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From the Publisher

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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

INTERSECTIONS remains an important way for the higher education community to engage ideas about and reflections on the characteristics of Lutheran higher education: what is, what was, what should be, what could be, and why. We hope each issue stimulates discussion on the campuses of Lutheran institutions, and that it keeps church leaders informed about the ideas that circulate on campus. It is designed to reach faculty, college administrators and church leaders. If you have ideas for how the journal can be more effective or better reach it's audience, please send them to the editor, Tom Christenson, or to me.

But as an academic journal INTERSECTIONS can only do a good job with one audience by leaving other audiences untouched. So the Executive Director for the Division for Higher Education and Schools within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Leonard Schulze, challenged his staff to think through all the different target groups we have for our communications, and to develop a comprehensive communications plan. How do we communicate with high school students, with college students, with parents, with pastors, with journalists and media people? The more we do, the more we realize that we should do. It is clear that we have not done a good enough job of communication through the years because there is widespread ignorance about Lutheran colleges and what they stand for. Again, we welcome your input, please send us your ideas.

But before you do that, review what we are doing. Check our website at <www.elcacolleges.org>, it is much improved in the last year, thanks to our webmaster Tom Witt and the Assistant Director for Colleges and

Universities, Sue Edison-Swift. Push the button for FREE STUFF to get copies of our brochures. Look at our advertisements in *The Lutheran*, *Lutheran Partners*, *Seeds for the Parish* and the ELCA Yearbook. If you have not already done so, read the book by Professor Ernie Simmons that we had Augsburg-Fortress publish: *Lutheran Higher Education - An Introduction*. Check the higher education stories in the ELCA video magazine - *Mosaic*.

You can also help us by telling us what works well. If you notice an ad or a story about Lutheran colleges or universities, tell us where you spotted it, and what made it catch your eyes. And if you hear a presentation that you think deserve a wider audience among one or more of our constituencies bring it to our attention, or have the author submit it to Tom for his consideration.

Arne Selbyg
Director for Colleges and Universities

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of *Intersections* was fun to put together because of the diversity of pieces that it contains. It includes Darrel Jodock's inaugural lecture as he assumed the Bernhardson chair at Gustavus Adolphus College. His lecture raises for me the question, "What would a religious tradition be like that had no sense of humor?" I'm sure that such exist, but I'm very happy to say that I do not personally know them. I had a returning student (I think she was in her mid-fifties) in a class a few years ago. One day I discovered that the traditional aged students in the class referred to her among themselves as "the church lady from hell." She condemned everyone she encountered in that class: the authors of the texts, me, her fellow students. She went on to point out in detail what was wrong with our views, prefacing each sentence with the words, "God and I think..." When I challenged her condemnations she said, "Don't you believe in the absoluteness of God?" I said I did, and that this was why I did not consider any human version of the truth as absolute. Not hers, not even my own. When I told her that Luther referred to his own theology as "a bag of farts," she was not amused. Sad.

Ernie Simmons' article follows. This was a talk he gave at last summer's Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference which I thought would be of interest to faculty at all our institutions because it researches so thoroughly what our current crop of students are like and what the difficulties and opportunities are that they present to us. This is followed by two short pieces that came out of a travel-study opportunity for faculty and students in South Africa. These pieces by Brian Wallace and Corin Wesner demonstrate what a soul-opening opportunity such cultural relocation can occasion. I thought it made very good sense to publish them together with some of the photographs they brought back. Finally there are two reviews of important books that came out this year. I was very happy to review Richard Hughes' book. I had heard him deliver some of it's chapters as public addresses and wanted to see how he fit them together into a larger argument. Joy Schroeder's review of Robert Benne's book concludes this issue. It is a book that deserves a discussion on each of our campuses.

If any of you are interested in reviewing books for future issues please let me know.

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