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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

The Division for Higher Education and Schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America sees it as a central part of its mission to stimulate discussion about the characteristics that Lutheran higher education have or should have. We were very glad to see the results of the recent research called “Reclaiming Lutheran Students.” The study was made by the Lutheran Education Conference of North America (LECNA), partly funded by a generous grant by the Aid Association for Lutherans. The research showed that on a number of indicators and measures the alumni of Lutheran colleges and universities were much more satisfied with the quality of education that they had received while in college than were the alumni of flagship public universities.

A much higher percentage of the graduates of Lutheran colleges and universities expressed high satisfaction with the overall quality of their college education, and believe that when they graduated they were well prepared for graduate school and their first job, and a much higher percentage of them had finished their college degree in four years. Our colleges and universities stood out as places where the students were much more likely to benefit from good teaching and a personalized learning experience. More than eighty percent of the Lutheran college graduates said they had benefitted from opportunities for spiritual development while in college, and from courses with an emphasis on personal values and ethics, while eighty percent reported that their college had been effective in helping them develop moral principles to guide their actions. Many of us were surprised that the integration of faith and values into the college experience and the development of a strong sense of community in the Lutheran colleges were reported as being just as common by graduates from recent years as by the graduates from earlier decades, surprised because we often hear complaints that the Lutheran colleges are not as faith centered as they used to be.

But the research also showed that parents of Lutheran high school students were not aware of the magnitude of financial aid that our colleges provide in order to make Lutheran college education affordable, and that many of the parents were not aware that in many ways our colleges provide much better education than the flagship public universities. So our colleges have done a better job in providing good education than in marketing themselves to the parents of Lutheran high school students.

This journal, *INTERSECTIONS*, is probably of little direct help in that marketing. But we hope that because of the journal and the conference, "The Vocation of a Lutheran College," on which the journal is based, many college and university faculty and staff members can speak with confidence to prospective students and their parents about the nature of Lutheran higher education. We are grateful to the Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation for the generous grant support which it has provided, which makes it possible for us to continue the journal and the "Vocation" conferences.

June 2000
Arne Selbyg
Director for ELCA Colleges and Universities

From the Editor

This issue of *INTERSECTIONS* contains a greater variety of offerings than is usually the case. That variety has made it fun to put this issue together. The Von Dohlen / Ratke discussion should provoke some interesting responses. Von Dohlen challenges Lutherans use of Luther's "two kingdoms" idea. Surely someone will be offended. As Diogenes the Cynic long ago said, "Of what use is a philosopher who doesn't piss anybody off?" Certainly someone will take issue with Ratke's attempt to explain what Luther really meant. Several years ago I suggested that Lutheran theologians declare a moratorium on "two kingdoms" rhetoric until we could figure out what we wanted it to mean and what practices were (and were not) justified by it. Now I think that a genuine discussion with an important dose of humor will serve us better.

The talk by Rachel Hammond included here is, I think, a real gem. It demonstrates so many things: ways in which people are called, what it's like to understand one's education as a gift and a responsibility, what it's like to suffer alienation and to find oneself in the process. I recommend copying this and sharing it with students. That's what I intend to do. Anyone who is moved to contribute to the orphanage Rachel worked at may send a check to Rachel's home congregation. They will forward all contributions to the Home for Perpetual Hope. Make checks payable to: First Baptist Church, 44 Lorain St., Oberlin, OH 44074.

The essay by Church Huff illustrates well the effect that liberal learning and teaching have on the way we conceive of and pursue our disciplines. I hope we get many more reflections like this one, written from a disciplinary viewpoint, yet engaging issues of a larger and deeper sort.

John Reumann's essay tells the interesting life story of a scholar whose work is done not only to meet the highest standards of criticism within a discipline (biblical scholarship) but also to meet the needs of the church. Though Reumann's essay was not selected with this in mind, it serves very well as an example of the issues argued in the Von Dohlen / Ratke discussion. Reumann begins by talking about the art of teaching as "a balancing act." Reading that line made me pay attention in a new way to the drawing my eight year old daughter had completed after a recent trip to the circus. As a result she became the cover artist for this issue.

Tom Christenson
Capital University