

VOLUME 39
NUMBER 2
DECEMBER 1998

The Lutheran Educator

The WELS Education Journal

**Mary
treasured up
all these things
and pondered them
in her heart**



The Lutheran Educator

The education journal
of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
edited by the faculty of Martin Luther College

ARTICLES

- Lutherans and the
Common School** 36
Rachel Elizabeth Dolan
- Reflections on Family Ministry** 42
Lawrence O. Olson
- I Read a Book Once:
A Student's Perspective** 48
Ramona M. Czer
- Poetry Teaching,
and Emotions** 51
Paul I. Willems
- Philemon—A Conundrum?** 56
Conrad Frey
- Preparing for the
IEP Conference** 59
Daryl B. Hanneman

DEPARTMENTS

- As We See It** 35
The "Ugly" Pupil
- Reviews** 62

VOLUME 39 **NUMBER 2**
DECEMBER 1998

Editor — John R. Isch

Editorial Board — Mark J. Lenz, Gerald J. Jacobson, Cheryl A. Loomis

Editorial correspondence and articles should be sent to *The Lutheran Educator*, Editor, Martin Luther College, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm, MN 56073. Phone 507/354-8221. Fax 507/354-8225. e-mail: thelutheraneducator@wels-mlc.edu

Subscription service information on a new subscription, a renewal, a change of address, or an inquiry should be sent to Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53226-3284. Phone 414/475-6600. Subscription rate for U.S.A. and Canada is **\$6.00 for one year**, payable in advance to Northwestern Publishing House, postage included. For all other countries please write for rates.

The Lutheran Educator (ISSN 0458-4988) is published four times a year in October, December, February and May by Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53226. Second Class Postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Lutheran Educator*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, WI 53226-3284.

Copyright © 1998 by Martin Luther College. Requests for permission to reproduce more than brief excerpts are to be addressed to the editor.



The “Ugly” Pupil

Did you ever have one of those pupils only a mother could love—and sometimes you wondered about her?

He had two big feet and a head. But it wasn't a soft little downy yellow head like the other ducklings. This one was big and white, with a long scrawny neck and a fuzzy body

He was just plain ugly (or read it incorrigible or obnoxious). His feet seemed too big for his body. His hair was stringy, dirty, and uncombed. His long neck and oddly shaped body made you think this was how Ichabod Crane must have looked as a child.

“My, my!” exclaimed the mother duck when she saw him. “He certainly doesn't look like any of my other children. I wonder how he got to be so funny-looking?”

You often found yourself wondering what went wrong genetically. This child didn't seem to have any redeeming qualities. You never said such things of course, but you thought them.

“He's ugly!” quacked the other ducklings. “He doesn't look a bit like us. We don't want to play with him.”

You noticed that his classmates often avoided him and excluded him. Some said they didn't like him because he was different. He was the last one picked when teams were chosen. Sometimes he just stood by himself. Eventually he didn't even want to go out for recess.

But the ugly duckling had followed them down to the pond and, seeing them all swimming, he jumped in and swam too, at least as well as any of them.

Every day you insisted on taking him by the hand and bringing him to the playground. He played the games. When his turn came to bat, he could hit the ball as well as anyone.

“On my word!” exclaimed the mother duck. “He certainly can swim, big and ugly as he is! He must be my own child, and, after all, he's not so very ugly if you look at him right.”

You felt ashamed for thinking as you had. You realized that here was a precious child of God for whom Jesus died. Here was a youngster whom you could teach and train and mold and nurture in the faith. Here was a child who someday could grow up to be a dedicated follower of his Savior because of the training you would give him.

But what was this he saw reflected in the clear water? It was his own image! For the first time he saw himself as he really was. And, to his utter amazement, he saw that he was not an ugly duckling—or a duckling at all—but a swan—a beautiful white swan!

MJL

Lutherans and the Common School

Rachel Elizabeth Dolan

IN THE ERA OF THE common school in the 19th century, the education of American children encompassed political and religious instruction for every American. During the 19th century, Americans created a common school system that they hoped would be effective and solve many problems in society. As the country developed and changed, so did this school system. One of the major issues facing Americans was religion and its place in the common school.

America was founded on Protestant ideologies, yet as immigration flourished and the population became more diverse, Americans were compelled to deal with the issue of religion. Different sects were becoming prevalent especially among Protestants and Americans decided to implement non-sectarian teaching of the Bible in schools. This is commonly called the "Pan-Protestant Compromise." Historians regularly cite the opposition to this compromise as being primarily from Jews and Catholics. Yet, among Protestants, Lutherans are an overlooked opposi-



tion. In the history of Lutheran education, we can identify how the Lutheran emphasis on biblicalism, language, and traditions of sound education led Lutherans to form common schools as a part of the common

education system. America is a nation that was originally founded on Christian principles. The emphasis on the Christianity of its people. America was founded specifically on a Protestant ideology that promoted

“commerce, westward expansion, schools, and churches” (Kaestle 1983, 95). This emphasis on Christianity flowed into the school systems that were run by the Protestant ideological-based government. The general goal of public education was to form a self-reliant American citizen through shaping the moral character of children (Fultz 1997). It was thought that the common school could help to eliminate poverty, immorality, and political corruption (Tyack 1970, 220). For a society that prided itself on being Christian, it was logical, in the beginning of educa-

tional systems, to use Christian virtues to produce young, moral, citizenship-conscious individuals. Schools taught from the Bible and used Scripture as a guide for moral character. Later, however, immigrants, primarily from Europe and Great Britain, brought other types of religion with them. These incoming immigrants included Protestants, Catholics, and Jewish people. Also, the Protestant religion that the United States originally had been founded on began to divide into many different sects separated by doctrinal issues. The American ideal of the Protestant ideology was beginning to be tested by many involved in the system. Americans were faced with a difficult decision. They desired to have common schools run by the government for all children to attend, but there was this propagation of other religions in American society. This led to the question: How do the schools continue to teach the morals necessary for good citizenship while keeping order and fairness in society (Kaestle 1983, 98)? The issue was sectarian teaching in the schools, which meant a discussion of doctrinal issues relating to scriptural text (Tyack 1970, 218). The answer that many Americans came up with was to continue to use Bible readings and prayers but not have discussion or explanation of the Bible reading. A strong proponent of this solution was Horace Mann. In fact, one could argue that Horace Mann represented what many began to believe was the only answer for religion in the schools. It is stated in Horace Mann and Religion in

the Massachusetts Public Schools that Mann devised a "non-sectarian program of moral and religious education" (Culver 1929, 235). He proposed to teach only "natural religion and morality" (Culver 1929, 235). This he believed would preserve religion yet it would also uphold the laws without offending any people. The way in which the schools kept religion non-sectarian was to read out of the Bible but not comment on the reading (Tyack 1970, 224). The intention of this nonsectarian religion was that this would lead to an indisputable acceptance of the words of Scripture. In this sense, religion was not eliminated from the schools; it was simply not discussed. This type of answer was using the Bible as more of a story book and text book rather than a guide for a way of life as dictated by God. In general, many were happy with this decision. This is what Carl Kaestle, as well as other historians, called the "Pan-Protestant Policy" (1983, 99) or the "Pan-Protestant Compromise." Many were not upset by this compromise because at this time many communities were still run by the Protestants. It was still common in rural areas to see the public school and the church in the same building, run by the same group of individuals. Protestants were in charge of local politics thus they assumed that knowledge would end up being taught with a dominant Protestant viewpoint. Many ministers viewed the "common schools as the offspring of Protestantism" (Tyack 1970, 227). Even after this compromise, many saw religion as still being taught in the

schools. Kaestle states that for the most part Protestants agreed to this type of solution. The main opposition that Kaestle cites was from Roman Catholics and Jews (1983, 98). Not only was there dissent from the Catholics and Jews but there was also notable dissent among some Protestants. Many Lutherans did not agree this "Pan-Protestant compromise."

Quite contrary to the "Pan-Protestant compromise," Lutherans consistently did not support the teaching of religion in public schools (Diefenthaler 1984, 47). If the schools were not religious schools, Lutherans generally did not support them by sending their children. It was not that they were opposed to public education; rather, education was essential to the upbringing of their children. If many other groups of Protestants had agreed to this Pan-Protestant compromise, what was it that made the Lutherans so opposed to it? First, there were the traditions and heritage of the Lutherans.

Martin Luther had emphasized religious and secular education (Beck 1965, 6). A connection between church and religion was a part of the Lutheran tradition. Luther stated, "Where the Holy Scriptures are not the rule, I advise no one to send his children" (Beck 1965, 6). As Lutherans immigrated to America from their European homelands, primarily Germany and Scandinavian countries, they were overwhelmed by the change especially with the education system. These Lutherans were coming from a land where the government built their churches from

taxes and the schools were all religious schools. The pastors' and teachers' salaries were also subsidized by the government (Centennial Committee 1951, 209). The depth to which these Lutherans believed in their religious convictions was only strengthened by the government support they historically received in their homeland. However, this religious tolerance and control was changing in Germany and Scandinavia and religious persecution drove Lutherans to America. In coming to America, these Germans were strongly in favor of separation of church and state to protect their religion and schools. When the Lutherans began to settle in America, they came from a background of a very strong religious school structure. When Lutherans began to build schools in America, they followed the structure in their homelands. Education was a must. In most cases, where there was a church, there was a school and if no teacher was available, the classes were taught by the minister (Beck 1965, 10). The Ministerium of the West Pennsylvania Synod recommended in 1834 that the churches "introduce congregational schools wherever practicable and that every missionary receiving aid from the synod shall be required to establish and keep [teach] a congregational school if at all possible" (Beck 1965, 82).

Another barrier that the Lutherans faced in dealing with the common schools was their language. Many Lutherans came to America speaking German. The Lutheran schools were

the way in which Lutherans could continue what they considered part of their traditions and heritage by teaching school subjects at least partly in German. In 1889, Wisconsin passed the Bennett Law that was intended to Americanize immigrant groups in Wisconsin by prohibiting the teaching of children in languages other than English. If schools were not teaching their subjects in English, they were not considered a school by the state (Beck 1965, 229). In response to this, Lutherans launched a massive protest. They claimed that this infringed upon their right to practice religion. German was inherently a part of their religion and these schools were religious schools. The Bennett Law was the topic of many Lutheran conventions. The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans issued a declaration stating that they are "not opponents of the State schools We stand upon our rights to establish private schools through our own means...and conduct them without hindrance according to our Christian principles" (Beck 1965 230). The Bennett Law was repealed in 1891. The Bennett Law may have had detrimental effects on Lutheran education if it had not been repealed, yet many argue that this situation actually strengthened Lutheran schools (Diefenthaler 1984, 48). This law made Lutherans realize how non-Lutherans misconstrued Lutheran ideas about religion and education. For example, many believed that the parochial system was opposed to the common school. This was not the case. Rather, Lutherans were in

favor of the separation of church and state. Misconceptions like this led Lutherans to attempt to "safeguard" their schools by informing the public of their goals and policies (Beck 1965, 247). This strengthened the schools because they began to print their goals and policies in both German and English. They informed legislatures and the public of their activities and even entered pupils work in the World's Fair in St. Louis in 1904 (Diefenthaler 1984, 49).

While the traditions and language barriers may have been a portion of the explanation why most Lutherans did not comply in this "Pan-Protestant Compromise," it was not the most influential reason. Traditions can be carried out at home and the language of the Lutheran schools was soon becoming English. The prevailing reason that Lutherans did not join with other Protestants and send their children to the common schools has to do with the teaching of Scripture itself. As noted above, the common schools had decided to read from the Bible yet not discuss what had been read. While the schools were often run by a Protestant oriented government, it was still not teaching the Bible in the way that the Lutherans felt was effective. Herman Fick, a pastor in the Missouri Synod, stated that simply having a Bible reading is not an adequate alternative for religious upbringing and instruction (Diefenthaler 1984, 47). Lutherans maintained that it is not simply enough to read from the Bible without commenting on the meaning of that pas-

sage. Thus Lutheran immigrants not only desired to have Lutheran churches, but they also found it necessary to have Lutheran schools. At the First Synodical Convention of the Wisconsin Synod in 1850, it was resolved that “every pastor in the synod should devote himself especially to the youth and conduct day schools” (Centennial Committee 1951, 210). The founders of this synod were seen as putting first things first. Christian day schools were seen as the most desirable way for the upbringing of Lutheran children (Centennial Committee 1951, 213). In the 1840 Common School Journal, Rev. Horace Bushnell stated that “to insist that the State shall teach the rival opinions of sects would be false and wickedness all together” (Greely 1840, 58). The Lutherans agreed with this statement. Lutherans were strong supporters of the separation of church and state. Lutherans believed that this separation shields children from false doctrine detrimental to a Christian’s faith. There was no point in prayers without real meaning or reading the Scripture and not applying it in the way that it was intended to be applied. The way in which the Bible was taught in the common schools was seen as insignificant and trifling. “It was felt that Bible reading without some interpretation for personal application had little meaning to children and youth and that the type of prayers considered ‘non-sectarian’ were too generalized and superficial to have any effective worth” (Beck 1965, 468). Purity of Lutheran doctrine and the parochial schools were seen as nec-

essary to the survival of Lutheranism in America (Diefenthaler 1984, 37). In 1895 there were some 212,228 children enrolled in Lutheran schools in America (Beck 1965, 224). The concentration of these pupils was in the Midwest and continued to be that way in the 20th century. The number of children enrolled in Lutheran schools shows that Lutherans did believe in their schools. Parents believed in the



Germans were strongly in favor of separation of church and state to protect their religion and schools.



philosophies that were presented by the church regarding education of the children. This philosophy of Lutheran education has remained consistent. The aim of Lutheran schools was to bring up a child in the way of the Lord, untainted by false doctrine. According to the Lutherans, this would not have been achieved in a common school environment where the Scripture was supposed to speak for itself and instructors were not to comment on interpre-

tation. The teachings of Christianity were encompassed in the entire curriculum of Lutheran schools whether the subject was English, mathematics, religion, or science. The purpose of Lutheran schools was and continues to be to "integrate the tenets of Christian faith and practice with every subject and activity of the school" (Beck 1965, 473).

Lutherans are unjustifiably overlooked when one thinks about opposition to a Protestant compromise for the common schools in America. Not only did Lutheran schools flourish, they remain, years after, a strong source of education—elementary, secondary and or higher—in the United States. The Lutherans response to this "Protestant Compromise" is crucial to understanding Lutheran schools in America today. What many saw and continue to see as petty differences between sections of churches played a vital role in Lutheran education. What are individual religions without these differences? By not compromising differences in their religion, the Lutherans showed confidence in what they believe to be the single truth. This is a dedication to the beliefs they taught and continue to teach. In examining this conviction, one can be confident in the philosophy of the Lutheran schools. Even those who do not agree with the Lutherans can see the consistency and commitment to an educational philosophy. One could conclude that Lutherans were faced with difficult challenges when coming to America. Despite this, Lutherans kept their history, heritage, and doctrinal

beliefs in focus and successfully created an alternative to what they believed was insufficient for their educational goals.

WORKS CITED

- Beck, Walter. *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1965.
- Centennial Committee of the Joint Synod. *Continuing in His Word*. Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1951.
- Culver, Raymond B. *Horace Mann and Religion in the Massachusetts Public Schools*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929.
- Diefenthaler, Jon. "Religious Schooling in America." In *Lutheran Schools in America*, edited by James Carper and Thomas Hunt. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1984.
- Fultz, Michael. Unpublished lecture, 9/8/97.
- Greely, Horace. "Christianity and Common Schools." In *Common School Journal* edited by Horace Mann. Boston: Marsh, Capen, Lyon and Webb, 1840.
- Kaestle, Carl F. *Pillars of the Republic*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- Tyack, David B. "History and Education." In *Religion in the American Common School* edited by Paul Nash. New York: Random House, 1970.

Rachel Dolan is a senior majoring in history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Reflections on Team Ministry

Lawrence O. Olson

TEAM MINISTRY is a phrase that has received some common currency among us. It appeared more than a dozen years ago in the title of a book released by Concordia Publishing House: *How to Develop a Team Ministry and Make it Work* (Henkelmann and Carter 1985). The term is also used by the WELS Commission on Parish Schools to describe a process in which school counselors, principals, teachers and pastors—sometimes including the board of education—work together to evaluate and plan the ministry of a Lutheran elementary school. One hears the term used with increasing frequency. But what is it?

Defining team ministry

Team ministry refers to the cooperative work of persons in various offices or functions of the public ministry as to how they carry out the general work of the gospel ministry.

In a real sense, nearly every ministry is a team ministry. While many congregations struggle to find appropriate ways to involve their members in its ministry, this writer has yet to

encounter a congregation that did not benefit from the consecrated service of at least some of its members. That fits into the above definition, because the service that men and women give to their congregations is a part of the public (i.e., representative) ministry; they are serving at the request of, and in the name of, their congregations. David Valleskey, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, expressed this thought at the 1992 WELS Symposium on the Ministry:

It is the conviction of this essayist that all of these forms of service in and for the church [i.e. as pastors, teachers, staff ministers, or members serving as volunteers]...as different as they may be from one another in many ways, lie on the same plane. Each can properly be called public ministry. (1992)

For the purposes of this article we will focus on a slightly more restrictive understanding of team ministry, one that is more common when the term is encountered outside our circles, such as a situation where there is more than one called worker ("professional staff members," as one writer puts it).

However, this focus should not be taken as a down-playing of the importance of member ministry. Kenneth Gangel makes this point, "Churches and Christian organizations have survived and thrived for two millennia on the services of volunteers" (1997). Lay members are a critical part of the team, but for now we will focus on those who are serving as the vocational ministers on a congregation's staff.

Biblical examples of team ministry

Team ministry is nothing new; we see it in action in both Old and New Testaments. There is one caution, however: what we find when we look to examples in the Bible is descriptive, not prescriptive. We have the freedom of the gospel to structure our ministry and staff for it, in ways that differ from what we see in Scripture, and we have done so throughout history. But it is certainly appropriate to consider the approaches used by the church in the past and to reflect on what we might be able to learn from them.

In the Old Testament, both Tabernacle and Temple benefited from the service of the priests and Levites. Each had its specific functions, and both contributed to the overall work of the Old Testament church. The priests would have been severely crippled without the supporting work of the Levites, and the Levites were not authorized to carry out priestly functions. Together they provide us with an example of a team ministry.

The New Testament shows us a num-

ber of occurrences of team ministry. Jesus sent out both the Twelve (Mk 6:7) and the Seventy-two (Lk 10:1) "two by two," thus placing these early training experiences within the context of teamwork. In Acts 6, we have the Jerusalem congregation struggling to find a way to carry out an expanding ministry. They already had a team of ministers in place: the Twelve, who functioned in a way somewhat parallel to our pastors today. However, there was still work being left undone, so they chose to call the Seven to work along with the Twelve.

The missionary journeys that are reported later in the book of Acts reveal that the normal pattern was a team ministry. In fact, when we find Paul alone in Athens, we are told that the reason that he is there by himself is that he is waiting for his coworkers to catch up to him (Ac 17:15-16). In addition to the missionary teams, as the churches that were planted by the missionaries developed and grew, teams of local leaders were added into the mix. It may be informative simply to note that the plural "elders" appears fifty-nine times in the New Testament (NIV), while the singular "elder" occurs only four times—and three of those usages are by John in reference to himself. Thus it appears that the expectation was one of shared leadership or team ministry.

What benefits are there in the ministry teams we see in Scripture? There is no explicit list, so we are reading between the lines somewhat, but an obvious advantage is that the members

of the team would have had someone else to rely on—for support, for encouragement, and for accountability. Another is that they would have been able to complement each other, since two different people will always have different mixes of strengths and weaknesses. A third is that they may have shortened their learning curves by being able to learn from each other's experiences, and especially by being able to share those experiences and then subsequently reflect on them.

The Dynamics of Team Ministry

How does a team ministry work? How can pastors, principals, teachers, and staff ministers, working along with lay members, be a true team, instead of a loosely-connected group of individuals? The following, while not meant to be exhaustive, are some of the key factors in team ministry.

- ☛ A shared commitment to the mission of the church

The mission of the church, as Jesus puts it, is to “make disciples” (Mt 28:18-20). We do so by proclaiming the one thing, the only thing, that can make disciples—the gospel (“preach the good news” Mk 16:15), in our outreach (“baptizing” Mt 28:19) and in our nurture (“teaching” Mt 28:20).

It is critical for all called workers who make up a ministry team, regardless of their particular responsibilities, to note the difference between means and ends. The pastor needs to remember that the mission of the church is not to

preach sermons; the teacher needs to remember that the mission of the church is not to teach elementary school classes; the family minister needs to remember that the mission of the church is not to run a youth program. Those may be of vital importance in a congregation's ministry, but they are all means to the end of making disciples.

- ☛ A shared commitment to spiritual growth

It is a paradox of ministry that those of us who are called to work with the Word may be tempted to neglect our own personal use of that Word. Oh, sure—we study it to write lesson plans for Bible history, to prepare devotions, to develop sermons, to produce Bible studies, and so on. And we do benefit from that “professional” use of the Word—but we may end up neglecting to take time to simply let God speak to us without anything else on our agenda.

A staff of busy called workers can collectively drift into those same swampy backwaters, and also (and perhaps inevitably) drift apart at the same time. We are Lutherans, after all, who understand the Means of Grace, so let's make a commitment to grow spiritually as we are faithful in our personal use of God's Word and as we study God's Word together. That will result in a stronger team as we “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ” (2 Pt 3:18).

- ☛ An attitude of mutual respect

It is an unfortunate, but sad reality in a

fallen world, that our pride, our doubts, our self-centeredness, our fears—in short, our sin (Lyle Schaller once said, “Never underestimate the power of original sin.” Excellent advice, especially coming from a non-Lutheran.)—have intruded on all of our relationships, including those we have with our fellow called workers. Robert Hochmuth put it this way:

How pathetic that we who represent ourselves as serving the Lord on the same team collide with one another like outfielders in the bottom of the ninth, knocking each other out—and letting the ball drop. (1992)

The advice Robert Voss gave more than thirty years ago is just as appropriate today:

In all human relationships attitudes are so vitally important, and our attitudes will change and be improved if we remember that it is God who gave us to each other.

That ought to move us to get along with each other. (1968)

Having respect for the other called workers in our congregation or other ministry setting—respect for them as individuals, respect for them as ministers of the gospel, respect for them as gifts from God to work with us—will go a long way toward having a solid team for ministry.

☛ Clearly defined roles

One writer suggests that there are three basic concepts of staff relationships:

1. A loosely organized staff which may have several “soloists” but no direc-

tor, nor regular rehearsals, and consequently very little harmony; people on such a staff relate to each other only by necessity;

2. An integrated staff held together by one commander; or
3. A colleague relationship in which “each staff member trusts the others, despite their difference. This colleague relationship requires each member of the team to be a responsible person.” (D. Swan Hansworth as quoted in Gangel 1997, 38)

The latter, of course, is the preferred model for a ministry team. For the sake of efficiency, however, the team members need to know who is responsible for what. This virtually necessitates a clearly-articulated written position description. By knowing what we are—and, just as importantly, are not—responsible for, we will be in a far better position to follow Voss’s advice, “Each mind his own business.... We don’t need our fingers in every pie. Besides, we don’t have enough fingers” (1968).

Realistic expectations about relationships. Sometimes a called worker joins a staff with the assumption that he or she will develop intimate friendships with the other members of that ministry team. At other times the assumption is that the relationships between staff members should be on a purely professional level. Neither of those assumptions is particularly helpful.

If close friendships develop, that is something to be grateful for; where they do not develop, however, there is no need for hand-wringing. Friendships

develop in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons. More important than being bosom-buddies is having a loving relationship based in the love of Christ, a relationship that will observe simple human kindness, practice forgiveness, demonstrate patience (Robert Lofton Hudson has said, "Impatience is a heresy of the soul and an apostasy of the disposition" [quoted in Gangel 1997, 39]), and include a sense of humor. If it is true of the followers of Jesus in general, that "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (Jn 13:35), that is certainly no less true of those disciples who are called to full-time service in the Kingdom. We should expect that our relationships with our colleagues will vary in their depth, at least on the personal level, but we should also expect that they will be relationships powered by God's grace.

☛ Sufficient time for planning, coordinating, evaluating

A team works together to achieve a common goal, and that requires setting aside enough time to ensure that we work together to plan, coordinate, and evaluate the ministry. There are two aspects to this that will help to ensure that those critical functions take place: (1) regular, efficient staff meetings (probably on a weekly basis, at least bi-weekly), and (2) an annual planning retreat, where the staff can get some uninterrupted time to review the past year and especially to plan for the future.

Conclusion

One need not look far in order to discover an example of a team ministry in the WELS. Three hundred sixty-four of our 1235 congregations operate Lutheran elementary schools; 145 of our churches are served by two or more pastors or combinations of pastors and staff ministers (WELS 1997).

We find these team ministries in almost every kind of congregational and community setting imaginable. There is a team of a pastor and a staff minister starting from ground zero to plant a mission congregation in Florida. There is a suburban congregation in Wisconsin that is served by four pastors, two staff ministers, a principal, and 15 additional teachers. Other examples are found from the warm waters of the Caribbean to the icy waters of Alaska, and at many points in between. For some direct input, just get out your WELS Yearbook and your Statistical Report, identify some congregations whose experience you think that you might be able to learn from, and give them a call.

WORKS CITED

- Gangel, Kenneth O. *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1997.
- Henkelmann, Ervin F. and Stephan J. Carter. *How to Develop a Team Ministry and Make it Work*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1985.
- Hochmuth, Robert H. "Dealing with Each Other as Brothers when we

Disagree." Essay delivered to the Arizona-California Pastoral Conference, October of 1992, quoted in Valleskey, David J. "Coworking of Pastors, Teachers, Staff, and Member Ministers." Essay delivered at the WELS Symposium on the Ministry, Watertown, WI, December 1992.

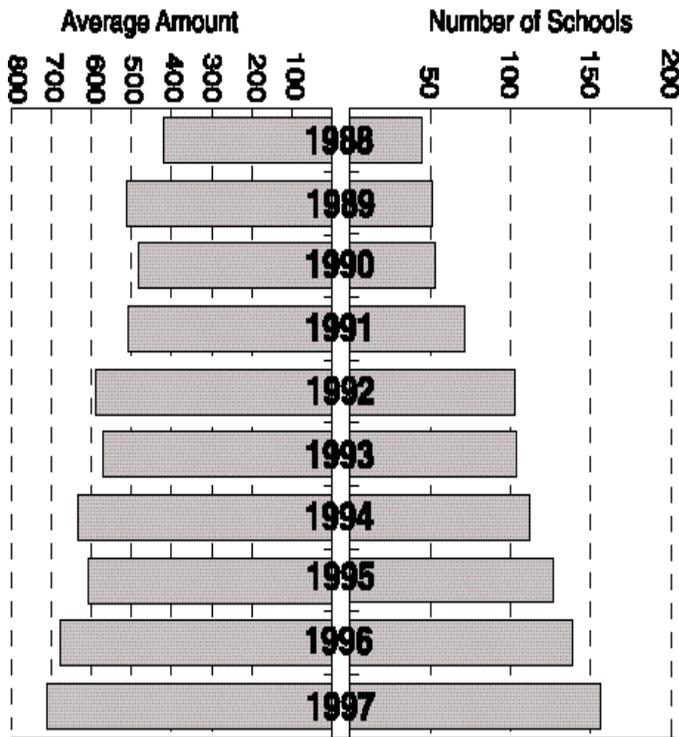
WELS Symposium on the Ministry, Watertown, WI, December 1992.
Voss, Robert J. "Pastor-Teacher Harmony." Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly 65:1, January 1968.
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Statistical Report of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1997.

Valleskey, David J. "Coworking of Pastors, Teachers, Staff, and Member Ministers." Essay delivered at the

Lawrence Olson is director of the Staff Ministry Program at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

WELS Factoid

WELS Elementary School Tuition Charges for Congregation Members' Children





I Read a Book Once: A Student's Perspective

Ramona M. Czer

DEAR TEACHERS,

I read a book once. Just last week, in fact. Aren't you proud of me? Maybe you're thinking no big deal and who is this guy to be bragging about something so mundane, even babyish. Well, for me it's a landmark occurrence. You see, I haven't read a book on my own since sixth grade. That's not so long ago, you might say, but a book every three or four years isn't going to get me real far. Not if I want to be a reader, that is. I think I do. Do you want me to be?

I'm beginning to wonder if you teachers really do care if we're readers or not. I'm talking about honest-to-goodness readers who smash a book in our backpacks every day and get yelled at in history class for finishing the

intriguing tale we started the night before, the kind of people who join The Literary Guild and don't get out of it as soon as we've earned the right to keep our five books for \$2. You've given up on that idea, I can tell. Want to know how I know?

By the way you act in class with books we have to read, for one thing. You're the ones who pick them out, right? Then how come you act so bored with them? How come your voice doesn't rise when you talk about them? How come you give us quizzes ad nauseum about character names and settings, and never get around to asking if we agree with what this author believes about life, love, and the pursuit of happiness? How come you don't share passages that make you smile or feel like crying or make you want to write a poem or story yourself? How come I get the impression that reading is just as much work for you as it is for us?

When I read this book I was telling you about, it was like eating candy for the first time. I felt like some kid from an undeveloped country, living on rice and grasshoppers or something, who'd



just tasted a Hershey bar. At first it felt strange in the mouth, kind of slippery and hard at the same time. Maybe that's because I'd been living on easy school reading, a kind of mush that's not bad



How come you, our academic coaches, don't push us in the same way?



for me but not sending me into any kind of ecstasy either. When I tasted this new thing, it was almost bitter too. Reading that book was hard going for awhile, I can tell you. It used bigger words than I'm used to, so I felt kind of stupid, and it said some things that riled me up, made me feel like I'd been thinking things backward for a long time. That wasn't sweet at first, I'll have to admit. In fact, I almost quit halfway through.

Then I thought about my basketball coach and how much he's taught me about pushing past my comfort zones. I've learned I can shoot 100 freethrows, run three miles, and lift weights without dying, which means that eventually I can do even more and probably will. I've learned how to suck it up and push myself past where I'm aching to quit so I can excel in sports. So I finished that book, and by the end I was thinking,

"Hey, this isn't so bad after all!" Yea, I'd become a real chocoholic. Now here's my question: How come you, our academic coaches, don't push us in the same way?

How come you make it so easy for us to not read the books you assign? It might surprise you to know that hardly anyone actually does read them. Two or three girls who smile and nod at you in the front row might, but don't be too sure. I listen really well in my English classes, take a few notes, and get B's on the quizzes without reading a word. I hope that doesn't make you feel too bad. The point isn't that you're messing up, it's that some of us really want you to be tougher, to do what's good for us even when we act like immature dolts



How come you make it so easy for us to not read the books you assign?



who don't deserve your efforts.

I wish I could walk into class next week and be embarrassed and disappointed in myself because I wasn't prepared. I wish you'd think of ways to hold us personally responsible for facts and concepts, but also for ideas and feelings about what we've read. I'd love it if you could get us talking so that we

start breaking the bindings of our books, looking up examples, marking down page numbers, and underlining all the good parts. I wish we'd compare how each of us experienced things differently as we read so that I come to see my viewpoints as okay but also so I get enlightened by my classmates. I



When was the last time you talked about a book you loved with a friend?



wish I could be so into a literature conversation that continues down the hallway after class that I risk a tardy from my next teacher and don't even care.

Trouble is, I know how busy you are and how much energy it probably takes to get us going. I see the look in your eyes when we hand in our boring little papers about books we never read, and I think, "No wonder we don't get them back for a month! I'd burn the suckers." I bet that means you don't have any time to read yourself either. I wonder when was the last time you read a book just for fun? When was the last time you talked about a book you loved with a friend? It'd be cool to talk to you about this book I just read. You probably don't have the time though. It's funny but ever since I read it, I've been

thinking about how it's kind of changed me. I think different. I feel different.

I'm not sure I want to change though. It'd be easier and a lot less scary to just lazily drift through school and graduate and go to college without thinking about things too much. If I change too much, my friends might not hang with me anymore. I might get labeled a geek. I might become one of those students who babble weird things in class that nobody listens to but the teacher (and I've caught you yawning once or twice!). I might even start to hate the old me, and that's a really freaky thought.

I wish you could tell me if this is normal or not, and how to think about books like this, and what to do with how you feel when you finish them. If I had some help, maybe together we could get my buddies interested in stuff beyond the Packers or how to party hardy. I know we seem pretty shallow to you, but some of them are almost as smart as me (ha).

Fat chance getting them to read, I bet you're thinking. I guess I'm just an idealistic kid. Forget what I said. It's just daydreaming anyway. It'll probably be another four years before I crack a book myself. I did wonder, though, if you know of something else written by this same author? If I have nothing better to do, I might pick it up and flip through it if you do. Hey, miracles happen. Sometimes even to guys like me.

A Student Who Just May Exist

Ramona Czer teaches at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota.

Poetry, Teaching, and Emotions

Paul I. Willems

WHEN I SPEAK to high school alumni who now regard me as a personal friend or colleague, I am amazed at what they recall from sitting in my classroom. One young woman speaks of being afraid to converse with me because I “threw her out of a sophomore class.” (I do not remember the incident.) Another says he was inspired to become an engineer by my classes, but I recall only his mediocre grades. Another asks why a chemistry concept was never taught and is chagrined when I show her the textbook pages and worksheets covering the topic in question. What is going on here? What have I taught, or rather, what have these former students learned in my classroom? I believe the answer lies in our emotions. People tend to remember events which touch them emotionally. Older persons speak of where they were when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Somewhat younger persons recall vividly what they were doing when JFK was shot. And the young can recall the Challenger explosion or other events that made an impact on their emotions. Perhaps teachers can capitalize on emotion to teach lesson concepts.

When Madeline Hunter, the late expert on teaching skills, spoke about leading students to reach an “anticipatory set” before teaching the new lesson, she was acknowledging the emotional side of learning. To anticipate has connotations of emotional expectation. Students also enjoy hands-on learning because they become physically as well as cognitively involved with the lesson. As additional layers of human consciousness become engaged, the students become excited as they experience learning right before their eyes. It is the emotionally involved instructors of whole language, of outcome based education, or of the initial teaching alphabet (ita) who speak of the successes they experience in their classrooms when these methods are used. Those distrustful or doubtful of such methods and expecting failure do not relate success stories at all; instead they report problems and dismaying classroom experiences. The emotions of both learners and instructors appear to be important elements in the learning process.

As I examine the school year and my classroom experiences, the most successful lessons appear to occur during the first quarter. As an instructor, I

arrive rested, well prepared, and excited to be back in the classroom among students again. New friends, new ideas, and a new school year also make students emotionally open to learning. The second quarter drags. The quirks and habits of the teacher have become irritating to the students instead of stimulating. Sparkling eyes become wondering reveries or stony stares. The emotion in the classroom has become negative and learning reaches a nadir. How can we keep our own emotions and those of our students positive so maximum learning can take place all year long in our classrooms?

Many ideas may flash through your mind, but prayer should lead the list. It is only when the strength of the classroom instructor is renewed by the Instructor that we are lifted up. It is only when we are daily reminded that we are feeding the Lord's lambs and not merely working at a job that our emotions stay positive and do not falter. We do not have such strength within ourselves. It must come from deeply drinking the water of life found in the Word of God. Job, in his misery and great loss, continued to look to God for help. He knew his strength and wisdom had run out. Job looked to the One who placed the stars in their courses, who provided for the wild animals, and who controlled behemoth and leviathan to also help him and he was not disappointed. God restored this prophet and he will also restore you and me. We may not be smarter than the students who sit before us, but we have greater maturity, more experiences, and have

been schooled in far more educational wisdom than they have. We also have the unique promise of God that he has placed us in this place at this time through his divine call. Only his promises and his strength can sustain us on eagle's wings.

An enthusiastic teacher is ever the student. Workshops, in-service programs, teachers' conferences, continuing education courses, private study, and discussions with colleagues will also stimulate us and keep us fresh and excited about teaching. An enthusiastic teacher is not afraid to try new methods and techniques. Not everything will be successful. An enthusiastic teacher is one who is not afraid to fail in front of his class. When an instructor can put himself at risk before his students, students will respond with respect for the honest effort of their instructor. When you allow yourself to become vulnerable in your classroom, emotions run high. Students sit up and take notice.

Emotion also involves the learner. Just as not every teacher can stand on his head eating an apple to demonstrate how peristalsis of the esophagus, not gravity, is responsible for transporting food to the stomach, neither is every student emotionally like every other student. Some very good athletes shy away from football because they dislike hitting another player. Those same athletes may be state champions in track because running produces a positive emotional high for them. In the same way, alternative methods and a variety of classroom experiences are necessary to stimulate students.

After reading Ramona Czer's (1994) article a few years ago, I tried to re-acquaint my students with poetry for its emotional punch. Yes, teens are moved by poetry. Many high school students pin poems to their bedroom walls and tape them to locker doors. The rhythm and rhyme of poetry charms their emotions. Why not appeal positively to this interest? After studying the Manhattan Project, the development of the first atomic bomb by the USA, I wrote this poem. It includes some facts and concepts, but it also has an emotional appeal to the writer and reader.

Trinity

The Saturday storms and the rain cloud
 Prevented the test with their mud.
 While G. G. and Oppie were so proud,
 The others predicted a dud.
 Some two billion bucks and their talents
 Rode high on the tower in balance.
 On Sunday the weather was fright'ning
 At Alamogordo, Point Zip.
 The thunder was loud, and the lightning ...
 It looked like they'd cancel the trip.
 Were two billion bucks spent for nothing,
 Explosive new lens just for stuffing?
 So Oppie sat smoking and coughing
 While Groves slept the sleep of the dead.
 And others sat musing and talking;
 Plutonium core, and their dread
 Of what they had made which lay sleeping,
 Manhattan's top secret still keeping.
 Yet Groves had decided it must go.
 The forecast looked better toward dawn.
 Decisions were made, oh-five-three-oh,
 "I am become death" soon would spawn
 And so from the tower retreated

The men all their tests now completed.
 On sixteen July, Monday morning,
 A colorless light shown so bright
 Before the true dawn was a-borning.
 First silence; then thunderous fright.
 A new sun was shining and glowing.
 A red hot tall mushroom was growing.
 With awesome destruction and Power
 The force in the atoms let fly.
 And nothing was left of the tower,
 And tears appeared in each eye.
 "You can change the sheets" said the wire.
 A-Bomb's a success. Hellish fire.

The events of Operation Desert
 Storm shown dramatically on our televi-
 sion screens and described graphically
 in newspaper articles a short time ago
 inspired this poem.

Bright Night

With sudden will and filled with fury bright
 The Tomahawks light up the pitch dark night
 With flames and blasting.
 What an awesome sight!
 Avenging angels born on wings of death,
 And slaughtering they kill with every breath.
 Defenseless men stare at the lighted sky
 And watch destruction as the Stealth planes
 fly
 Unhindered by their gun's and rocket's cry.
 Defiant, shake their fists and shout a curse,
 Then slowly turn and help to load a hearse.
 Saddam did not believe his Arab friends
 Would fight instead of talk to make amends.
 So now his dream is crushed.
 See how it ends.
 The innocent are killed with those same
 bombs
 That were to kill and maim the man
 Saddam.

Willems

His modern planes, his mighty army dies.
His boastful plans are all a pack of lies
As death comes screaming down from out
the skies.
Does this bight night a new world order pave,
Or merely show a short cut to the grave?

After demonstrating poetry, and remember, become vulnerable, encourage your students to write poems. I have been amazed at what students write, probably because I underestimate the deepness of their thoughts and the vividness of the emotions lying dormant beneath the surface calm. Here are some simple examples of student poetry utilizing the five line poem to explore a physics concept.

Aristotle
Geocentric universe
Rotation around earth
Wish I were him

Intelligent

Electricity
Moving electrons
Powers modern machinery
Don't touch! It hurts

Coulomb

Work
Equals energy
Force times distance
Do much during life

Joule

Archimedes
Greek scientist
Shouting out "Eureka!"
Running around naked

Streaker

Graphing
Plotting points
Displays a function

Easy to see relationships

Functions

Second
Tick, tock
Keeps us organized
It goes by fast

Time

It is said that learning has taken place when behavior is observed to change. No one can forget Winston Smith's betrayal of his beloved Julia in George Orwell's 1984 after he was threatened by his deepest fear. He could pretend he didn't mean what he said, but his changed feeling toward Julia betrayed his betrayal. It is with such descriptive words that the novelist also impresses upon the reader's senses the "moral" or point of his work. It becomes etched in our minds because our behavior has been changed by the emotional content of what we have read. Humans are creatures of emotion. Teachers need to exploit this affective domain as well as the cognitive to reach and teach students. Enthusiasm is contagious.

So teach with emotion. Try the hands-on approach. Use poetry or literature in science and social studies classes. Add variety to your teaching plans. Become enthusiastic with whatever lesson presentation you use and the students will respond positively. Don't be afraid to show emotion in your lessons or to become emotionally involved in your classroom lessons. God created humans with emotion and insatiable curiosity, an emotion of inquisitiveness; remember the Elephant's Child? Let's guide our students to have positive attitudes and positive emotions about

learning by our own demonstrations of Christian exuberance and optimism. No, they still may not know a gerund from an infinitive or a quark from a quirk, but do they love to learn for learning's sake? Are they excited to be in your classroom because both the instructor and they can become stimulated to discover and understand new things? Can they communicate their thoughts to others and share another's experience with empathy? Can they relate to and discuss these shared encounters with each other and with you? They will become better at these skills as you become an instructor who teaches with emotion.

The Curmudgeon

What do you see looking at me?
Do you just look, and never see?
A curmudgeon—old and not wise,
Feeble of limbs, far away eyes,
Quiet and making no reply
To your loud shout, "Why don't you try?"
Noticing not the things you do.
Smiling though. Not always blue.

The curmudgeon, who unlike you

Changes habits, loses a shoe.
Unresisting to your stern rule.
Eating and bathing when you will.
Uncertain how each day to fill.
Is this your thought and what you see?
Then look again, for that's not me.
Please! Look again. Look and see ME!

This is me as I sit so still,
Or as I rise to do your will.
I'm a child of four with my dad,
Scared of hospitals, feeling sad.
I'm a young man on his first date,
Driving fast so that I'm not late.
Kissing my wife. Holding her hand.

Walking with her. Taking a stand.

Watching my children born. Each small
Miracle! And now they're so tall.
Dancing with daughters, filled with pride.
Walking with grandkids, stride for stride.
Teaching children of Jesus' love;
Steady work. Blessed from above.
These are no dreams you can shove
Under the carpet or above.

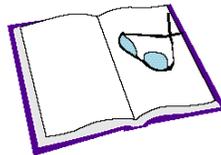
My feeble reach. I watch with dread
As my friends pass on. All are dead.
My years are long, but love I've known
Yes, now I'm old and all alone,
But inside I'm young and alive.
And now and then my heart will strive
To think of years gone by—too fast
Realizing nothing can last.

So, as you look, view not with eyes
Alone, but with your heart.
Surprise! I'm not just a curmudgeon, old,
But a person. Frail now, not bold.
One who sits still when once he sped,
For this is where my long strides led.
Open your eyes. Open and see
Not a curmudgeon, but see ME!

WORK CITED

Czer, Ramona. "If Only More Teachers
Were Poets." *The Lutheran Educator*,
(October 1994), 21-22.

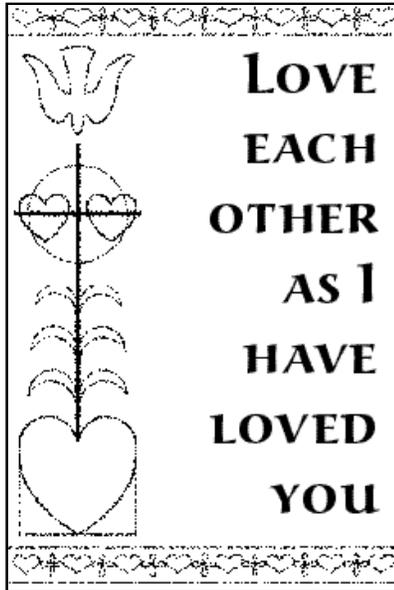
Paul L. Willems teaches at Minnesota Valley
Lutheran High School, New Ulm, Minnesota.



Philemon—A Conundrum?

Conrad Frey

NO DOUBT AT ONE time or another you've heard the word short-shrift. If you're vague about its meaning, the dictionary defines it in this way, "slight consideration, or attention, or mercy as given people or situations." Before you get the idea this is a vocabulary lesson, let me steer you in another direction by pointing out that probably more than any other book in the Bible the epistle to Philemon gets short-shrift. As a matter of fact perhaps you yourself may never have given this letter a whole lot of consideration. On the other hand, now that the question has been raised, it is likely that the question of why has now popped into your mind. So why has this letter gotten such short-shrift? Let's see whether we can unearth some answers. But, before we start, why don't you get out your Bible and read the



book of Philemon? In the conventional sense it is really not even a book since it comprises just one chapter of only twenty-five verses, some quite brief, so the reading of it won't take long. I'll wait.

As you will have noted, the epistle centers on one of Paul's converts, Onesimus, who had fled from his master in Asia Minor. His meanderings finally took him to Rome where Paul was being held as a prisoner in

what we today would likely call a half-way house, affording some measure of freedom. Just how it was that Onesimus came to hear Paul preach, we really don't know. But we do know that the Holy Spirit worked faith in his heart. He became, as a result, a dedicated and active Christian convert. There was, however, a fly in the ointment, so to speak. Paul soon learned Onesimus was a runaway slave. He promptly advised him to return to Asia Minor to his mas-

ter. The apostle then wrote this letter to Philemon on behalf of his returning slave. Almost anyone will admit the letter is a masterpiece of eloquence. So, why does it get shortshrif? It is truly a wonderfully affectionate and warm letter, addressed not only to Philemon but also to the congregation meeting in his home. Furthermore, as Paul penned this, he knew beyond all doubt Onesimus would now return voluntarily to his master. He likewise knew that Philemon would receive him again, not as a slave, but as a Christian friend and beloved brother. In view of these facts, over a century and a half ago C.E. Stowe, a Bible historian, wrote, "Of all the shameful travesties of Scripture, there never was one more shameful and ridiculous than that which puts the account of Paul and Onesimus on a parallel with transactions under the Satanic slave law of America."

This and similar observations to which C.E. Stowe objects led many to take the position that the epistle to Philemon should not be considered a part of the New Testament canon. They contend it is simply a private letter concerned with purely personal matters, certainly not with doctrine and practice. Furthermore, they aver, the tone of the letter and certainly its language embody an extravagant use of flattery and cajolery to soften and bribe Philemon and thus it comes off as a truly disgusting effort and as an exercise in poor taste.

To make these kinds of observations is to demonstrate an abysmal ignorance of the holy Scriptures and of those

whose faith rests in them. The plain fact of the matter is that in his other epistles Paul likewise makes specific references to this faith as well as to the fruits of faith of those to whom he was writing. An outstanding example is found in 1 Thessalonians (1:2-3), "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continu-



All men will know
you are my disciples
if you love one
another.



ally remember you before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Lest anyone suggest this is an isolated citation, permit me to suggest another found in 1 Corinthians (1:4-7), "I always thank God for you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed." Neither these citations nor the content of Philemon suggest in any way the use of extravagant flattery and

cajolery to serve ulterior motives and nefarious ends. What is abundantly clear, however, is that the apostle Paul is addressing people who, body and soul, belong to the Lord. They are his possessions, his people bought with a price, with everything they have and are dedicated to his service.

Is the epistle to Philemon really merely a private letter without much of a doctrinal nature to commend it? It doesn't take a degree in exegesis to see that the epistle serves as a clear reminder of how important in God's scheme Christian love is. And you don't have to be a renowned theologian to be able to point to the source of such love. It is the fruit of the gospel, and the gospel alone. This is why we can read in 1 John (3:14), "We know we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers." Even more specific and more direct are the words in John's gospel (13:35), "All men will know you are my disciples if you love one another."

Almost two centuries ago Charles Simeon, an English divine, wrote, "We must never forget that the Word of God is intended to regulate our spirit and conduct in every situation and relation of life. It (Philemon) does not state particularly any of the doctrines of the Gospel, but it does show us in a very impressive manner the spirit which it breathes. Any attentive consideration of



its contents will soon convince... that it is worthy of its Divine Author."

The epistle to Philemon is indeed divinely inspired. You can read and study it as the Word of God in utter confidence and with spiritual profit despite its brevity, so don't lay it aside because it doesn't look like much. Furthermore, the commendations accorded Philemon and

the congregation in his house can certainly be equally applicable to those who teach the Word of God, who visit the sick and the imprisoned, or who comfort the grieving and conscience stricken. Prestigious awards, medals, and trophies received in this life pale in comparison to the commendations found in the epistle to Philemon. It is blessedness beyond comparison if the Holy Spirit can bestow these commendations on us, our schools, our congregations, our synod. So may it be!

President emeritus Conrad Frey submitted several articles last August. On October 13, 1998 he was called to his heavenly home.



Preparing for the IEP Conference

Daryl B. Hanneman

WHEN A STUDENT is identified by a multi-disciplinary team as being eligible for special education services, a document describing the nature of the proposed services is written. This individualized education program (IEP) is the "road map" of services that will be provided, and the goals of these services. The IEP is developed by a team that includes parents and school professionals and, when appropriate, the student.

Public Law 105-17 known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is very specific about how a student's IEP is developed, reviewed, and revised. Since IDEA was reauthorized in July of 1997, the student's regular education teacher is now formally included as a member of the IEP team. What follows will be ideas on how you, as the student's regular education teacher, can prepare for the conference.

Prior to the IEP conference, the results of the multidisciplinary team's evaluation should have been presented to the parents of the student and the student's teacher. This is not always the case, however. If possible, you should request results of the evaluation before the IEP conference so you will be better able to comment and offer insight into the student's school performance, in light of the evaluation results. For example, if the IEP will include goals in written language, you will be able to

provide information which will help determine which accommodations are more likely to be successful than others, based on your knowledge of the student's work performance in this area. If you are the receiving teacher of a new student, it is good to get evaluation results ahead of time so you can be prepared to describe how you can try to meet the learning needs of the student with the resources you have available.

Assuming that you have been the student's regular education teacher, you will be able to provide very helpful information regarding the student's strengths and weaknesses, which are not always apparent in an evaluation. You will be able to comment on work habits, skill level compared to others in your classroom, issues related to motivation, behavior issues, and simply general knowledge of the student which the evaluation team would not have available. If you are the receiving teacher, you will be able to provide information about the curriculum and the match between the student's skill level and instruction in your classroom. This information is important to know as the IEP is written to determine both where and how instruction for the student will occur.

Written notice of date, time, and location of the conference will be sent all people invited to the IEP conference. The IEP team must include par-

ents, a regular education teacher of the child, a special education teacher, a representative of the school who can supervise special education services, and someone who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results. It is a good idea to let the parents of the student know that you would like to be included in the conference so they can inform you of the conference time and place. Sometimes the local public school will include its own regular education teacher at the conference, if there is any doubt about where special services will be provided. The law requires a free and appropriate "public" education for students with disabilities, so it is wise to be at the conference to advocate for your school's role in the student's education whether you are formally invited or not. Parents always have the right to have you included.

One of the rights of parents is to have their child educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means the child should have instruction with his/her same-grade peers for as much of the school day as possible. You should be prepared to offer to provide as much of the "special" education as possible. The goals of the IEP can often be addressed by the regular classroom teacher. For example, a goal may be "In 26 weeks, after silently reading a previously unread story from the third grade trade book, Bob will orally retell the story and identify all of the major characters and events for five consecutive stories." This goal can be worked on by the regular education teacher. It does not require a special education teacher.

Having this goal will be helpful to you in focusing instruction for this student. It does not mean the student needs to have services in a special education classroom. Make sure that you are listed as the "service provider" for as many of the student's goals as you believe you can provide.

If you are unclear about any goals or objectives on the IEP, be sure to ask for clarification. If you, as an educator, are unclear it is likely that the parents are unclear as well. Sometimes parents are reluctant to ask questions. You can advocate for both the student and parents by asking questions.

The IEP will include ways that progress toward the goal(s) will be measured. If you will be measuring the student's progress, make sure the monitoring procedures are reasonable for you. If you do not believe you will be able to monitor progress in the way prescribed on the IEP, ask that another monitoring system be implemented.

Someone certified to provide special education services will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the IEP. This person does not have to provide direct services to the student. It would be well for you to develop a working relationship with this person so that any problems that may arise can be addressed in a professional manner. Be sure to inform both the parents and the person overseeing the IEP of progress toward the written goals on a regular (or more frequently) basis as listed on the IEP.

Since the goal of instruction should be to have the student participate in the

general curriculum as much as possible, you will be able to provide critical information regarding the extent to which the student can participate in the curriculum. If you are the student's cur-

Preparing for an IEP Conference

1. Ask for the evaluation results prior to the conference.
2. Let the student's parents know that you want to be invited.
3. Be ready to advocate for your school's ability to meet the student's needs.
4. Ask questions if anything is unclear to you.
5. Be willing to provide the recommended services in your classroom if this is reasonable.
6. Be ready to describe what the student can do relatively well.
7. Pray that the the Lord will bless your efforts to provide the one thing needful.

rent teacher, you will be able to provide information about the specific academic and/or behavioral needs of the student, based on your day-to-day interactions with the student. For example, you may know that Bob can complete shorter assignments than his peers, but becomes frustrated and disruptive, when required to work more that 15 minutes on an assignment. This information is important as goals, objectives, or benchmarks of progress are written. Because of Bob's disability, it may be necessary to break work time into shorter units for him. This is a modification that can be implemented by you, his regular education teacher.

Sometimes specific teaching strategies are stated in the IEP, although they are often left to the teacher's discretion. If a particular strategy is stated in the IEP, this must be carried out in order to be in compliance with the law. Make sure you have the knowledge to implement the strategy, otherwise ask that a different strategy be stated in the IEP. You can not be expected to provide every service that may be helpful, but you can provide almost all services within the regular classroom for mild to moderate disabilities.

Lastly, to prepare for the IEP conference, it will be helpful to be able to give specific examples of what the student can do. The evaluation team will have identified weaknesses, which make the student entitled to special education, but it is very helpful to know areas in which the student is at least minimally successful. For example, if reading decoding is a weakness, but the student can retell a story that has been read to him or her, the IEP can include modifications to the curriculum which could include having assignments in the content area read to the student prior to being tested on the material, for example. Being able to identify relative strengths of the student will enable the IEP team write goals which build on the student's current skill level. Also, discussing the student's relative strengths is something parents need to hear, and will help enlist their support as you provide instruction in your classroom.

Daryl Hanneman is a school psychologist practicing in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

REVIEWS

REVIEWS



Ellis, Arthur K. & Jeffrey T. Fouts.
Research on Educational Innovations,
2nd Ed. Larchmont, NY: Eye on
Education, 1997.

Every teacher has to make hundreds of decisions regarding what and why she or he should do something in a classroom. Should I use whole language, a phonics approach, or something in-between? What is this brain-based learning and what does it have to do with my classroom? Which is better, direct instruction or inquiry? Do cooperative groups really help children learn? Teachers are also well aware of the "flavor of the month" syndrome in education. Every year brings a new teaching method, curriculum, or diagnostic criteria for exceptional children. There are several ways a teacher may decide these questions. She may go on personal experience or the encouragement of colleagues. She may take the word of a respected professor or principal. She may become convinced through a workshop or course. And, in many instances, she may believe that educational research provides a pretty good indication of what she should do.

Questions like this and the implications of the answers are important. Ellis and Fouts give you one way of working

through the research issue. They discuss current methods and trends in the perspective of the research that either supports them or contradicts them. They examine each of the ideas on three levels: what is the theory behind the educational practice and how did it develop, what is the research which supports the theory, and what does research show about its effectiveness in a classroom. The chapters deal with what is current in education: self-esteem programs, brain research and its implications for teaching, teaching to increasing intelligence, thinking skills programs, whole language, learning styles, interdisciplinary curriculum, cooperative learning, mastery learning, outcome-based education, direct instruction, and authentic assessment.

The authors are conservative in their evaluations; that is, they base their analysis on evidence from research and if that evidence is not there, they conclude the case for a particular innovation has not been made. On the other hand, when there is research evidence, they give it. They conclude, for example, that self-esteem programs do not work, either in increasing self-esteem or in helping students achieve more in school. But they also give evidence that cooperative learning is well worth exploring.

Their writing is clear and non-technical. You don't have to understand

research or statistics or any other arcane science. The chapters are brief and to the point and the authors' conclusions are based on what they found in the research. The reader is often surprised at how little exists to prove a particular education practice and how often the pendulum swings back and forth with each generation forgetting what had supposedly been learned by previous generations of teachers. Ellis and Fouts have provided a valuable resource to schools and teachers in helping them decide important questions in education.

JRI



Video reviews (Continued from the October 1998 issue.)

The Animated Stories from the Bible
Entertainment, 6100 Colwell Blvd,
Irving, Texas 75039.) 1991-

"The Kingdom of Heaven," "Elijah," "Elisha" These cartoon character videos seem appropriate for early elementary school age children. The Kingdom of Heaven video includes parables from the New Testament which explain the kingdom of heaven (e.g., sower and the seed). There are some factual inaccuracies in the stories (the number of virgins) and some minor details are left out. There are a number of embellishments, particularly in the Elijah video, which seem to have been added to show the ridiculousness of Baal worship. Baal is proven wrong, but the only

two who recognize this are Elijah and Obadiah. It didn't seem that the Children of Israel are even recognized or shown in the video. The medium of cartoon characters does not overwhelm the story. The message does give the main point of the story—the sin of idolatry and the Lord is the only true God. These videos could be used in the classroom and the differences between the video and Scripture discussed with the children. The cartoons give a good visual picture of what children should already know. They should not be used to teach the story, but only as a review or reinforcement of what has been taught. The Elisha video picks up where Elijah left off. This video contains many events of prophet's life. There are workbooks which accompany the videos. They are not necessary for using the videos.



Superbook Video Bible
Victor King
Videos, Tyndale Christian Video, 351
Executive Drive, P.O. Box 80,
Wheaton, IL 60189) 1982-

"Jonah and the Big Fish" This video is part of a set of videos on the New and Old Testaments. This particular video included the story of Saul anointed king and Jonah. Two children and a toy robot are transported back in time to participate in the Bible story. In this instance they travel with Jonah to Nineveh. What is presented is accurate

Author

but not complete. Jonah's disappointment that God determined to save Nineveh was not shown nor was his sitting under the vine outside Nineveh. Nor was it shown that the Lord told Jonah to go to Nineveh. The use of the children and the robot would take explaining because they could give the impression that the entire story is made up if the time-traveling characters are fiction. There is no gospel message and the video is more entertainment than a teaching tool.



Note: The video series, That the World May Know by Focus on the Family, also has New Testament sets (Set 3 and 4). These materials are similar to the OT

sets and are offered in the same three options (see the October 1998 issue of TLE). The video production is excellent, the lectures/presentations are dramatic and effective, the overheads are stunning, and the Reformed theology is still very evident. The video set should now be available from Zondervan which has taken over some of the publishing ventures of Focus on the Family.

Reviewers: Janis Visaggio, Wendy Wurster, Kristin Bilitz, Sue Falkner, Joyce Tafel, Susan Fleming, Anne Alff, Jill Lode, Linnette Fehr, Brenda Thumann, Jean Porter, David Putz, Rick Holz, Terry Steinke, Joel Railling, Susan Potter, Jean MacKenzie, Dale Lorfeld, Janet Rosin, John Isch

THE LUTHERAN EDUCATOR

THE LUTHERAN EDUCATOR