

AN EXAMINATION OF OUR FEDERATED SCHOOLS'
EFFECTIVENESS AT PREPARING FUTURE LAY MINISTERS
(AREA LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOLS AND WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE)

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First, to define the term "lay ministry": It will become clear soon in this paper that the term is by no means always understood in the same way. Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding, "lay ministry" will be defined at the beginning of this paper so that the term can be used hereafter without any further comment.

When a child of the Reformation and a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran uses the term lay ministry, he cannot be speaking of some sort of semi-ministry for a select group of para-professional Christians who would be categorized somewhere between a preacher and a pew-sitter. Nor would this truly Lutheran individual consider the pastor of his congregation a mere "enabler" or administrator over a congregation of lay ministers who do all the work that the pastor organized and set before them.

We use this term lay ministry assuming the correct relationship between a member of a congregation and the called pastor of that congregation. Although Ephesians 4:11-12 directs a pastor to "equip the saints for works of service," that is not his only or even primary responsibility. The pastor's primary task is to be a spiritual shepherd which involves preaching and applying God's Word to and for his members "in season and out of season." The pastor doesn't possess a higher station among his fellow royal priests; he has been called into the public ministry, for the sake of decency and order, to serve other members

of the universal priesthood in their common ministry.

The lay minister is, therefore, any and every member of a Christian congregation whose faith bears the fruit of good works. One of the uncovered treasures of the Reformation was the true understanding of the universal priesthood. Without going into a dogmatical discussion, our priesthood is possible only because Christ has made us holy in God's sight by means of his perfect obedience and innocent death. Through faith in this Christ, we become priests who are to "offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--which is our spiritual worship(Rom 12:1)."

A lay minister, as a member of the universal priesthood, lives his personal life of love, witness, example and service both inside and outside the congregation.

When an individual joins a congregation, he will quickly discover that his congregation needs people, besides the pastor, to carry out programs that serve the needs of those people. The lay people who take part in such service opportunities, who serve for and with the congregation, are our lay ministers. In addition to their "priestly" duties as father or mother, worker or wife, child or student, they have accepted other duties as members of a congregation. The lay ministry they carry out in connection with their local congregation is faith bearing fruits of service and does not imply a different level in a priestly hierarchy. One might say that they are bearing "corporate" fruits of faith.

The next order of business is to examine the results of a questionnaire that was sent to all the administrators, twenty-two, of our Synod's high schools and academies. The goal of this questionnaire was to determine three things:

1. What is the school's (administrator's) attitude over against lay ministry preparation in their school?
2. What specific courses or other educational devices does their school offer in order to prepare future lay ministers? (This must go further than chapel talk applications.)
3. What opportunities does the school offer for some sort of current lay, or more specifically, youth ministry? (This must go beyond singing in choir and collecting the mission offering.)

In order to determine the above mentioned items, the administrators were asked the following questions:

1. What are you doing specifically to encourage and train your students who aren't going into the public ministry for active involvement in their congregations?
2. Do you discuss this subject in your faculty meetings?
3. Do you encourage your teachers to make lay ministry applications whenever possible?
4. What special training or "tools" do you give your students for such a future lay ministry?
5. Do you have specific service programs that involve them in some sort of youth ministry now?
6. Have you recently become more aware of this need to prepare lay leaders for our congregations?

These administrators, or the people to whom they delegated this task, also offered many comments that were helpful and germane.

ARIZONA LUTHERAN ACADEMY

Mr. Robert Adickes, Principal
Rev. John Zarling responding

Pastor Zarling's immediate concern was an orthodox definition of lay ministry. He feels that our Synod (and this essayist) is in danger of no longer clearly distinguishing between public ministry and the universal priesthood.

More specifically he commented:

If you make something a subject, you immediately get three strikes against you. Don't forget that you are working with a teenager's mind. This formal training is no good. We rely on the example of the faculty. We discuss this need with the faculty and how they are the example. The teachers do strive to make applications in their class and point out their own involvement in a congregation. Take this back to the congregation where the stigma of a teacher is gone.

To briefly summarize, Pastor Zarling's attitude is that the congregation should handle the training of lay ministers. Arizona Lutheran Academy offers no specific preparation and no specific opportunities.

CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Kenric Peterson, Acting Principal

Mr. Peterson made it clear that his school believes in preparing young people for active involvement in congregational life but also spoke of a lack of specific preparation and opportunities offered to their students. He is interested in developing such programs but in the meantime, they:

- develop faith in Christ which bears fruit in active service.
- maintain student committees on worship which plan liturgies, prayers and chapel services in general.
- encourage students to give mission offerings to a selected project.
- provide mission and evangelism seminars through local congregations.
- have not, up to this time, spent time in faculty meetings discussing this subject.

Mr. Ken Peterson represents a significant percentage of those men responding who are interested in developing a "better" lay ministry program but are looking for suggestions.

EAST FORK LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. Reginald Riesop, Principal

At the present time, East Fork Lutheran High School indeed recognizes the fact that a program for training good lay members is necessary. This topic has come up in several faculty meetings and is at the present one of our most important priorities.

Presently, we do not have a program for the lay ministry, but the importance of the lay ministry is given much emphasis when the opportunity presents itself. Hopefully, by giving our children here on the reservation a good education founded in God's Word, it will serve as an essential tool in their lay ministry.

Yours in Christ,
Reginald C. Riesop

EVERGREEN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. Wayne W. Baxmann, Principal

Mr. Baxmann did not respond.

FOX VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
 Rev. James Plitzuweit, Principal

Pastor Plitzuweit did not answer the questions that spoke of attitudes and opportunities. He did not indicate whether the faculty took time to discuss lay ministry programs or whether they were encouraged to make lay ministry applications. In the area of preparation, however, Pastor Plitzuweit did send a description of two courses with a number of comments in regard to these courses.

Family Life Under Christ - 1403

A quarter course elective for seniors. Emphasis is on Christian communication skills: dating, engagement, and marriage; Christian family life and parenting skills; crisis-handling; and old age. (½ credit)

Stewardship and Evangelism - 1704

An elective quarter course for juniors and seniors. Emphasis is on Bible-centered stewardship and evangelism with emphasis on personal involvement in every day living. (½ credit)

Concerning Family Life Under Christ, Pastor Plitzuweit says it "deals with many aspects of...involvement in outside activities including church." Concerning the stewardship course, he says that it should be a semester course to cover all the material. This course "deals directly in many areas with lay ministry." In a comment that touches on attitude, at least the attitude of one Mr. Bock (Pastor Plitzuweit wrote: "Bock"):

The individual who teaches the course at the present time is Mr. Walter Bock of our faculty. He places a great deal of stress upon involvement and urges greater participation of the student in the areas of congregational life where possible...About 75% of our students take the Stewardship and Evangelism course during their studies at FVL.

HURON VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Rev. Karl S. Peterson, Principal

Apparently, lay ministry attitudes, preparation and opportunities are still in the hopper. Pastor Peterson's response is printed below.

In all of our Religion classes we strive to be as practical as possible. References to congregational life are made whenever feasible. We are giving some thought to involving our youth in first hand experiences (e.g. hospital calls) but this has not materialized.

KETTLE MORAINÉ LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. James Fenske, Principal

Mr. Fenske did not respond.

LAKESIDE LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. Philip A. Strohm, Principal
Pastor Martin Stuebs and Mr. Steven Schiller responding

Pastor Stuebs returned his questionnaire in a large manila envelope that also contained three papers written on, in one aspect or another, the topic of lay ministry. Pastor Stuebs asked Mr. Schiller to write a paper that answers the questions looking for specific ways that their school is training active lay people. In this paper, Mr. Schiller stressed three things. First, the positive example of the Christian educator is of the utmost importance. Secondly, he stresses the need for a teaching method that gives proper emphasis to affective teaching, that is, providing the student with a "heart-knowledge" of God. He points out an essay written by Rev. Joel Gerlach that warns of the

danger of relying on only the cognitive domain or, in simpler words, relying on a "head-knowledge" of Christ and Christian doctrine. Finally, Mr. Schiller points out their use of practical application not only in religion classes but also in the secular subjects. Teachers at Lakeside are encouraged to remember their church and how they could help their church in view of their talents and job skills.

Pastor Stuebs mentions another essay by Richard Grunze, Teaching From The Scriptural Viewpoint, which the faculty members are given to read as a means to make their teaching and applications more affective and effective. Lay ministry is an important issue at this school and they are studying their curriculum "so that it is not only a written document of course content and goals...It seems we are doing this with greater emphasis and intensity and as a result more practical applications are daily accomplished in the classroom together with stronger gospel-powered motivation to Christian sanctification outside the classroom."

It is easy to determine the attitude which Lakeside has in the realm of lay ministry but judgments in the areas of preparation for lay ministry and opportunities given to serve are not so easily made. There is one class on stewardship but no description was given nor was there any mention made of specific opportunities to "minister".

LUTHER HIGH SCHOOL
 Dr. James Raabe, Principal

Dr. Raabe also did not give enough information to allow a sure judgment of his attitude over against lay ministry. One may assume that his brief comments infer a positive attitude.

-Faculty discussions concerning preparing students for the lay ministry are seldom held on a formal basis, although informal faculty discussions take place often relative to preparing our students to be effective members of their congregations and to be involved in their congregation's programs.

-The "tools" we give our students are an increased knowledge of God's Word. (Are these tools really specific?)

-When occasions arise, such as opportunities to canvass, to sing carols, to help in other ways, we encourage our students to get involved. (Does this mean that Luther High offers opportunities to serve?)

MANITOWOC LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
 Rev. David Worgull, Principal

Pastor Worgull did not respond.

MICHIGAN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
 Rev. John H. Kurth, Principal

Pastor Kurth was another minister who expressed some concern with the way the term "lay ministry" was used in the questionnaire he received; "I don't understand whether or not you are making a distinction between Christian stewardship and a narrow defined "lay ministry"...My impression from your letter is that you are making a narrow category for your paper."

The reason Pastor Kurth's comment is included is to highlight the irony in the rest of his answers. After such a comment, one might expect Pastor Kurth to discount lay ministry preparation in a high school context. His following comments, however, prove this to be an incorrect assumption.

-We do discuss application for Christian life and witness both in our faculty meetings and in our classrooms.

-(We give) examples where appropriate of specific services or time/talent/treasure sharing in church organizations such as Voters' Assembly, Women's Group, etc.

-I personally make "our opportunities" (to serve) the emphasis...(God) has chosen us in His plan (to use us), solely by His grace,

-Within the school, service opportunities are presented in both class projects and extra curriculars.

Pastor Kurth also emphasizes that Michigan Lutheran High School is only an arm of the Church which means that the real responsibility for lay training lies upon the congregation. He does not use that as an excuse for neglecting, as an administrator, lay ministry preparation. Rather, he suggests cooperation.

MINNESOTA VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Jerome P. Birkholz, Principal

Mr. Birkholz offered a detailed explanation of how Minnesota Valley Lutheran trains and encourages their students to become active lay members. This begins with their faculty meetings within which they discuss lay ministry applications and attitudes "very, very frequently". Also, when the faculty counsels their

students, the teachers emphasize that the students are "future members of a congregation".

The students receive lay ministry preparation in their senior religion course which dedicates a "unit" to adult life in connection with the church they attend. They also receive a two week unit on evangelism. This evangelism course is led by members of their District Evangelism Committee, by the local pastors of the congregations the students will assist, by a high school professor and, by a local lay member who demonstrates the evangelism procedures. After this course, the students spend one Saturday canvas witnessing on behalf of those two local congregations. One other opportunity to serve that Mr. Birkholz mentioned was the Recruitment Committee. On this committee, there are a number of students who travel with certain members of the staff and faculty who offer their plugs for MVLHS.

NEBRASKA EV. LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. Karl Blauert, Administrator

Mr. Blauert comments that since his school is relatively new (four years), they haven't incorporated a formal program of training for lay ministry in their curriculum. Being new does have its advantages in that "it has been repeatedly stressed that ours is an area high school and not a Synod preparatory school. While we do have the pastor and teacher training programs, our

Association has strongly promoted the idea that the majority of our students will one day be the leaders of our District's congregations. Therefore, our Christian training program will reflect this thinking."

Even for a young school, however, the preparation and opportunities to serve which Mr. Blauert mentioned were encouraging:

In one of our religion classes evangelism techniques were studied. Another unit deals with a study of the various denominations they will encounter. The small congregation formed when the school started is planning a canvass of the surrounding community. Students will be invited and trained to participate in this. Finally, because we are a dorm school, students can and do teach Sunday school as well as serve as organists for church services.

NORTHLAND LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. John R. Schultz, Administrator

Mr. Schultz did not respond.

SAINT CROIX LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Rev. Robert A. Sievert, Principal

Few of the administrators responded to the question that asked whether they had become more aware of the need to train lay leaders recently. Some neglected to answer that question, some didn't understand the question (because of its admittedly poor wording) and still others declined to answer it for lack of evidence. Pastor Sievert, however, knew exactly what the question

sought. He apparently has a lay ministry "conscience" on the high school's board. He answers the question thus: "Yes, especially with the deep concern in this area...expressed by a Board member--Pastor Richard Stadler(Thank you, Pastor Stadler!)."

The faculty of Saint Croix has never made lay ministry a focal point of a meeting but "the topic has emerged and was discussed as it arose in the flow of dialogue." Pastor Sievert visits the classes and, when opportune, mentions special lay ministry applications (on the basis of a lesson) to the instructors. At the present time, they do not give specific training for lay ministry but they did in the past. The course was called "Our Church In Action" and they are considering such a course again. They do also provide an opportunity for the students to get involved in a program called "One on One" which is a tutor program. The students travel, at their own expense and during their study period, to local Christian elementary schools to help children with "special needs".

SHORELAND LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Mr. Kenneth Jeske, Acting Principal

Mr. Jeske sent the shortest and certainly the most pointed reply to the questionnaire:

The subject of lay ministry has...never been formally discussed in our faculty meetings. To be truthful, the subject has never been formally addressed in any setting at our school. I know that as "appropriate moments" present themselves...our instructors encourage personal witnessing; but this "hit and miss" situation can hardly

be construed as a "program" in which...students are trained to exercise their priesthood.

I am giving you very little useful information of the type you seek. In fact, the opposite is true; you have given me a heightened sense of awareness that more, much more needs to be done in this area.

Mr. Jeske's school would not serve well as an example of lay preparation in action but one wonders whether his honest appraisal of what his school is doing in this area couldn't be a healthy example for others. He has not only stated the condition of his school clearly and honestly and its need for improvement in the area of lay minister preparation. He has also stated the condition and need of many other area Lutheran high schools. May we say it? The condition and need of all the other Lutheran high schools.

WEST LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Adair Moldenhauer, Principal

Mr. Moldenhauer did not respond.

WINNEBAGO LUTHERAN ACADEMY

Mr. John H. Schibbelhut, Principal

Mr. Schibbelhut's response was another honest and, in his own words, difficult reply. The bulk of his reply can be summed up in this statement which closed his introduction to the specific answers: "It's easy to give lip service, but hard to follow with actions, but once in a while some progress is apparent." This

statement follows a digest of Winnebago's mission statements found in the school's catalog and Registration Booklet.

Now to his answers to specific questions:

1. "Discuss with faculty lay ministry?" Yes. It is discussed via classes and the service work done by the Student Council.
2. "Encourage teachers to make lay ministry applications?" We have not done this as we should...Consequently, we have not developed nor used any specific "tools" in this regard.
3. "Specific service programs?" We don't do much in this area. We try to emphasize the need in religion classes... We have had students assisting during the day on a regular basis at a local nursing home...students made themselves available to clean yards, put up storms and so forth. We encourage students to participate in our annual work day.
4. "Have you become more aware..." I feel we are more conscious now than we were five years ago of the need to put our faith into action, but as I said before, we hope to do more in the future.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
Rev. W.M. Borgwardt, Administrator

Pastor Borgwardt also prefaced his specific answers with a long paragraph on the concept and attitude of lay ministry.

The concept of lay ministry is interesting. I see in the very term a certain kind of emphasis perhaps because we in our Synod have not emphasized in a practical way the role of lay people in the universal priesthood.

The rest of this paragraph concerns itself, again as has been noted in other administrators' replies, with a correct understanding, theologically, of the term lay ministry. Pastor Borgwardt's concerns can be summed up in one of his sentences:

Where does training as a Christian leave off and specific training for lay ministry begin? I imagine you will be wrestling with such questions of definition as you work on your paper."

The faculty has not meet to specifically discuss lay ministry at WLHS except in the way of "Christian students discussing their faith now and after they leave WLHS, which has implications for lay ministry." Then Pastor Borgwardt points out, as Pastor Zarling of Arizona Lutheran did, the stressed importance of faculty example in their local congregations.

There is, relatively speaking, much done at WLHS in the way of specific training for lay ministry and many opportunities to serve. Below is listed a brief description of what WLHS offers in regard to both:

1. Christian Service At Wisconsin Lutheran Child And Family Service. This is a one quarter senior religion elective that includes two weeks of class room preparation and seven weeks of field work(nursing services, occupational therapy services, indirect services).
2. Religion 5-6. "All students are required to take the course in junior religion, which in one quarter gets into the work of Synod and congregation."
3. Teaching Sunday School. A one quarter senior religion elective.
4. Comparison of Christian Churches. In one of the objectives for the course, the text reads "prepare students to witness their faith to those of other churches."
5. "For the last three years we have instituted the "Pastor-student Day" at which the student's pastor meets with his teenagers attending Wisco. One focus of these meetings is the role of the Wisco student in congregational matters."

6. "We recently instituted the ADAPT program, in which students are trained to serve fellow students, parents, and elementary students with problems in alcohol and drug abuse."

SYNOD PREPARATORY SCHOOLS

Rev. William Zell Northwestern Preparatory School

Rev. John Lawrenz Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Rev. Theodore Olsen Martin Luther Preparatory School (didn't respond)

The prep schools will be placed in one category, a different category because they are obviously not in the lay ministry preparation business. President Zell states that the prep schools do "nothing in that regard" for the following reasons:

1. "(Should) our school as a synod-subsidized worker-training school (be) "used" by individuals as a Lutheran High School."
2. "It's a very sensitive area with many, and rightly so, since two-thirds of a prep student's tuition is subsidized."
3. "The last thing we want to do is to provide student services, student career guidance, or any other student benefits for individuals who have in fact agreed to our worker-training course of studies and general program, but who really want anything but that."

And lest anyone accuse President Zell of being "crass",[→] as he feared, he closes his reply with this:

I have no doubts that graduates of ours who become lay members in our congregations have been given a training which will serve them well as active, knowledgeable, and dedicated lay workers for Jesus.

President Lawrenz opens his three page reply with the same lay ministry disclaimer but adds some interesting comments from a prep school president's perspective.

1. In our stressing of the service Christians do, we honor all service. We stress that all are called to serve in the universal priesthood of believers. We stress that MLS is a workshop of the Holy Spirit to make servants of every last student. We quickly point out the great privilege of full-time service in the public ministry. In so doing, of course, we never attempt to leave the impression that lay ministry is "second rate."
2. There is a real danger that our kids develop a "nest" mentality. For this reason (among others) I have been working hard toward the establishment of a Spanish program. This foreign language is designed for service. Our Spanish American friends are all over. All of our students can look forward toward the use of a Spanish medium in the next generation.
3. On the high school level we need a "consciousness raising" about ministry in general. The good Lord will in time let our young people know whether their budding interest in service will find its adult focus in a classroom, pulpit or pew.
4. We need more opportunities for all youth to become involved in ministry. In a school like ours with its dorm family and single purpose the overall thrust will be toward full-time ministry. That, to my mind, is not incompatible with lay ministry. The lessons learned will carry over. The task I see before us at MLS is to do an even better job in teaching ministry as a concept and as a practical reality.

Although President Lawrenz's comments are spoken from the point of view of a prep school administrator, they could well be taken to heart by all our area Lutheran high school administrators as well. The presence of these comments on this page and in this paper is, therefore, more than justified,

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE
Dr. Gary J. Greenfield, President

How effective has this federation supported institution been in training their students for active lay involvement in their congregations? This question becomes much more serious when it is asked of Wisconsin Lutheran College. Through a recent Synod-wide publication (Mary, I'll Be Waiting) and through their mission statements, this college has worked to become known as a school that offers more than a quality liberal arts education. WLC also wants to be known as a college that develops a more-informed and better-equipped lay ministry.

Once again, we seek answers to three questions, the same three questions that have appeared many times on earlier pages. What is WLC's attitude towards lay ministry training? What specific preparation does this school offer? Does WLC provide opportunities for their students to serve in some sort of youth ministry? In the case of WLC, these questions were directed to many members of the faculty and staff and not just to Dr. Greenfield, the school's president.

A brief look at the beginnings of WLC will point out that, from its inception, preparation of congregational leaders was high on its founders' list of priorities.

In September of 1969, just after Synod had closed Wisconsin Lutheran Teacher's College, a group of men met at Mr. Carroll

Dummann's home to discuss alternative proposals which might keep the college alive. The upshot of it all was that they decided to establish a junior college that would be supported by a federation of Wisconsin Synod churches and not by the unwilling Synod itself.

Mr. Dummann stated (interviewed on February 22, 1983) that this group's primary motivation was to establish a Lutheran college that offered a Christian liberal arts education. The number of young people that "Synod was losing" in the secular universities was a strong force behind their decision to establish WLC. While their primary purpose was to establish a Christian liberal arts education that offered professional career training, these founders also had in mind a school that would prepare its students for active participation in churches in a leadership role. Quoting Mr. Dummann:

Right from the very inception, there was no question as to what the purpose of this school was. Although the term lay ministry was not used, that was the intent. As far as implementing this Christian leadership role, we did not start out with specific ideas. It was left up to those who would develop the curriculum to carry out this goal. We did not want to be a Bible college but that doesn't mean that we didn't want the fruits of Christian education.

The fulfillment of this lay leadership goal was about a six year evolution. This goal took definite shape after the physical plant had been purchased, the faculty called and the Dean of

Student Affairs and the Academic Dean were installed (This observation offered by Mr. Ray Schumacher, chairman of Board of Regents). The last four years have been a solidification and an implementation of lay ministry programs both in the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. This is a nutshell presentation of the historical development of lay ministry attitudes. What is the attitude of WLC's administration, faculty and staff now?

Protocol suggests that we begin with Mr. Ray Schumacher, the current chairman of WLC's Board of Regents. Mr. Schumacher believes that the vast majority of the twenty-one member board (11 laymen, 5 teachers, 5 pastors) has a firm grasp and familiarity of the lay ministry preparation aspect of WLC's mission. Those members who don't have this grasp, according to Mr. Schumacher, are forced out of active participation in the board due to the distance involved or busy time schedules (not lack of interest). All the board members encourage this aspect of WLC and "in no way try to squelch or temper lay ministry ideas."

Mr. Schumacher stressed:

This capable and committed group of men are not a rubber stamp board who merely acquiesce to the requests of the college president. These men are on this board because they want to see to it that our Synod's youth who are not preparing for the preaching or teaching ministry have an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a Christian education that fosters strong lay leadership and active lay participation.

How does Dr. Gary Greenfield, president of WLC, view lay preparation and its place in the college's complete picture?

I see why lay ministry is the reason for this school's existence.

But how will his role as the school's president affect WLC's reason for being? To this, Dr. Greenfield said that his primary purpose as president is to "keep the school focused on its goals." Grossly over simplified, his job involves listening to the ideas and dreams of his faculty and staff and then guiding them with the following questions:

- What is the specific goal?
- Where will the program fit into the budget?
- What will the program actually look like?
- How long will it take?
- How is the program progressing?

When the Academic Dean and the Dean of Student Affairs are trying to hash out the balance between the cognitive and the affective domain (academic versus practical) in lay ministry terms, Dr. Greenfield operates with a different set of questions:

- What is lay ministry?
- What is a school for the laity of Wisconsin Synod?
- What is our goal as such a school?
- Are our means to attain that goal the best possible means?
- After the mission statements have been reviewed, is it clear that WLC has the programs to implement those mission statements?

Dr. Greenfield vehemently states that he is a strong proponent of lay ministry preparation but, "I won't allow emphasis on lay ministry to be over emphasized at WLC. It must fit into the entire picture. (We are not looking to) establish a new monk-like

order."

Since the mission statements establish this entire picture, they are offered below as they are found in the Faculty Handbook.

1. To provide in depth and practical instruction from Scripture to help college students grow in faith and develop personal values, a sense of purpose and "Weltanschauung" which are consistent with biblical Christianity.
2. To offer a program of liberal arts instruction academically comparable to the best in current education and broad enough to allow transfer into programs of continuing study leading to post-college careers.
3. To offer courses which lead directly to employment in the business world, and to augment those courses with education for life as a Christian.
4. To provide the environment and counseling which enable Wisconsin Lutheran College students to assess themselves and their future in an uncertain world.
5. To create a campus atmosphere that is characterized by Christian love and sharing as well as intellectual stimulation.
6. To provide a program of continuing Christian education for the members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, with courses and workshops directed at developing a more-informed and better-equipped lay ministry.
7. To offer credit and non-credit courses, seminars and workshops which provide continuing education and avocational opportunities for the community.
3. To analyze the social, philosophical, moral, and spiritual trends in the contemporary world and to seek ways to address these issues with the Christian faith.

The reality of those mission statements that pertain to lay ministry preparation exists not in their place on paper, but in their place in the hearts and practice of WLC's faculty and staff. In order to determine this reality, these three questions were

asked of 12 staff and faculty members:

1. Where on the list of your priorities here does lay minister preparation belong?
2. Do you plan this aspect of your work or teaching?
3. Are you personally encouraged and guided by other staff and faculty to consciously prepare future lay ministers?

The answers that these people gave to question number two above were strikingly similar. While not all of the staff could plan, per se, lay ministry "lessons", all of the seven faculty members stated that they most definitely planned lay ministry applications in all their various courses. Three of these seven faculty members teach some type of religion course which most easily allows for lay ministry application. Six of them, however, teach courses in areas such as history, psychology, etc., in which they also plan and look for lay ministry applications.

The answers given to question number three above revealed two things. First, that there is definitely a lot of encouraging and guiding going on within the faculty, both formally in meetings and in informal discussions. Secondly, however, their answers revealed that the majority of this encouragement comes from the two deans. In addition to the encouragement that comes from the deans, and the regular chapel devotions, committee meetings and committee work in general was mentioned as conducive to lay ministry preparation guidance and encouragement. Although this encouragement doesn't come from every quarter and as frequently

as some would like, it does nonetheless regularly occur.

The first question, which sought priority ranking of lay ministry preparation, sparked the most interesting comments and also clearly demonstrated that there is a developed awareness of WLC's mission to "equip the saints." Although they will not be offered in the following section, seven of the twelve people gave concrete examples of how they put their attitude into practice in their classrooms and job situations.

Eugene Baer: English, Religion

I rank lay ministry among the top two or three WLC purposes. I see lay ministry preparation as inherent in nearly all courses. I believe a well-prepared core of lay leaders is essential to the mission of the church and that a WELS liberal arts institution is best qualified to provide such a core. I suspect that admissions policies, recently changed, will result in recruiting and admitting more students with stronger convictions and greater lay ministry and leadership potential.

John Bauer: Academic Dean, History

At this point, I would say we have not defined what "active" or "qualified" (lay ministers) are. While some classes (e.g. Evangelism, Skills-Issues of Lay Ministry, etc.) deal with concerns of lay ministry, I would say that a greater impact is had through the maintenance of a "spirit" or "mind-set" on campus that stresses the unique nature of the institution as a training ground for lay ministers and provides off-campus opportunities to witness. I think that a major part of the training or "preparation" of a committed Laity involves helping them to live and work together as Christians.

Rev. Roger Fleming: Religion, Greek, P.E.

"Preparation for lay ministry is first in my list of priorities."

Arthur Hombsch: Plant Manager

When asked whether the lay preparation aspect of WLC influenced his decision to take the job, he responded, "I'm sure not here for the money! It's what I believe in."

Dr. John Juern: Psychology

The preparation of lay people is of vital importance. WLC can help prepare for future careers, but along with this it can also help to encourage them to use their abilities in the local congregation or church at large...I see WLC as being able to help students prepare for secular careers that can be used to the glory of God in the local congregation.

Rev. Paul Kelm: Dean of Student Affairs, History, Religion

(My) personal priority would be very high because (lay ministry preparation) is a goal for which projects and programs in student affairs exist, from Christian service to talent and leadership development.

Karl Koepke: Maintenance

I...think of this place as a college first. The preparation of lay ministers is secondary but gaining.

Starla Paur: Librarian

(Lay ministry preparation) is a top priority. (It) is difficult to translate into academic programming but layman education was the reason for starting WLC. However, the purpose of WLC and lay preparation is poorly communicated.

Paul Ruege: History

(Lay ministry preparation is) very high on my list. (It was) my purpose in helping to found the school.

Peter Schumacher: Mathematics

(Lay ministry preparation) is probably at the top, since that's one of the primary purposes of the school.

Kay Turnbull: Executive Secretary

On a scale of 1-10, I'd give it a 7 or 8. (Lay ministry preparation) is gaining ground but there is so, so much that could and should be done.

Martin Wolf: Admissions

(Lay ministry preparation is) near the top. The "how-to" should be taught as well as put into practice. At WLC, the student is taught how to be a leader in the community and in the church.

Much has already been said about lay ministry preparation at WLC as attitude was discussed. Instructors generally, though not

universally (Prof. Baer: "Full-time faculty knows our mission and believes in it." But one half of WLC's faculty is part-time), make applications to lay ministry when and where they can. Beyond this preparation, there are four classes under the heading of Religion that directly and specifically address lay ministry preparation and, in most cases, offer immediate opportunities to serve.

The Old Testament

In addition to a "typical" study of the historical books, the course includes sections on teaching Sunday School, examining the weaknesses of most Sunday School teaching (i.e. no application) and the preparation of devotions for youth group meetings or shut-in visits.

Communicating the Gospel

The students learn and then, through local churches, put into practice various evangelism techniques.

Skills and Issues of Personal Christianity

Scriptural and practical approach to such aspects of Christian life as: peer counseling, personal stewardship, etc.

Skills and Issues of Lay Ministry

Includes church administration, teaching, dealing with delinquents, youth ministry, etc.

Outside of the classroom, there are various types of opportunities to both learn and serve in ongoing extracurricular activities. Rev. Paul Kelm, Dean of Student Affairs, is the administrator over this area. At the present time, students have the opportunity to get involved in any of the following programs:

1. Canvass Inner City for prospective Sunday School children.
2. A three hour shift on the Pregnancy Counseling Center Hotline.
3. Saturday morning Spanish classes which will train students for VBS work in Puerto Rico.
4. Tuesday night Bible classes.

5. Annual TCW trips.
6. Tutoring slow learners at local Synod elementary school.
7. Witness on a weekly basis to teens at Milwaukee County juvenile home.
8. Witness on a weekly basis to teens at Milwaukee County Adolescent Treatment Center.
9. Peer counseling.
10. Help Rev. Lenz, an institutional missionary, at Sage nursing home on a weekly basis.
11. WLC's own Every Member Stewardship Visit.
12. Thursday evening "Forum" which addresses lay ministry issues (conducted by off campus speakers).

To the outside observer, there appears to be an abundance of programs at WLC that offer a student both the on the job training and the opportunities to get involved in an ongoing youth ministry of their own. Many of the programs named above (e.g. Hotline, tutoring, witnessing at two county homes, nursing home) are programs that provide an opportunity to learn and to serve once a week throughout the school year. Yet, this essayist spoke to no one who stated their satisfaction with the number and the variety of programs presently offered. Pastor Roger Fleming stated:

Perhaps the area of our greatest failure lies in our being unable to recognize the abundant opportunities for lay ministry that constantly surround us, teachers and students alike.

Such an attitude, if effectively communicated to and shared by all, will insure for the students a diversified and comprehensive youth ministry now and a better equipped lay ministry for the future.

An analysis of the effectiveness of lay ministry training in the federated high schools of our Synod and Wisconsin Lutheran College has surely already begun in the mind of the reader of this paper. Perhaps one's initial thought centers around the urgent need for improvement in this area. My analysis, however, will begin with an emphasis on a point that many people responding to questionnaires and interviews made. That point is this, that the best way, and finally the only effective way to motivate and to train Christian lay leaders is to develop in them faith--faith in Christ and his gospel promises. This Spirit-breathed faith will bear fruit in active and eager service in the student's personal life of faith and witness as well as in their part in their congregation's ministry.

Yet, to use Pastor Stueb's words, a Wisconsin Synod high school or college cannot be satisfied with this "cognitive domain" alone. This, finally, is the glaring weakness in our lay ministry program at large. There is no real, pointed, specific application to and for a future lay minister.

We can encourage our high school students to get involved in their congregation's ministry, and should do so often. But if we don't show them how to get involved and take the time in class and out of class to train them for this involvement, then we have no one to blame but ourselves when young people complain about not

feeling part of their congregation or when young people simply don't get involved.

So what is the solution? Can there be a single solution that will meet the needs of our high schools that are spread out over most of the United States? I believe that there is a single solution. This solution begins to take shape when one examines the list of what those high schools which do have some sort of lay ministry program are doing. Examine the list below and see whether you can detect the common denominator which appears in most of the programs. This common denominator is the key to a viable, to the only viable solution. (The list below was compiled from questionnaires returned by area high school administrators.)

1. Promote discussion among the faculty for lay ministry application.
2. Stress the faculty member's example of Christian life and witness which he carries out in his own congregation.
3. Provide evangelism seminars through local congregation(s) to spark interest.
4. Provide evangelism courses and opportunities through local congregations to capitalize on that interest.
5. Urge the student to ask the pastor of his congregation how he could get involved now.
6. Make a conscious effort at providing first hand experience for the students. Make the lessons in lay ministry concrete.
7. Bring lay people into the high school so they can tell the students exactly how to and what it's like to evangelize, make shut-in calls, visit delinquents, etc.
8. Tell the students what goes on in a voter's meeting, ladies aid, mission society, Pioneer meetings, etc.
9. Discuss with the students "Treasure Sharing" and where the money goes and what it's used for in the congregation and throughout the Synod.
10. Use students on a recruitment committee.
11. Teach students what non-christian groups believe and how they might effectively witness to them.
12. Develop a tutor program for slow learners in a local Christian Day School.

13. Encourage board members who are pastors of local congregations to give suggestions for lay ministry programs (i.e., find a lay minister advocate).
14. Work with an area pastor to establish a witness/service program in a local nursing home.
15. Through an area pastor, introduce the students to shut-ins who would enjoy devotions from the youth and could use their help around the house.
16. Teach students how to teach Sunday School and work with the local congregation so they can try it.
17. Try a "pastor-student Day" so both student and pastor can think about youth involvement in the congregation.
18. Teach the students basic techniques in peer-counseling.
19. Canvass for Sunday School and VBS students on behalf of local congregations.
20. Introduce courses that utilize lay ministry teachers from different backgrounds.

The scarlet thread that runs throughout this list of lay minister training suggestions is, in almost every case, the word "congregation". The solution to a good lay minister training program which involves concretes, which gives first hand experience, which can easily and effectively branch out into the "affective domain" is simply this: work with and through local congregations.

The area Lutheran high school will be nothing more than ineffective if it tries to operate a lay ministry program apart from a local congregation. To do that, would be to remove the source of reality, the source of urgency, the source of real motivation. An area Lutheran high school cannot replace the congregation in its role of lay minister trainer. A local congregation or any group of congregations in a federation cannot relegate or abdicate its responsibility to train these students for lay ministry to the area high school.

When high school and congregation work together, plan together, brainstorm together, then there is real benefit. There is benefit for the student who will become a much more qualified and more aware participant in his congregation's ministry. There is benefit for that congregation that will reap the fruits of that student's present and future service in its midst. A high school and the local congregation have to come together and work together before any real effective lay ministry program can result.

If you return to the section of this paper that deals with the high schools, you'll see that only California, Michigan, Minnesota Valley, Nebraska and St. Croix made any mention of specific, current lay ministry training in connection with the local congregations. Herein lies the glaring weakness of our lay minister training program in the Wisconsin Synod.

Wisconsin Lutheran College enjoys many distinct advantages over our federated high schools as they strive to train lay ministers on the college level. To begin with, a college student generally attends the school of his choice to get the kind of education which he feels that school offers. Wisconsin Lutheran College offers a lay ministry training program along side its liberal arts program. For the most part, therefore, WLC is working with a much more willing core group of young lay ministers. A college student also is going to be more mature intellectually

and emotionally. This means that the students will be more willing to venture out into the sometimes frightening frontier of actual service to and communication with a troubled friend or an unbelieving mission prospect. And since WLC is primarily a dorm school, it can assume evening hours for such things as informal seminars and classes lead by certain lay people and professionals without stepping on the students' pastor's toes (cf. Thursday night forum mentioned earlier). If WLC were the best place in Synod for a young person to receive lay ministry preparation along with their regular education, it would only be because a college student is generally more willing, more able and bolder than a high school student.

Another distinct advantage that WLC enjoys is that they've been working at lay ministry preparation longer, talking about it more, and experimenting with ways to make it happen. If the reader will look back to pages 27 and 28, you will again see that the current training programs are carried out, generally, through congregations or in connection with Pastor Lenz's institutional ministry (witnessing programs and Sage Nursing Home).

None the less, the strongest lay minister training proponents at WLC are not, nor can they afford to be, entirely satisfied with their school's present level of effectiveness in this area. Yet, they can rejoice in the progress which WLC has made towards an

effective lay ministry program. There is communication, there is planning, there is an effort to raise their own effectiveness and awareness level. This awareness of WLC's lay ministry mission was given a substantial boost on February 6, 1983 during their tenth anniversary service. In his anniversary address, Pastor Wayne Mueller said, "Wisconsin Lutheran College is a worker-training school!" No, not in the sense of Northwestern College or DMLC who train future preachers and teachers. WLC is a worker-training college in this sense, that they strive to train their students, who are preparing for a life in the business world, for an effective lay leadership role in their congregation's ministry.

Their lay ministry program still needs work, still needs to be grasped by all the faculty and staff, still needs to take advantage of more lay ministry opportunities. But this isn't my evaluation--it is their own. Many, hopefully soon all of the faculty and staff of WLC will take it upon themselves to improve their answer to this question: How effective is Wisconsin Lutheran College at preparing lay ministers for the future?

Now, asking the reader's forbearance, this essayist/WLC residence counselor will put in a plug for the school that opened his eyes to the need for a well-defined lay ministry program. Although WLC is still striving to achieve universal awareness and cooperation among its faculty and staff to carry

out their lay ministry program, the time has already come for teachers and pastors in the field to acknowledge WLC's present level of effectiveness. The time has come for teachers and preachers already in the field to keep a current copy of the Wisconsin Lutheran College catalog on their bookshelves. All of our young people headed for secular college campuses should be introduced to the idea of attending our Synod's third (and only federated) college level worker-training school, our laity training school, Wisconsin Lutheran College.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE
1974-1975

Nota Bene: All the questionnaires and interview manuscripts are in the essayist's files.