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From the Publisher: Staying Connected

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Purpose Statement

This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-six colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA. The publication has its home at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, which has generously offered leadership and physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the publication.

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators that have addressed the church-college/university partnership. The ELCA has sponsored an annual Vocation of the Lutheran College Conference. The primary purpose of *Intersections* is to enhance and continue such dialogue. It will do so by:

- Lifting up the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities
- Encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the partnership of colleges and universities with the church
- Offering a forum for concerns and interests of faculty at the intersection of faith, learning, and teaching
- Raising for debate issues about institutional missions, goals, objectives, and learning priorities
- Encouraging critical and productive discussion on our campuses of issues focal to the life of the church
- Serving as a bulletin board for communications among institutions and faculties
- Publishing papers presented at conferences sponsored by the ELCA and its institutions
- Raising the level of awareness among faculty about the Lutheran heritage and connectedness of their institutions, realizing a sense of being part of a larger family with common interests and concerns

From the Publisher | Staying Connected

Creating and sustaining meaningful relationships in our personal and public lives challenges each of us. This challenge extends to higher education and the community of ELCA colleges and universities. *Intersections* was established as a tool for maintaining relationships among leaders in ELCA higher education. Under our now not-so-new editor, Jason Mahn, *Intersections* remains a vibrant vehicle for sharing ideas, research, and reflections on the vocation of our institutions. Jason has recently brought new voices to serve as an editorial advisory board for the journal. We welcome Laurie Brill (LECNA), Jacqueline Bussie (Concordia), Darrell Jodock (St. Olaf), Lynn Hunnicutt (PLU), Tom Morgan (Augsburg), Kathi Tunheim (Gustavus), and Ernie Worman (Newberry). Your suggestions for *Intersections* are welcomed by Jason and the advisory editorial board. It is my hope that over the next few years, the journal will become a more widely utilized tool for a conversation about our shared ELCA identity and our congruent mission as colleges and universities.

Coming together for face-to-face conversations has and will continue to be—even in this digital age of virtual meetings—important for maintaining relationships among the people who work at our institutions. The annual Vocation of a Lutheran College conference remains an important in-person gathering. We will next meet July 21-23 at Augsburg College to discuss Leadership as informed by vocation, service, and mentoring. In the summer of 2014, teams from our colleges and universities are also invited to attend a special conference on the expanding work of interfaith dialogue and understanding on our campuses. With support from the churchwide organization, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois is hosting this conference June 1-3, 2014, on its campus. (See more information on page 7.) ELCA colleges and universities are invited to send presidents, faculty, students, and chaplains to discuss best practices and experiences in interfaith dialogue and understanding. Eboo Patel, president of the Interfaith Youth Core, and the new presiding bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton, will speak at the conference. The conference promises to help us all better claim that the vocation of an ELCA college or university includes the promotion of interfaith understanding among students and all within our communities of learning.

Maintaining our community of shared identity and mission is an ongoing task, but the task is made all the easier with this fine journal, our annual Vocation conference at Augsburg College, and special events like the 2014 interfaith understanding conference at Augustana or the conference in summer of 2013 at Pacific Lutheran University on introducing faculty and staff to Lutheran higher education. Join the conversation!

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