

2002

From the Publisher

Arne Selbyg

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/intersections>

Augustana Digital Commons Citation

Selbyg, Arne (2002) "From the Publisher," *Intersections*: Vol. 2002: No. 14, Article 2.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/intersections/vol2002/iss14/2>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by Augustana Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Intersections* by an authorized administrator of Augustana Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@augustana.edu.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-eight colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Division for Higher Education and Schools of the ELCA. The publication presently has its home at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio which has generously offered leadership, physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the inauguration of the publication.

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators which have addressed the church - college/university partnership. Recently 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

Surely “vocation” is a one of the precious gifts Lutheran theology offers education. It is an awesome and humbling notion to believe that we are each called to serve God and others in the places and among the people of our daily lives, and to honor God by doing so with excellence. It is fitting, then, that this issue of *Intersections* (Faith + Life + Learning) considers vocation in an “up close and personal” way.

Several of the articles in this issue sprang from presentations offered during the 2001 Vocation of a Lutheran College conference, and 2002 participants will receive the first copies of this issue. As a new staff member of the ELCA Division for Higher Education and Schools I attended my first “Vocations” conference last year. I was joined by a diverse group of new and seasoned college and university faculty, staff, and administrators, theologians and scholars. We came together, at the invitation of the ELCA Division for Higher Education and Schools, to think about what it means personally and collectively to be called to serve God and others through our vocations in Lutheran higher education. This conference is a gift to the church as it considers its role in education and to education as it considers its role in the church. To learn more about The Vocation of a Lutheran College conference, contact Dr. Arne Selbyg, director for ELCA colleges and universities, at aselbyg@elca.org.

Speaking of gifts, *Intersections* (the journal of Faith + Life + Learning that grew out of the first “Vocations” conference in 19XX) and its editor, Dr. Tom Christenson (professor of philosophy at Capital University) are treasures to those who care deeply about higher education and faith. Some of the participants at a recent consultation considering the need for “Lutheran Identity” resources in ELCA schools and centers, campus ministries, and colleges and universities found *Intersections* to be a surprise gift; they hadn’t seen an issue before. Whether you are reading your first issue or whether you’ve read every issue, it would be helpful to know about you. Consider gifting future issues of *Intersections* with your feedback. Photocopy the table of contents. Jot notes next to the articles: What did you read? What did you skip? Please share a bit about

yourself: something that explains why you would read the publisher's note of *Intersections*. Finally, tell us how you ended up with a copy of this issue. For example, "It comes via interoffice mail, distributed by the president's office." Send your notes to Dr. Tom Christenson, *Intersections* editor, Capital University, 2199 E. Main St. Columbus, Ohio 43209.

Blessings,
Sue Edison-Swift
Assistant Director, ELCA Colleges and Universities

FROM THE EDITOR

Many of our campuses are or recently have been abuzz with conversations about vocation. I would like to think that this is not entirely due to the hope of winning millions in the Lilly lottery. If vocation is an idea that is at or near the heart of a Lutheran understanding of education then it should be something we converse about whether or not the conversation is funded. It should just be part of who we are and what we do.

As I listened to the presentations included in this issue the question was raised for me, "What have we learned from these Lilly funded programs that can be applied to those of us who have not been funded? Is there some way to share the gift, to pass the learning on to institutions that have little or no budget for such programs and activities?" From the presentations included in this issue I have drawn a conclusion that I think is applicable to all of our ELCA colleges and universities; we need to encourage and enable more conversations about vocation at all of our institutions. (1) Faculty need to be engaged in conversation about vocation, about what moves us to do what we do, and what moves us to care about the kind of job we do, about what we feel called to do and how that informs our work. What kind of money would it take to encourage such conversation? Twenty dollars will buy enough wine to get such a conversation started. When I retire I plan to leave a wine endowment to my university, with the proviso that faculty will converse as they drink it. *In vino veritas*. (2) Students need to be engaged in such conversation. Students grow in proportion to the significant conversations they have. They come to college with culture-shaped ideas about the nature of success, about finding a good job, and about how all that is related to the learning they will do in college. We need to talk about such things in an encouraging and critical way, not just once during orientation, but over and over again in classes and out. It's probably the most important conversation they can have while in college, yet we often make no special effort to encourage and enable it. What would this cost? Nothing more than we are spending now. (3) We need to encourage our alums to talk about vocation, to share stories about people they've encountered who lived out a vocational approach to their work, their situation, their daily responsibilities. We need to hear the voices of our alums, and to be informed by what they have to tell us about what they've learned and from whom they've learned it. We might be significantly surprised to find out where the lessons of vocation are learned. What would it cost us to initiate such conversations? Very little, and in the long run nothing. An institution that shows some interest in its alums will find that interest more than returned.

We decided to print an issue of *Intersections* that's a good deal "fatter" than usual in order to publish together these pieces all focused on vocation. Let us hear what you think about this issue and about the possibility of other single topic issues in the future.

Tom Christenson
Capital University
tchrste@capital.edu