you actually want to offer someone encouragement that will stick with them, talk to them one on one. Show them that you care by taking them aside and telling them. Don’t just write it on a report card.<sup>118</sup>

Perhaps it was this lack of personal connection, or perhaps it was something else, but most of the respondents conclude in various ways that they do not know or cannot say why there was an increased enrollment to MLC from their respective classes. Andrew Gerlach concludes, “I don’t think there was any specific ‘cause.’ It just happened that more individuals were interested.”<sup>119</sup> One could take this comment two ways. First, this is a matter of conviction and the heart. The Holy Spirit moves young men by the gospel to consider preparations for the ministry. But, the author also contends that we cannot let it just happen in an atmosphere lacking the needed encouragement. Instead a more concerted effort needs to be determined and put into action. This effort does seem to be taking place at WLHS now. The recruitment director indicates, “WLHS is a unique gathering of WELS and potential WELS students. The approach taken has shown results, but there is so much more to accomplish.”<sup>120</sup> Andrew Gerlach supports this with his own comment, “I currently teach at WLHS and serve on the committee for recruitment for public ministry. Whatever was done in those years is being done now and to a much greater extent.”<sup>121</sup>

*What can be replicated from those specific years?*

Some of the same kinds of things seen in the FVL and LL study are designated here as well: trips to MLC, former students coming to speak about life at MLC, supporting a campus pastor who has encouragement toward ministry as one of his tasks. Andrew Gerlach again makes a valid observation, “Perhaps an influential factor is personal connection—not with an

---

<sup>118</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 8, 31 October 2014.

<sup>119</sup> Andrew Gerlach, Personal interview.

<sup>120</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 7.

<sup>121</sup> Andrew Gerlach, Personal interview.

MLC rep, because students meet him or her maybe once a year, but rather with individual teachers within the area Lutheran high schools.”<sup>122</sup>

#### ***Case Study 4: St. Croix Lutheran High School***

The author was not able to receive any information from the ministry recruitment director; however, he did receive responses from SCL graduates. They explained the different things that were done to recruit students for ministry. MLC student, Tyler Swiderski recalled, “Various recruiters came by once every couple months to tell us more of what life was like and what I would need to do at MLC. There were very informative Focus on Ministry trips about twice a year. We also had the option of leading the school in chapel.”<sup>123</sup>

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from SCL during the designated years?*

Chester Reinemann, also a present MLC student, indicates that he did not have much of a personal connection with the ministerial recruiter at SCL. In fact, he first spent a year at a public university before deciding to enroll at MLC. He does include this thought concerning the four other men who enrolled with him from the following graduating class of SCL, “The only reason for the higher enrollment at MLC of the guys one year below me that I can think of is the new pastor who became in charge of recruiting for the pastor track. He is Pastor Sutton, a cool, buff dude who had his first call in Alaska. Pastor Sutton is a very likeable guy who could easily sway a student sitting on the fence to go into ministry.”<sup>124</sup>

*What can be replicated from those specific years?*

The respondents concur that the Focus on Ministry trips to MLC, meeting an MLC representative, and leading a chapel service should be continued. Chester Reinemann concludes,

“Area Lutheran high school instructors and especially the campus pastors should actively look for pastoral traits in students and encourage those men to consider ministry. The school should keep having a pastor designated to gathering interest for pastoral ministry. The school should keep a strong emphasis on the gospel of Christ’s forgiveness at the center of everything because there is no greater motivator.”<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> Andrew Gerlach, Personal interview.

<sup>123</sup> Tyler Swiderski, Personal interview, 30 November 2014.

<sup>124</sup> Chester Reinemann, Personal interview, 2 December 2014.

<sup>125</sup> Chester Reinemann, Personal interview.

### *Case Study 5: Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School*

“Recruiting for the pastor track is done formally and informally,” reports Pastor Ron Mehlberg.<sup>126</sup> Formally, KML offers a Taste of Ministry program for junior and senior guys every year. “Every year that there is recruitment night and day at the Sem, we send as many as we can. We encourage by comments on report cards. We afford the opportunity to our senior boys to conduct chapel at KML. I take students to Focus on Ministry at MLC every year.”<sup>127</sup> Also, informally, Pastor Mehlberg states that he would encourage the young men individually and “speak of the blessings of ministry in religion classes.”<sup>128</sup> Pastor Mehlberg puts an emphasis on personal connections, “I usually have quite a bit of contact in class and out with those I teach. In addition, I speak with them in the hallways. I try to keep to a minimum the ‘call them into my office to talk ministry’ occasions. I feel the informal is so much more productive.”<sup>129</sup> He remembers good informal connections with all of the young men who enrolled at MLC in one way or another.

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from KML during the designated years?*

Christopher Pflughoeft, a current MLC student, had a strong connection with Pastor Mehlberg, “I had a great experience with Pastor Mehlberg personally as a teacher, and my relationship with him made me greatly consider becoming a pastor.”<sup>130</sup> Christopher’s classmate, Martin Loescher, gives his thoughts, “The examples that certain pastors at KML and other churches set played a key role. Also, the Focus Trips played a big role as well.”<sup>131</sup> Once again, the personal connections with the recruiter and other pastors made a great impact on these young men. However, Christopher also comments, “But outside of my personal relationship with Pastor Mehlberg, there were not many influences encouraging me into the ministry. We were always told at KML that we could do whatever career we want. So, when the idea of going to MLC came to me, it was accepted, but not really encouraged or discouraged.”<sup>132</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> Ron Mehlberg, Personal interview, 4 November 2014.

<sup>127</sup> Ron Mehlberg, Personal interview.

<sup>128</sup> Ron Mehlberg, Personal interview.

<sup>129</sup> Ron Mehlberg, Personal interview.

<sup>130</sup> Christopher Pflughoeft, Personal interview, 23 October 2014.

<sup>131</sup> Martin Loescher, Personal interview, 22 October 2014.

<sup>132</sup> Christopher Pflughoeft, Personal interview.

*What can be replicated from those specific years?*

Pastor Mehlberg comments, “More opportunities for the high school guys to go to the Sem and hang out with the Sem guys for a night really benefited the majority of these guys. They get to see young men preparing for the ministry with whom they can identify. A few more opportunities for our guys at the Sem would be good.”<sup>133</sup> Listening to Pastor Mehlberg, it seems as if the question could be put to WLS. What can WLS do better to help influence area Lutheran high school boys to prepare for full-time service as a pastor? Pastor Mehlberg would contend that more of these opportunities would be a good step forward.

***Case Study 6: Winnebago Lutheran Academy***

WLA does many of the same things to influence and recruit young men toward the pastoral ministry that the other high schools do. It is a given that WLA attends the Focus on Ministry weekend at MLC. The MLC recruiters come twice a year to meet with students starting with the freshmen. The ministerial recruiter from WLA describes more activities they have in common with other area Lutheran high schools, “The students thinking about the pastor track are taken out by our local pastors for lunch once a year. I invite former students to come back and talk with the students or to also conduct chapel.”<sup>134</sup> Yet, even with these common activities and emphases, WLA’s ministry recruiter comments, “There have been students over the years that entered WLA with the thought of being a pastor, but as the years go on and other opportunities are offered to them, their career changes to something else. It is a challenge to keep them on the pastoral track.”<sup>135</sup> One can only imagine that many of the recruiters at area Lutheran high schools have the same thought and experience.

*What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from WLA during the designated years?*

The ministry recruiter from WLA puts his finger on the commonality that has been seen in all of the schools, “The students that were going on to MLC were very influential in encouraging others. When there is a good core of students thinking ministry that opens the doors for others to think the same thing. The programs have always been the same. I believe it is sometimes just the influence of the teachers they become close with.”<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>133</sup> Ron Mehlberg, Personal interview.

<sup>134</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 9, 12 November 2014.

<sup>135</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 9.

<sup>136</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 9.

*What can be replicated from those specific years?*

The role of the parents is one thing that was pointed out by the WLA respondents. Perhaps parents need to be involved in the recruitment process just as much as the students at times. WLA's recruiter does not have much to offer for this section, but does bring up a deterrent for studying for the ministry that he has heard often: "Every year I hear students say they don't want to attend MLC because of the cost, and then as pastors they don't make enough to pay back the loans. I don't agree with this, but it seems to be a never ending battle. Students just don't think pastors make enough money for the years they go to school."<sup>137</sup> This comment confirms the author's opinion, "The old joke is getting old." What is the old joke? Talking constantly in Bible classes and sermons about how little one makes as a pastor. Always being quick to chime in about how pastors only are interested in things that are free. Complaining that one's pay is low and one's pension is a joke around parishioners who have lost their jobs. Sadly, the old joke is now being used as a reason for young men not to study for full-time ministry as a pastor. It is important to point out that just as pastors make the best recruiters, they can also be the best deterrents toward ministry recruitment.

Again and again, the Lord Jesus comes with his forgiving love. He became poor so that you could be rich. He gave everything so that you could claim eternal life through him. Now our wonderful Savior still uses these jars of clay to do his work of finding, influencing, and training more young men to serve his Church as pastors. Put the old joke aside and show your love for the Lord Jesus and his ministry—that has a powerful influence on the young men around you.

## **Conclusions**

*What can be replicated?*

The MLC recruiter is going to come to every area Lutheran high school no matter what. They should, and they will. However, how is this event received and promoted? I think that many area Lutheran high schools would be benefited greatly by looking at what Pastor Clark Schultz and Pastor Dave Wenzel do to prepare for these meetings. Make sure identification of potential pastoral candidates is done long before the recruiter comes. Give ample time for students to know that the recruiters are coming. Prepare them by having your own meeting with the students prior. Also, consider how you can use the MLC recruiter beyond just being a person

---

<sup>137</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 9.

behind a door for a meeting. Invite him to preach for chapel. Invite him to give a presentation to every religion class in the school, freshmen through seniors. Invite him to welcome and greet the students when they arrive in the morning.

MLC Focus on Ministry visits are very helpful and influential for the student wondering if being a pastor is for him. The author remembers the first and only time he visited MLC during his senior year at WLHS. Going up the hill, he was thinking about law school and the UW system. Going down the hill, he was planning on enrolling at MLC as soon as he got home. Most of the respondents mentioned these trips. They are a must for every area Lutheran high school. With that said, the trips might not amount to much if they are not heavily promoted and portrayed in a positive light. Pastor Dave Wenzel makes this evident as he nurtures a pro ministry environment at FVL and plans these trips with care. Pastor Clark Schultz also recognizes the importance by offering two trips to MLC each year.

Another obvious, but perhaps underutilized, influencing factor is a trip to WLS. The pastor track students at MLC come to WLS during their junior and senior years. Some students might never have been to the seminary before those trips. It is encouraging to learn that a few of the high schools have made visits to WLS in the past. However, there was a plea for more of these opportunities in the future. Perhaps the Board for Ministerial Education and WLS could develop an annual program to get more area Lutheran high school boys on the campus and, more importantly, connected to the professors and students in a meaningful way.

Practical ministry involvement is important to many of the young men recruited to the pastoral ministry. Clyde Kaminska, a Missouri Synod professor, shared his research,

Spiritual experience at an early age was a highly motivating factor, and students cited opportunities to lead worship, to participate in worship services as acolytes and the like, and to participate in various opportunities to serve their fellow-men as quite important to their decisions. The students paid staggering tribute to their “desire to serve God” and their “desire to serve their fellow-men” as influences toward choice of the ministerial curriculum.<sup>138</sup>

The high schools gave many of the students surveyed opportunities to lead a chapel at their schools. Several area Lutheran high schools have a Taste of Ministry event. The students who express interest in ministry are connected with a local pastor to shadow for a day or two. These events will continue to be very beneficial for influencing young men when they are

---

<sup>138</sup> Kaminska, 317.

prepared well, when the students are matched with a pastor that really enjoys ministerial recruitment, and when they get to see a variety and abundance of pastoral work.

A pro ministry climate should certainly be replicated. This, however, will not happen by accident. It will also not happen if someone is not designated to lead the way when it comes to ministerial recruitment. Every area Lutheran high school would be encouraged to make sure that they have a person in charge of this unique function. It would also be beneficial for this person to have time designated for him to carry out these duties to a high degree. Other easy, but sometimes overlooked items include prominent MLC signage. Report card messages should be used with the caveat that they will never replace a personal, one-on-one relationship with the particular students. Every pastor and teacher on the faculty should make it evident that this is one career they are really passionate about, along with all the other options. This should be easy, since it is the career they chose.

Finally, pastors are still needed to be the primary recruiters of pastors. The preparatory schools are primarily run and operated by pastors. The area Lutheran high schools are primarily run by teachers. There needs to be an intentional commitment to having a pastor serve as the ministerial education recruiter at each WELS area Lutheran high school. When this is in place, this pastor has the important task of identifying and building relationships with the students who have the desire to become a pastor. One of the responders made a very good point, “High school students can generally see through fakeness, and while a more concerted effort is necessary, it will never amount to anything if it is forced. Anyone encouraging high school students must first make a solid relationship and speak from the heart.”<sup>139</sup> Overwhelmingly, the importance of building personal relationships is evident in the survey responses. All respondents indicate that someone, usually a pastor at the high school or their home pastor, encouraged them toward the pastoral ministry in WELS.

### ***Review of Importance***

As the numbers of pastoral candidates trend lower, WELS needs to be more vigilant in recruiting young men to pastoral ministry. The area Lutheran high school still remains a great resource for identifying and influencing young men to prepare for the work of a pastor. The importance of reaching the world with the gospel will continue to motivate all within WELS to use the preparatory schools and the area Lutheran high schools for that purpose. The Lord of the

---

<sup>139</sup> Personal interview, Anonymous 5.

Harvest still instructs his people to ask him for workers to go out into the fields while they are ripe. With renewed trust in our Lord Jesus, WELS will continue to provide pastoral candidates to share the unconditional gospel with the world. The area Lutheran high school can and should be an important part in the equation.

### ***Methodology Deficiencies***

The author recognizes that his interview was more open-ended and subjective. Perhaps he could have formulated questions and a survey that was more objective and quantitative. In this way he would have been able to analyze numerical data concerning what should be replicated among the area Lutheran high schools of WELS. Several respondents also included thoughts about the parents, family influence, or the candidate's specific journey. The author thinks that these would be valid elements to research. However, he wanted to stay as concise as possible.

The author feels much like Dr. Schmeling. He has the hope that area Lutheran high schools will be utilized more for recruiting pastors. He has a love for all of the institutions in WELS. He wants to see more cooperation between all of those institutions. Yet, he knows that much more could be researched, said, or done. It is his prayer that others will take up this issue in the future as well. He hopes that those entrusted with this great opportunity will work at it with joy in their hearts to the Lord, faith that the Lord will bring about his will, and trust that the Lord will bless their efforts. "Now to [the Lord] who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:20,21).

## Bibliography

- Baumler, Gary P. "The Pastor as Recruiter for the Preaching Ministry: (In Search of Timothy)." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/88>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Baumler, Gary P. "Providing the Next Generation of Pastors in the WELS: An Essay on the Role of Pastors in Recruiting More Pastors." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/86>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Brenner, John M. "Commitment to Pastoral Education." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/235>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Gerlach, Andrew. Personal interview. 31 October 2014.
- Grasby, James. "Lakeside Lutheran High School: Strategic Plan." Provided by the author, 11 November 2014.
- Kaminska, Clyde W. "Where have all the young men gone." *Springfielder* 38, no. 4 (March 1, 1975): 315-318. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Kelly, John A. "WELS Prep Schools: Are They Practical in the 1980's and Beyond?" *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/2692>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School. <http://www.kmlhs.org/home/mission-a-philosophy> (accessed 15 November 2014).
- Klein, Jonathan. Personal interview. 20 November 2014.
- Krause, Dr. Carol. "A History and Tradition of Christ-Centered Education." *Wisconsin Lutheran High School Website*: <http://www.wlhs.org/about/schoolhistory.html> (accessed 15 November 2014).
- Krause, Shane. Personal interview. 27 October 2014.
- Lawrenz, Carl. "The Philosophy of Secondary Christian Education." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1334>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).
- Loescher, Martin. Personal interview. 22 October 2014.
- Luther Preparatory School. <http://www.lps.wels.net/page> (accessed 18 November 2014).
- Mehlberg, Ron. Personal interview. 4 November 2014.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary. "History of Seminary." <http://www.mlsem.org/about-mls/history-of-seminary> (accessed 18 November 2014).

Personal interview. Anonymous 1. 3 November 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 2. 12 November 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 3. 29 November 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 4. 1 December 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 5. 25 October 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 6. 31 October 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 7. 4 November 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 8. 31 October 2014.

Personal interview. Anonymous 9. 12 November 2014.

Pflughoeft, Christopher. Personal interview. 23 October 2014.

Prange, Paul. Personal interview. 11 November 2014.

Proeber, Matthew. Personal interview. 22 October 2014.

Reinemann, Chester. Personal interview. 2 December 2014.

Schmeling, Daniel M. Personal interview. 2 December 2014.

Schmeling, Daniel M. "The Role of Area Lutheran High Schools in Worker Training." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1674>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).

Schroeder, David. "WLA 2020: A Vision. A Plan." *Winnebago Lutheran Academy Website*: <http://www.wlavikings.org/about-us/vision-2020/> (accessed 15 November 2014).

Schultz, Clark. "Lakeside Recruitment for Ministry." Provided by the author, 27 October 2014.

Schultz, Clark. Personal interview. 27 October 2014.

Sonntag, Jeffrey. Personal interview. 12 November 2014.

St. Croix Lutheran High School. <http://www.stcroixlutheran.org/> (accessed 15 November 2014).

Strobel, Richard W. "The Role of the Prep School in Our Educational System." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3622>; Internet; (accessed September 2, 2014).

Swiderski, Tyler. Personal interview. 30 November 2014.

Timmermann, Nathaniel. Personal interview. 23 October 2014.

- Voss, Paul. "The Man with a Plan: A Biography of Hans Koller Moussa." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3701>; Internet; (accessed November 1, 2014).
- Waldschmidt, Paul S. "Winnebago Lutheran Academy 1925-2000: 75 Years of God's Grace." *WLS Essay File*; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/node/3546>; Internet; (accessed November 1, 2014).
- Wenzel, Dave. "FVL's MLC Recruitment Plan." Provided by the author, 18 November 2014.
- Wenzel, Dave. "Ministry recruitment at FVL." Provided by the author, 18 November 2014.
- Wenzel, Dave. Personal interview. 16 November 2014.
- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. "ALHS Online." <http://www.wels.net/lutheran-schools/alhs-online> (accessed 26 November 2014).
- Wisconsin Lutheran High School. "Our Mission." <http://www.wlhs.org/about/information.html> (accessed 15 November 2014).
- Worldometers. "Current World Population." <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/> (accessed 24 November 2014).

## **Appendices**

### ***Appendix A – FVL’s MLC Recruitment Plan***

#### **August In-service:**

- Time on faculty in-service agenda to address faculty about the need for ministry recruitment. Encourage the faculty to:
  - use report card comments that encourage ministry
  - put MLC’s visit to FVL on their calendar: send me names, personally encourage student/athlete/advisee to see MLC rep
  - encourage faculty to sign up to “sponsor” an FVL grad MLC student. They can send them emails, care packages, a small gift card, words of encouragement, etc throughout the year.
  - consider “adopting” an FVL student to mentor toward ministry.

#### **August: 1<sup>st</sup> day of school**

- Have religion teachers survey students on career plans, forward names to me of those considering ministry and use that list to develop a contact plan.
- Identify which 1<sup>st</sup> semester junior Romans students are ministry candidates

#### **Year round:**

- Send personal emails to at least 2-3 MLC students a week
- Recruit MLC juniors to “adopt” a FVL senior candidate
- Arrange “Taste of Ministry” experiences for interested teacher candidates in area Lutheran grade schools. Arrange transportation for those who need it. Follow up with both grade school teacher and student, arrange a 2<sup>nd</sup> shadow visit if possible.
- Schedule male senior MLC candidates to give chapel. Ask them if there anything scandalous that would prevent them from being God’s spokesman in chapel. Assign each a text and give them background info on the text. After they write the devotion, meet with them for editing/revising. Before each student delivers the chapel message, do a number of dry runs in the auditorium. Discuss appropriate attire, decorum, privilege. Pray with them for God’s blessings on their preparation and their message.

#### **September:**

- Schedule MLC’s fall visit—coordinate with FVL Guidance.
- Ask MLC for a list of FVL grads and their email addresses
- Post the list of students and email addresses for the faculty

#### **Fall MLC reps visit**

- Remind faculty of MLC visit dates and ask them to encourage students to sign up with me to see the MLC recruiters.
- Contact all of the juniors and seniors on our MLC list to schedule an appointment with MLC recruiters.
- Schedule the MLC reps for freshmen religion presentations in ½ the OT sections. Add new freshmen names to our data base.

- On the 2 days of MLC's visit, make sure that students get in to see the recruiter. Juggle scheduled appointments as necessary.
- Meet with MLC reps to discuss candidates and what we could do on either end to encourage specific students.
- After MLC reps left, follow up with each of the FVL students for added encouragement/feedback.
- Use MLC's visit as a chance to promote the November "Focus on Ministry" trip.

### **October:**

- Schedule the bus for the MLC Focus trip.
- Arrange substitute teachers to cover classes during Focus trip
- Put announcements out for the MLC trip.
- Talk to students one on one about participating in the Focus weekend.
- Hold a meeting for all students who are attending the Focus trip.
- Arrange "Taste of Ministry" experiences for interested pastor and teacher candidates in area congregations and Lutheran grade schools.
- Encourage faculty to use report card comments to encourage ministry
- Remind faculty to consider sending care packages along on Focus trip.

### **November:**

- Focus trip
  - On trip to MLC: target "bubble kids" and talk with them at lunch or on the bus
  - Arrange contacts with key kids/college students, profs, coaches, etc.
  - At MLC: connect specific FVL alumni with specific FVL candidates
  - On return trip: had kids fill out evaluation, read evaluations for feedback/follow up.
  - On return trip: target kids for lunch time de-briefing
  - The week after the trip: Do follow up reinforcement
- During November parent/teacher conferences, connect with parents of Focus trip kids for follow up and encouragement. Try to determine whether parents are encouraging or discouraging ministry.
- During November parent/teacher conferences, discuss ministry with parents of other god MLC candidates. Again, determine the level of parental support.
- At some point in fall, follow up with students who may be considering WLC for teacher education. Evangelically discuss the advantages of MLC.

### **December:**

- Continue "Taste of Ministry" experiences for interested teacher candidates in area Lutheran grade schools.
- Meet one on one with seniors considering MLC. Offered encouragement and guidance.
- Recruit MLC candidates for FVL's "Kinderfest"

**January:**

- Have a “ministry recruitment” chapel using current FVL ministry kids and MLC alumni that are home on Christmas break.
- Identify which 2<sup>nd</sup> semester junior Romans students are ministry candidates
- Schedule MLC’s 2<sup>nd</sup> visit with Guidance
- Recruit MLC candidates for FVL’s “Winterfest” game room/child care
- Schedule “Taste of Ministry” experience for senior pastor candidates with St. Matthew and Mount Olive.
- Continue “Taste of Ministry” experiences for interested teacher candidates in area Lutheran grade schools.

**February:**

- Inform faculty of MLC visit dates and ask them to encourage students to sign up with me to see the MLC recruiters.
- Contact all of the juniors and seniors on our MLC list to schedule an appointment with MLC recruiters.
- Schedule the MLC reps for remaining freshmen religion presentations. Add new freshmen names to our data base
- On the 2 days of MLC’s visit, make sure that students get in to see the recruiter. Juggle scheduled appointments as necessary.
- Meet with MLC reps to discuss each student. Shared insight with each other and discuss ministry recruitment ideas and strategies.
- After the MLC visit, attempt to follow up with each of the FVL students for added encouragement/feedback.
- Recruit juniors/seniors for WLS’s biennial “Focus on Ministry” visit.
- See if any student would benefit from a spring trip to MLC

**March:**

- Meet with sophomore parents in college planning session: encourage ministry, solicit names.
- Each odd year, take guys (juniors/seniors) to WLS for “Focus on Ministry.” In even years, arrange WLS trip earlier in winter.
- Meet with each student after we return to talk about their experiences and their outlook on ministry.

**April and May:**

- Do one more follow up with students who may be considering WLC for teacher education. Evangelically discuss the advantages of MLC.
- Schedule “Taste of Ministry” experience for senior pastor candidates with St. Matthew and Mount Olive.
- Continue “Taste of Ministry” experiences for interested teacher candidates in area Lutheran grade schools.
- Touch base one more time with each student enrolling at MLC.
- If possible, take pastor track students to WLS for Call Day.

**Summer:**

- Letter to next year's MLC candidates encouraging them to consider MLC. Ask them to put Focus trip on their calendar.

## *Appendix B – Ministry Recruitment at FVL*

### **Keys for success:**

#### **1. Pray**

#### **2. School climate must be pro ministry**

- starts with faculty:
  - the higher the percentage of teachers that exude a love for ministry, the higher the percentage of students who will consider ministry
  - the higher the percentage of faculty who participates in ministry recruitment, the higher the percentage of students who will consider ministry
  - recruit specific teachers/coaches/advisors as mentors
  - recruit faculty to “adopt a MLC student”
- MLC posters & displays
- MLC attire
- Federation/association needs to know that your high school promotes ministry
- Educate students and parents so that they understand that encouragement for ministry is a compliment, not a command

#### **3. Identify candidates for ministry**

- through federation pastors/teachers
- through faculty
- through parents
- through students

#### **4. Focus weekend**

- make it a high quality experience
- make it a high quality group: strike a balance
- set clear expectations
- transportation
- use of alumni
- debrief

#### **5. MLC’s visit to your school**

- before
  - voluntary sign up
  - personal recruitment
  - faculty recruitment: direct/indirect
- during
- after

**6. Taste of ministry**

- recruit good mentors
- grade school
- ALHS
- debrief

**Challenges:**

- 1. Parents**
- 2. Distance**
- 3. Peer pressure**
- 4. WLC**

**Faculty**

## ***Appendix C – 2013-2014 Lakeside Recruitment for Ministry***

### **August:**

1. Send out emails to local pastors and principals to encouraging them to consider taste of ministry
2. First week of school meet with juniors and seniors interested in MLC
  - a. Go over taste of ministry options
  - b. Go over MLC fall focus dates
3. Begin to work with guidance office to set up appointments with MLC recruiters about their visits with our students.

(Seniors and Juniors considering MLC are encouraged to go on a taste of ministry visit prior to MLC trip)

### **September:**

1. MLC recruiters come for a visit
2. Encourage MLC recruiter to lead chapel
3. Seniors continue to visit grade schools or shadow pastors for a day

### **October:**

1. Seniors continue to visit grade schools or shadow pastors for a day
2. Begin to set up and organize fall focus trip (register classes, room assignments etc)

### **November:**

1. Coach Lange visits with students interested in MLC sports
2. Fall focus trip
3. Kingdom Workers come and speak about TCW trips

### **December:**

1. Encourage LLHS Alums, current MLC students to come and speak while on break to various religion classes (this happens throughout the school year)
2. Encourage Seniors to begin filling out MLC applications

END OF SEMESTER

### **January:**

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> visit for MLC recruiters (or in February)
2. Begin to take students interested in ministry or on the bubble out for lunch

### **February:**

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> look focus trip to MLC
2. Continue to take students interested in ministry or on the bubble out for lunch

**March:**

1. Pastor Jim Buske encourages sophomores to volunteer at LIGHTHOUSE youth center
2. MLC recruiters come and speak to Sophomores and Freshmen classes ( or in April)
3. LLHS alums at MLC pizza party with Senior's planning to go to MLC, informal Q and A Session.
4. Continue to take students interested in ministry or on the bubble out for lunch

**April:**

1. Sophomore class trip to the Seminary
2. Pastor track seniors visit to the Seminary
3. Continue to take students interested in ministry or on the bubble out for lunch
4. Encourage juniors to go out for a taste of ministry visit

**May:**

1. Possible final visits with MLC recruiters
2. Encourage students to have their favorite pastor or teacher come in to talk to their classmates about ministry in sophomore religion class
3. Give MLC gifts to Seniors enrolled at MLC in the fall

In conclusion: This is just a year at a glance of what we do at Lakeside. One could be very specific in that every class we teach, we encourage ministry and continue to keep the thought of being a pastor or teacher as an option. As a religion department we meet and discuss post MLC recruitment visits who are students we should continue to encourage for ministry. I share with the faculty Laurie Gauger's emails about what's going on at MLC, encouraging the faculty and staff to print and display those in their classroom or work area. Throughout the year we encourage students, both pastor and teacher track to volunteer to write and conduct a chapel devotion. We also welcome LLHS Alumni at MLC to visit frequently, to EFE, to lead chapel or just mix and mingle with current students. Equally, whenever the MLC recruiters are in the zip code for visit, formal, informal or just in the stands at a Warrior event, we help them to make any connection with parents and students. To wrap it up, we as faculty continue to model and display our love for our Lord and for the ministry, that is the best recruitment for our students: Love our Lord and Love what you do! God bless your school year and happy recruiting!!

# **The Role of Area Lutheran High Schools in Worker Training**

*by Dr. Daniel M. Schmeling*

[Presented to the Association of Lutheran High Schools, Milwaukee, WI, on February 6, 1992]

## **Introduction**

Initially, the scope of this presentation was perceived to be rather narrow. It was to be a joint response by the administrators of the Commission on Parish Schools and the Board for Worker Training to the Association of Lutheran High Schools regarding ways in which they could take a more expanded role in preparing candidates for the public ministry. As it developed, its scope was broadened and its view was narrowed.

The scope was broadened because it became apparent that a more holistic approach to the issue was required. Issues were raised in our discussions with the boards of directors of area Lutheran high schools that were not anticipated but were relevant to the discussion. It also seemed necessary to place the discussion within the setting of our changing world and synodical environment.

The views expressed are those of the author. Suggestions from Dr. Wayne Borgwardt, Dr. LeDell Plath, and Dr. John Lawrenz have been helpful and influential in formulating and articulating those views. There has been a deliberate intent to provoke discussion so that we might extend our thinking beyond the traditional boundaries. It seems as if that is an important and necessary function of this forum. It is my prayerful hope that this conference will further a God-pleasing commitment and spirit of cooperation toward developing strategies that will aid in encouraging young men and women into entering the public ministry of the WELS.

## **For Such a Time As This**

### **The Times of Our Lives**

We are living in exciting times for ministry. The effects of sin are openly impacting our people creating a demand for the message which God's Word brings to a sinful world. Transportation and communication technology are enabling access to people in remote regions of the world. The need and opportunities for the ministry of the gospel have never been greater. Such a climate for ministry should be moving the hearts of men and women in record numbers to enter the public ministry of the gospel.

The educational world is also brimming with excitement. Since *A Nation At Risk* was published in 1983, legislatures have sought to lengthen the school year and school day, reform the way in which teachers are prepared, and change the administrative structure of schools. A wave of classroom reforms, from outcome based education through cooperative learning, have attempted to improve the instruction given to children. This attention to education should raise the consciousness of us all to renewed excellence in the way in which we prepare our students for lives as disciples of Jesus.

These are also challenging times for the schools of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Congregations are finding it increasingly difficult to carry on their ministry as they did in

the past. Lutheran elementary and high schools, and the synodical worker training system have often become the victims. Although the “double-Ds” of dollars and demographics have frequently been cited as the cause of difficulties in the worker training system, they face all of the schools at every level within our synod.

There has been no time in our history in which the gospel ministry of our full-time Lutheran schools—at every level—has been more important. Yet, there have been few times in our history in which our full-time Lutheran schools have been less valued. This poses an exciting challenge for all of us.

### **The Time of Esther’s Life**

The life of Queen Esther can provide some parallels for us in our present condition. Esther lived in an exciting environment. She was a young Jewess chosen to be in the privileged position of queen in a foreign land. She had maids and eunuchs to wait upon her every need. She was enjoying the excitement and privileges of royalty. Then came the challenge.

Mordecai discovered Haman’s plot and pleaded with Esther to intercede on the Jew’s behalf. Esther, at first, excused herself because of the risk to her life. Mordecai reminded her of the responsibilities which she had because of the royal position into which God had placed her. The focus was upon the mission God had given her and the opportunities He had provided to accomplish that mission.

Queen Esther’s response to Mordecai’s challenge demonstrates her trust in God to carry out the mission He had given. She willingly went before the king with the confident resolve: “If I perish, I perish.” Her words resound with the confidence of God’s people. She understood that if she did not fulfill her responsibility, God would provide “relief and deliverance for the Jews...from another place.” She also understood that the God Who had placed her in that royal position and equipped her to carry out His mission would now bless her efforts to do His will.

### **Perhaps, We**

We also have been given a royal position of leadership. We have been privileged to serve in the public ministry of the church. We have furthermore been given positions of leadership within that church. The challenge which Mordecai placed before Esther is also appropriate for our consideration. Perhaps, we “have come to royal position for such a time as this.”

God has uniquely equipped the WELS to prepare men and women for ministry. He has provided over one hundred years of experience in Christian education. He has blessed our educational system with quality, dedicated, and theologically-sound teachers. He has established a nation-wide network of schools from the pre-kindergarten level through the seminary. He has filled the hearts of our members with a desire for full-time Christian education and a willingness to support it. He has provided gifted leaders to develop and administer appropriate programs of Christian education which meet many of the needs of our children, families, and church. He has provided all that is needed for ministry in times such as this.

Our struggle is not because of a lack of God’s blessings for ministry. One of the reasons for our struggle is an inability to cooperate in ministry. Although organized for educational ministry through a synodical system of schools, we frequently operate as if we are individual schools with distinctively different ministries. At a time in which the “double Ds” tell us there are limited numbers of students and dollars, we often compete for both. Times such as this call for cooperation among our schools at every level so that God’s mission can be accomplished through us.

God will provide the means to carry out His ministry in times such as this and as those of the next century. He has, at this time, given us the royal position of leadership in the education of the next generation of public ministers. He has equipped us with the resources necessary to carry out that ministry. He now challenges us to a renewed spirit of cooperation to carry out the mission which He has set before us.

## **Mission-Focused Ministry**

### **Understanding Our Mission**

Our synod has adopted the following mission statement:

As men, women, and children united in faith and worship by the Word of God, the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod exists to make disciples throughout the world for time and for eternity, using the Gospel to win the lost for Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service, all to the glory of God.

The statement based upon Christ's Great Commission to His church has the dual emphasis of nurture and outreach. Our synod is committed to nurture its members through the Word and sacraments so that they are motivated and equipped to reach out to the lost. As the lost are brought to faith through the power of the gospel, they are continually nurtured in their faith through the continued study of God's Word and use of the sacraments. Reaching out to the lost and nurturing the faith of the believers as the public representatives of our church is the privilege of every Christian in WELS, but the called ministers of the gospel have the special privilege of doing that work full-time.

We, who are involved in the worker training system, have the privilege and responsibility to equip the men and women for the public ministry of the WELS. We encourage talented men and women to use their special gifts in the public ministry. We instruct them in a proper understanding of the Scriptures and appropriate methodologies of ministry so that they can serve effectively. In a real sense, our special mission is that which the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (II Timothy 2:2).

Our mission as the trainers of those who are to be called into the public ministry of the WELS is:

- a) We are to faithfully nurture the faith of our students through diligent study of the scriptures;
- b) We are to select reliable men and women who are qualified to teach the scriptures to others; and
- c) We are to equip these men and women with the necessary attitudes, knowledge, and skills to serve in the public ministry.

### **Analyzing Our Environment**

Much has been said about the "Double Ds" causing the intense discussion regarding our worker training system and the role of the area Lutheran high schools in it. Although it may be the cause for our discussion, it is not the cause of the dilemma. One of the major problems is rooted in a changing environment and a system which has not responded to those changes.

Less than fifty years ago, it was appropriate to have a synodically supported secondary school in the major areas served by our synod—Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota. In a true sense, we “walked together” by providing a Christian secondary education which prepared young men and women for the public ministry. We collectively provided that which sparsely populated groups of our people could not do by themselves.

As the WELS population centers grew, concerned members of our synod organized area Lutheran high school associations to “walk together” in providing a Christian secondary education. They collectively provided that which individual congregations could not do by themselves. They established these congregationally supported secondary schools in the major areas of our synod with the dual purpose of preparing young men and women for the public ministry and preparing them for service as laymen and laywomen in our synod.

The “area Lutheran high school movement” has grown so that today we enjoy the blessings of a nationwide network of nineteen congregationally supported Lutheran high schools which are affiliated with the WELS. These schools are staffed by men and women who are committed to the mission of the WELS. The boards, administrations, and teachers in these schools have consistently reaffirmed their desire to serve as a part of our synodical worker training system.

WELS parents have increasingly communicated their desire to keep their sons and daughters at home during their teen years while enrolling them in a Lutheran secondary school. This has had a potentially negative effect upon the enrollment in the synodical preparatory schools. Recruitment efforts within the worker training system have been focused upon efforts to encourage students to enroll in our preparatory schools. This has led to frequent competition for students between the synodical schools and the area Lutheran high-schools.

Congregations have demonstrated an increasing desire to support those aspects of ministry which are visible and have a direct impact upon their members. The support of the area Lutheran high school serving their congregation frequently takes a large portion of their financial resources. This may have resulted in a reduction of the congregation’s support for the work of the synodical program of ministry and for the synodically supported preparatory schools. This tension has increased the feeling of competition between the synodical schools and the area Lutheran high schools.

### **ALHS Consultations**

During the past four months, Administrator Wayne Borgwardt and I have consulted with the boards of directors of seventeen of the area Lutheran high schools. We are grateful for their willingness to provide time on their agendas for us to discuss their role in the preparation of called workers for our synod. Our discussions focused on the following four questions:

1. What does \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran high school perceive to be its role in worker training?
2. What curricular matters surface at \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran high school in regard to preparation for the pastoral ministry?
3. What is the recruitment potential at \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran high school for worker training?
4. What concerns/opportunities are present because of your locality?

We carefully recorded their comments and provided a summary report to the board through the school's principal. The summary intended to provide an overview of the board's attitudes and comments rather than a record of individual responses. The following summary is also intended to provide an overview of the comments of the boards rather than focus upon isolated comments of individual school boards.

1. *All* area Lutheran high schools (ALHS) boards expressed complete support for the training of called workers in their schools. *Most* indicated that was one of the purposes for which the school was established. They also indicated a concern that their programs reflect a balanced approach so that all students might be served.
2. *All* ALHS provide the curriculum necessary for entrance into both NWC and DMLC. This has been a conscious commitment which has been costly to the school's operation. Courses—specifically Latin—necessary for entrance into NWC are provided even if only one or two students are enrolled. *Some* boards questioned the entrance requirements and approach to language instruction at NWC.
3. *All* ALHS that discussed the idea of providing foreign language instruction via distance learning were supportive of it. They viewed this as a means of providing needed instruction for their students while relieving some financial and work loads from the school.
4. *All* ALHS expressed a confidence that the recruitment potential was better than the past. They cited a variety of programs that have been begun recently which are aimed at encouraging men and women into the public ministry. They also recognized the need to do more than has been done in the past. The need for positive role models among pastors and teachers was frequently mentioned as a hope for the future.
5. *All* ALHS indicated they had been more successful preparing candidates for the teaching ministry than the preaching ministry. This was due primarily to the fact that students planning to go to NWC have to take a course of study different from the majority of their classmates. This creates negative peer pressure and inhibits the ability to direct students into the pastoral ministry in their junior or senior year.
6. *Most* ALHS expressed a desire for financial support to better enable them to improve their worker training program. Suggested options included: support for student housing facilities, support for a faculty position, and increased subsidy to ALHS for graduates entering DMLC and NWC. Two board members from different schools identically summarized this by stating that their high school could only be a viable contributor to the worker training system if it was a financially strong and viable school.
7. *Several* boards expressed concern that their school was viewed as “inadequate” for the preparation of pastoral candidates. This view is communicated to graduates of ALHS attending NWC. It is upheld by some area pastors who were educated through the preparatory school system and reinforced by preparatory school recruiters. They felt that the synod needs to communicate a clear message that ALHS are full partners in the preparation of

- called workers and that they have a viable and strong curriculum which can do the job.
8. *Several* comments focused on the importance of providing “ministerial” experiences for students at both secondary and elementary levels. Activities such as “Taste of Ministry,” “Footsteps to the Ministry,” and “In His Service” were mentioned as practical examples of this approach. It was felt that such activities provided a positive introduction to ministry without the feeling of “recruitment.”
  9. *Several* board members expressed concern regarding the reputed drinking culture at DMLC and NWC. Graduates of their schools have described an atmosphere that tolerates the open abuse of alcohol. This is a matter of offense to the serious and spiritually mature students considering the public ministry. It inhibits the effectiveness of efforts to encourage these students to enter the public ministry.
  10. Board members of schools located near preparatory schools cited the negative effects of the competitive spirit which existed between the schools. Superior facilities available at the synodical schools as well as the competition for students—especially athletes—were mentioned. The schools closest to Northwestern Preparatory School especially expressed the negative effect this relationship had upon their ability to encourage students to attend Northwestern College.

The foregoing summary is an accurate reflection of the viewpoints repeatedly expressed by the board members who discussed these issues with administrators Borgwardt and Schmeling. Other points, less frequently mentioned, were also significant. They should be taken seriously as we analyze the environment in which we are working to involve the area Lutheran high schools more actively in the preparation of called workers. They raise serious concerns for both the area Lutheran high schools and the division for worker training. They also serve as the basis for the recommendations which will follow.

## **A Holistic Approach**

### **Outcome-Based**

An outcome-based approach to planning may help us understand where we are going and how best to get there. It seems appropriate to take this approach both in terms of quantitative outcomes and qualitative outcomes.

Historically, the synodical preparatory schools have provided 60% of the pastoral candidates and 30% of the teacher candidates. The area Lutheran high schools have provided 25% of the pastoral candidates and 50% of the teacher candidates. Appendix A provides more detailed information regarding these figures for the past decade.

The past performance of the area Lutheran high schools demonstrates a need for these schools to improve their efforts in recruiting students for NWC and DMLC. There has been little growth in the number of Lutheran high school graduates entering the worker training colleges of our synod. The percentage of Lutheran high school graduates entering college in preparation for the public ministry is between 10% and 11% annually. There must be a significant increase in

the number of Lutheran high school graduates entering the public ministry if the future needs of our synod are to be met.

To meet the synodical need for pastors, established by the synod's MOV as 70 by the year 2000, the area Lutheran high schools will need to increase the number of graduates attending NWC. It is projected that an enrollment of approximately 95 freshmen students and a total enrollment of 330 students at NWC in 1996 will be needed to provide 70 pastoral candidates in 2000. An annual 25% increase of ALHS graduates enrolling at NWC through 1996 will provide approximately 58 candidates for the pastoral ministry from our area Lutheran high schools. That number will be about 60% of the synod's projected needs. An annual 10% increase through 2000 should provide for our synod's future needs. Appendix B provides a suggested outcome for each of the high schools to meet that desired synodical outcome.

The area Lutheran high schools are already providing approximately 50% of the candidates for the teaching ministry. Although the staff ministry may attract men and women from the teaching ministry, there is not a projected shortage of teachers. The synod's MOV envisions 140 teacher candidates in the year 2000. To achieve that goal, an enrollment of 791 students—with approximately 230 freshmen—will be needed at DMLC. An appropriate share of the teacher candidates from area Lutheran high schools would seem to be about 75%. This would require the number of graduates from area Lutheran high schools entering the teaching ministry to increase to 173 by 1996 and 250 by 2000. This will require an annual increase of 15% through 1996 and 10% annually thereafter. Appendix C provides a suggested outcome for each of the high schools to meet that goal.

There have been some suggestions that the quality of the ministerium will decrease if there is greater reliance upon the area Lutheran high schools. No evidence has been provided which might justify that concern. There have also been questions raised upon the qualities of the pastors and teachers which will be needed to carry out the ministry in the next century. Serious study ought to be given so that the qualities desired and developed through our worker training system are those which are needed "to win the lost for Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service."

## **Curriculum**

It is imperative that we use this opportune time to seriously analyze the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for ministry in the 21st century. Once these qualities have been determined, a major revision of our curricula throughout the worker training system—including the area Lutheran high schools—should be undertaken so that we are best able to prepare the men and women who will reach out to the next generation with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will negate any advances we make by increasing the quantity of ministerial candidates if we do not address the qualities of those candidates.

The Division for Parish Services and the Division for Worker Training can work together in determining the ministerial qualities which will best serve the needs of our parishes. Curriculum department leaders across the system can work to design a matrix which aligns the desired attitudes, knowledge, and skills with the courses through which they are developed. Teachers and administrators in each school can then design the courses and assessments necessary to implement the design. This approach to planning and implementation will bring the area Lutheran high schools, synodical preparatory schools, colleges, and seminary into a partnership which will naturally lead more students into and successfully through the worker training system.

## **Instruction**

Distance learning was frequently mentioned as an opportunity to provide quality foreign language instruction to the Lutheran high schools in a cost effective manner. It would also provide an added link to bring the schools together while improving the instructional program. Now is the time to seriously evaluate and appropriately implement distance learning technology to enhance our instruction and unify our schools.

Satellite transmission, fiber optic cables and compressed video provide technologies which are readily available and will soon be cost effective for our schools. The Joint BWT/CPS Committee on Telecommunications Technology in Education is investigating ways in which this technology can be used in our schools. There may be additional local and regional opportunities which are available to our schools. The cable television companies in Michigan are planning to connect all of the private and public schools through an interactive fiber optic network. When this is completed in 3-5 years, it will enable all our elementary and secondary schools to share instructional programs. Compressed video may make this a reality on a more limited basis in 1-3 years. By being alert and sharing information, we may be able to take advantage of similar opportunities in others areas of our synod.

There is a continuing need for our teachers in the high schools, preparatory schools, colleges, and seminary to be actively involved in a program of professional growth so that every student receives the best possible instruction. The highest quality of instruction by teachers who model a continuing commitment to the ministry will help provide both the quantity and quality of candidates for the public ministry.

In the past, the professional growth programs of our teachers have been largely voluntary and self-directed. In public education, 43 of 50 states require a minimum level of continuing education for renewal of licensure. It is reasonable that we should maintain at least the same expectations of our called workers. At a time when continuing education is being encouraged for our parish pastors and teachers, it is appropriate that our worker training system—including the area Lutheran high schools—take the lead by establishing continuing education standards for our teachers. These standards should include a mixture of spiritual, academic, and pedagogical experiences.

## **School Climate**

The pervasive climate in our schools—area Lutheran high schools, preparatory schools, and colleges—have a significant impact upon recruitment for the public ministry. Issues such as the drinking culture at our colleges, the anti-ministry attitude among many of our area Lutheran high school teachers, and the competitive spirit between the preparatory schools and some of the area Lutheran high schools need to be addressed by the responsible administrators. The Apostle Paul's attitude of self-effacement for the sake of the ministry of the gospel should serve as an example for us as we seek to remove all obstacles which might hinder young men and women from entering the public ministry.

## **Approaches to Recruitment**

Most pastors and teachers are able to identify one significant individual—a parent, a pastor, a teacher—who encouraged them to enter the public ministry. That one-on-one encouragement is perhaps the most effective recruitment “program” available to us. Each teacher at each of our secondary schools could identify one student in each class each year who would be

“targeted” for the public ministry. A personal interest in the student and encouragement to enter the public ministry would have a significant impact upon them. This most basic approach to recruitment requires the support and some organization on the part of the principal and the commitment and involvement of all the teachers.

Students in the area Lutheran high schools receive an abundance of recruitment materials from interested colleges. Many colleges enlist students and alumni to make personal telephone calls to prospective students. The recruitment practices of our colleges need to be aggressively proactive if they are to compete for these students. Consultations with administrators and counselors in the area Lutheran high schools and a study of successful recruitment practices of other colleges will help identify strategies that will be more effective among our high school students.

The top students also receive scholarship offers which attract them to private and public colleges throughout the country. These scholarships may only be discounts off an already inflated tuition, but they are influential in attracting aspiring students to the schools. A significantly endowed scholarship fund which would be designated for students interested in the public ministry and available to defray high school expenses as well as college tuition might help attract qualified students into the public ministry. Some scholarship recipients may not enter the public ministry; however, that is also the case in our current synodically subsidized preparatory system. The commitment by the synod and the encouragement given to worthy students would communicate the urgency which we feel about attracting the highest quality students into the public ministry.

A few of the area Lutheran high schools presently provide housing for their students. Others are considering it. Synodically subsidized housing operated in conjunction with an area Lutheran high school could provide worker training preparation for a larger number of students. Students could attend school closer to home rather than a preparatory school located in Wisconsin or Michigan and still receive training which prepares them for the public ministry. There are many obstacles to such an arrangement; however, it provides significant opportunities to utilize our nationwide network of high schools for worker training.

### **Introduction to Ministry**

One of the interviewees stated: “Let the power of God’s Word work as a recruiter.” In that manner, he was encouraging the broader use of programs that involved students in ministry opportunities—e.g., “Taste of Ministry” and “In His Service.” Area Lutheran high schools are uniquely equipped in a concentration of congregations to provide their students with opportunities for ministry. The programs which are presently operating can serve as models for others. Experiences can be shared among the area Lutheran high schools and the preparatory schools so that present programs can be improved. Local pastors and/or teachers can be enlisted to help with the organization and coordination of the program. Providing opportunities for the students to observe ministry in action and to be involved in the sharing of the gospel will do more than recruitment brochures and campus visits to encourage young men and women to enter the public ministry.

On a broader scale, cooperative efforts in youth ministry can be undertaken patterned after Wisconsin Lutheran High School students’ trip to Mexico, the vacation Bible school in Milwaukee’s central city, and the Hispanic vacation Bible school in El Paso, TX. Lutheran high schools and preparatory schools can cooperate in the planning and implementation of such activities outside the local community. Such experiences provide opportunities for students to work with God’s Word and expand their understanding of their world. Teachers also benefit as

they have opportunities to work with students in new settings, share God's Word with others in unique environments, and experience international travel.

Opportunities for such ministries already exist in El Paso, inner city Milwaukee, and East Germany. Invitations have been received from Australia, Brazil, St. Lucia, and Brooklyn, NY. With the cooperation of the educational institutions (BWT and ALHS) and the mission outreach divisions (BHM and BWM) additional opportunities might be available. These ministries might also attract the interest of the Kingdom Workers and other individuals willing to support scholarships for students interested in participating.

### **Conclusion**

I have ranged beyond the original scope of the essay because I felt it necessary to take a broader view of the issue. Rather than be discouraged by the "Double-Ds" of dollars and demographics, it is important that we grab hold of the opportunities which the Lord is setting before us. He may have slapped us in the face because "we needed that" to wake us up from our lethargy. He has done that to His people before.

God has placed us in the royal positions of leaders of His church. He gives to us the opportunity to create a vision which embraces a nationwide network of WELS secondary schools cooperating as never before in the training of men and women for the public ministry. He gives to us the challenge of restructuring our worker training system so that it is able to produce both the quantity and quality of public ministers which we will need to carry His gospel into the 21st century. He gives to us the means through a holistic approach to worker training which will enable us to carry out the ministry which He has set before us.

These are exciting and challenging times for ministry in the world and in the WELS. I am confident that if we do not accept the challenge the Lord will raise up someone else from another place to *do it*. I pray that He will fill us with the zeal and the courage so that we will have the joyous privilege to *do it*. With the confidence of Esther, we can *do it*. Let's *DO IT!*

SCHMELING APPENDIX A

**GRADUATES OF ALHS ENROLLED IN DMLC/NWC**

Schools	1980		1985		1990		1991	
	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC
Arizona LA	--	--	4	0	0	1	3	1
California LHS	--	--	1	1	0	1	1	1
East Fork LHS	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Evergreen LHS	--	--	3	0	0	0	0	0
Fox Valley LHS	21	4	6	1	8	3	3	4
Huron Valley LHS	3	0	2	1	0	1	3	0
Illinois LHS	--	--	--	--	3	0	4	0
Kettle Moraine LHS	7	2	6	3	8	5	6	1
Lakeside LHS	10	3	5	0	9	1	7	1
Luther HS	6	0	4	0	4	0	5	1
Manitowoc LHS	8	2	5	1	9	0	5	1
Michigan LHS	3	2	0	2	3	1	3	3
Minnesota Valley LHS	--	--	9	2	6	0	10	2
Nebraska LHS	--	--	3	0	2	0	1	0
Northland LHS	--	--	2	0	2	0	2	1
Saint Croix LHS	2	0	1	0	0	0	7	1
Shoreland LHS	8	0	4	1	4	0	5	0
West LHS	--	--	0	1	2	0	0	0
Winnebago LHS	11	3	4	0	5	1	8	1
Wisconsin LHS	19	7	5	2	10	0	14	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	98	23	64	15	76	14	87	19

**SCHMELING APPENDIX B**

**DESIRED OUTCOMES OF ALHS GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DMLC & NWC\***

Schools	1991		1993		1996		2000	
	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC	DMLC	NWC
Arizona LA	3	1	4	2	6	4	9	5
California LHS	1	1	1	0	2	1	3	2
East Fork LHS	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
Evergreen LHS	0	0	1	0	2	1	3	2
Fox Valley LHS	3	4	5	4	9	6	13	8
Huron Valley LHS	3	0	4	0	6	1	9	2
Illinois LHS	4	0	5	0	6	1	8	2
Kettle Moraine LHS	6	1	8	2	12	3	18	5
Lakeside LHS	7	1	9	2	15	3	22	5
Luther HS	5	1	6	2	10	3	15	5
Manitowoc LHS	5	1	7	2	11	4	15	5
Michigan LHS	3	3	4	4	6	6	9	8
Minnesota Valley LHS	10	2	12	3	15	5	22	6
Nebraska LHS	1	0	2	0	3	1	5	2
Northland LHS	2	1	3	1	4	1	6	2
Saint Croix LHS	7	1	8	2	12	3	18	5
Shoreland LHS	5	0	7	1	11	2	15	3
West LHS	0	0	1	0	2	1	3	2
Winnebago LHS	8	1	10	2	15	4	20	5
Wisconsin LHS	14	1	18	4	25	7	35	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>85</b>

\*Growth Rates

	1991-1996	1996-2000
DMLC	.15/year	.10/year
NWC	.25/year	.10/year

*Appendix E – Research Documents*

Informed Consent Form for Interviews

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate and evaluate the statement: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its Area Lutheran High Schools make a more concerted effort to provide continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. It is being conducted by Jason Williams for his senior thesis a graduation and program requirement for a Masters of Divinity degree. In this research you will be asked to respond to some questions about the statement listed above. The purpose of this information is to provide the interviewer, Jason Williams, with a greater understanding of this matter and may be included in the assignment. Please understand that your participation in this research is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.

I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

You may use my name in your study.

You may use the information I provide, but I wish to remain anonymous.

## Letter and Survey for Ministerial Recruiters

Hello, Pastor/Mr. (Name),

My name is Jason Williams and I am a senior at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Principal (Name) directed me to you as the contact person regarding ministerial recruitment at (specific ALHS). As part of the graduating requirements of the Masters of Divinity degree at the seminary, each senior is to propose and either prove or disprove a thesis in an area of theology of their choosing. My senior thesis is: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its area Lutheran high schools make a more concerted effort to provide continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

I am taking the approach that the ALHS doesn't have to become a prep school or even like a prep school per se. Instead, I want to look at the ALHS's unique situation and consider what has been done in the past fifteen years when four or more boys from a specific ALHS enrolled in the pastor track at Martin Luther College.

With the help of Administrator Paul Prange and the MLC records office, I have identified the years where (ALHS) has fit this criteria. The dates listed by graduating class for (ALHS) are: (Years).

Please read my thesis statement and answer the following questions based on your interaction with the students from (ALHS) for the specific years listed in the chart below. Since you have several years, please indicate which graduating class or specific student you are discussing.

Thesis statement: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its area Lutheran high schools make a more concerted effort to provide continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

(A table of the students identified was included for each school.)

### **Background Questions:**

- 1) How is recruiting for the pastor track at MLC accomplished at your ALHS?
- 2) Have you tried to imitate the prep schools? If so, how, and does it work?
- 3) Respond: Comparing ALHS to prep schools is not very profitable.

### **Key questions:**

- 1) What personal connection did you have with the students (particular students by name and year) who enrolled at MLC in the pastor track? Please answer for each individual student if possible.
- 2) What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from your ALHS during the designated years?

3) What can be replicated from those specific years?

**Follow up:**

1) What can WELS do to assist ALHS recruitment efforts for the pastor track at MLC? What could be developed?

2) What question(s) were not asked that you believe should be considered when defending or defeating this thesis?

Letter and Survey for Students who Enrolled in the Pastor Track from One of the Six ALHSs  
Hello, former (ALHS) student,

My name is Jason Williams and I am a senior at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. As part of the graduating requirements of the Masters of Divinity degree at the seminary, each senior is to propose and either prove or disprove a thesis in an area of theology of their choosing. My senior thesis is: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its area Lutheran high schools make a more concerted effort to provide continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

I am taking the approach that the ALHS doesn't have to become a prep school or even like a prep school per se. Instead, I want to look at the ALHS's unique situation and consider what has been done in the past fifteen years when four or more boys from a specific ALHS enrolled in the pastor track at Martin Luther College.

With the help of Administrator Paul Prange and the MLC records office, I have identified the years where (ALHS) has fit this criteria. The dates listed by graduating class for (ALHS) are: (Years).

Please read my thesis statement and answer the following survey questions. Also, please fill out the informed consent form and return both forms to me via email or snail mail.

Thesis statement: The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can create a larger pool of pastoral candidates when its area Lutheran high schools make a more concerted effort to provide continual influence from pastors, teachers, and peers to boys considering preparation for pastoral ministry at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

(A table of the students identified was included for each school.)

**Background Questions:**

1) What specific things were done at your ALHS to recruit you to enroll in the pastor track at MLC?

**Key questions:**

1) What personal connection did you have with the ministerial education recruiter at your ALHS?

2) What caused a higher enrollment at MLC in the pastor track from your ALHS during the designated years?

3) What can be replicated from those specific years?

**Follow up:**

1) What question(s) were not asked that you believe should be considered when defending or defeating this thesis?