

Foreword

In this issue of the *Quarterly* we are pleased to share with our readers the 2005 annual Reformation Lectures, delivered on October 27-28, 2005, in Mankato, Minnesota. These lectures are sponsored jointly by Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. This was the thirty-eighth in the series of annual Reformation Lectures which began in 1967.

This year there were three presenters. The first lecture was given by the Rev. Dr. Mark J. Lenz, who is professor of Religion and History at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. He joined the faculty in 1981 (at that time Dr. Martin Luther College) after serving as pastor in Morenci, MI, and Urbana, IL, and instructor at St. Croix Lutheran High School in West St. Paul, MN. Dr. Lenz received his B.A. from Northwestern College, Watertown, WI (1965), and his M.Div. from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, WI (1969). A specialist in Reformation history and the history of the Lutheran Church in America, he earned his Ph.D. (1998) from International Seminary, Plymouth, FL, writing on the topic "Luther's Theology of the Cross in Contemporary American Lutheranism." Dr. Lenz has served as chair of the History/Social Sciences division at Martin Luther College and presently serves as the chair of the Religion Division. He has served as an editor of the *Lutheran Educator* and as a contributing editor of *Forward in Christ*. His published works include: the *People's Bible Commentary on Leviticus*, the *People's Bible Teachings* volume on God's Providence, Bible studies entitled "Sing Along with Saints and Angels," "The Life of Abraham," and a study of John 11 entitled "Death is But a Sleep." He has also written lessons for the Christ Light series and a series of articles on the Apostles' Creed. Dr. Lenz and his wife Esther are blessed with three children and four grandchildren.

The second presenter was the Rev. Dr. Paul Lehninger, who is professor of Theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College, where he also serves as chair of the Religious Studies Department and teaches dogmatics, worship, and New Testament. He previously served as pastor of The Lutheran Church of the Abiding Word, Somers, WI (1984-90), Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Yuma, AZ (1979-84),

and Igreja Lutherana Brasileira da Consolação, Gravataí, Brazil (1978-79). He received his B.A. from the University of Wisconsin (1973), his M.Div. from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (1978), and his doctoral degree from Marquette University in 1999, writing on “Luther and Theosis: Deification in the Theology of Martin Luther.” He also attended Bethany Lutheran College for a year (1973-74) in its Mequon Program. He is a consultant for *Luther Digest* and a contributing editor for *Logia*. He lives in Milwaukee with his wife Jeanne.

The third presenter was the Rev. Dennis Marzolf, who has been a professor of music at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, MN, since 1984. He conducts the Concert Choir and Handbell Choir, is an instructor in the church music program, teaches private voice lessons, and is the music department chair. Along with the choir he has toured throughout the USA and Canada as well as Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Norway and England. Along with other faculty members he directs a lyric theatre production by the Bethany Choraliers in the tradition of the light opera, especially compositions by Gilbert and Sullivan. He directs the ELS Youth Honors Choir, the Children’s Choir at Mt. Olive Lutheran School, and directed the MN Valley Chorale for fifteen years. He chairs the Worship Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod which produced the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*. In 2002 he wrote “With Hearts and Lips Forever We Shall In God Rejoice,” a history of the choirs and the music program of Bethany Lutheran College. Prof. Marzolf holds a master’s degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato, a M.Div. degree from Concordia Theol. Seminary, Ft. Wayne, and a bachelor of music degree in church music from St. Olaf College. In addition he has studied church music and choral conducting at the Musikhochschule in Vienna, Austria. He has authored articles that have appeared in *Logia*, the *Lutheran Sentinel*, *Reformation and Revival* and other periodicals. He lives in Mankato with his wife Beth and two children, ages six and nine.

The theme of the lectures was Luther and Education. The first lecture, presented by Professor Mark Lenz, was entitled “Luther and Religious Education.” In this presentation the essayist emphasized Luther’s high regard for Christian education. The second lecturer,

Professor Paul Lehninger, presented his lectures “Luther, Lutherans, and Liberal Arts Education.” In this lecture the essayist spoke of the importance of Luther’s work to liberal arts education. The third lecture, given by Professor Dennis Marzolf, was entitled “Luther and Music Education.” In this lecture the essayist explained the importance of music and Lutheran hymns for Lutheran education.

The Reformation Lectures were centered upon the important contribution that Martin Luther has given to education, both religious and secular. For Luther, education centers in the Gospel, true wisdom from above. Such Christian education is of vital importance to the church today.

Professor Harstad’s manuscript on the book of Joshua was submitted to the Concordia Publishing House, and the *Joshua* volume of the *Concordia Commentary Series* was published last spring. This commentary will greatly assist confessional Lutherans in studying this important book of the Bible. The review of the commentary was written by the Rev. Cory Hahnke of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Cold Spring, Minnesota.

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Luther and Religious Education

by Mark Lenz

We live in a world of relativism and pluralism where people firmly believe (!) that “you have your version of truth and I have mine.” Any philosophy of life, any theological viewpoint, any moral or ethical standard, is permissible – except if you insist that there is absolute truth, that there are certain moral standards established by God to which he holds all people accountable, that the Bible is God’s Word of truth in everything it says, and that Christ crucified and resurrected is the only way to God and heaven.

If truth is relative, if there are almost as many versions of truth as there are people, why, many today ask, would I want to force a particular brand of “truth” on my children? Shouldn’t I rather let them discover their own version of truth? Doesn’t each generation have its own system of values and ethical standards? Why would I impose mine on my children?

There once was a woman who said she would not insist on a Christian education for her children. She would rather let them decide for themselves when they grew older. A courageous Christian responded, “Madame, if you don’t train them, the devil will.” Even a casual observer of contemporary society would have to admit that the devil has had more than a little success in doing that.¹

Even sometimes in the church that bears Luther’s name. The emphasis on Christian education is not what it once was in Lutheran circles. Some branches of Lutheranism have practically conceded all education to the state, attempting to fill the void in spiritual training with youth programs, family ministries, and the like. Some Lutheran church bodies no longer support a system for training ministers of the gospel to any great extent.² Among others, support for such a system is waning rapidly.³

One sometimes hears of Lutheran pastors and teachers that no longer teach the catechism to any great extent, of others that require little, if any, memory work.⁴ What would Luther say? Would he say that since times have changed, the *Small Catechism* is no longer relevant? Would he say that children can no longer be expected to

memorize the chief parts of the catechism, or Scripture verses, or hymn stanzas? Would he say that more important than doctrine is making children feel good about themselves, helping them realize their full potential as human beings, and keeping them entertained and happy all the time?

If Luther could speak today, it is this writer's opinion that he would have more than a few choice words (maybe even some very colorful and shocking words) to say to our society and possibly even to many of those who bear the name Lutheran.

In this presentation we shall consider two works of Luther dealing specifically with religious education, in addition to examining his thoughts on religious education in the two catechisms and in other writings. We shall examine especially Luther's motivation for writing what he did, the main arguments for religious education in these works, and Luther's ideas about the basis and objectives of religious education.

The Need for Educational Reform in the Sixteenth Century

The need for educational reform at the beginning of the sixteenth century had reached crisis proportions. There was no school system as such, and usually only the children of wealthy merchants and city rulers received an education. The Roman Catholic Church supervised the training of young people in monasteries, cloisters, and other church-run institutions. But these were falling into disrepute and disrepair, as the people reacted negatively to the corruption and abuses among the clergy. Many parents simply stopped permitting their children to receive an education in institutions operated by the church, insisting that learning how to make a living was more important than a religious education. One of the first tasks of the reformers, therefore, was to convince parents that the spiritual well-being of their children was more important than their physical comfort.

Martin Luther was at the forefront of those who realized the need for change in education, and with characteristic zeal he sought to

effect improvements in Wittenberg and throughout Germany. While he composed only a few works that treat education directly, his other writings often reveal an attempt to relate education to the doctrinal rediscoveries of the Reformation, and especially to subject learning to the “theology of the cross.” The few treatises Luther did dedicate strictly to education had such an impact that they may be deemed seminal for the development of schooling in general in the sixteenth century. These works not only influenced teachers and preachers throughout Germany, but they also encouraged other theologians to consider the role of education in society.

Circumstances Leading to the Writing of the Catechisms

In 1529 Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms became instant best sellers.⁵ That may seem strange to us. Few people today clamor for books about doctrine. But in 1529 Luther’s catechisms filled a great need.

For decades, leaders of the church had been aware that people were basically ignorant of the teachings of the church. Most Christians could generally be expected to know the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles’ Creed, but often even this knowledge was lacking.⁶

The people who became Lutheran in the early decades of the 16th Century were not much different. The church visitations in Saxony in the winter of 1528/29 revealed how serious the situation was. Ignorance, apathy, and intransigence were endemic. In one village the visitors found that the peasants refused to learn the Lord’s Prayer because they thought it was too long. In another, the visitors discovered that the Lord’s Supper had not been celebrated for years. Most priests were hardly better educated than the people they served. Some could only stumble their way through the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles’ Creed.

Upon returning to Wittenberg, Luther exclaimed,

The deplorable, wretched deprivation that I recently encountered while I was a visitor has constrained and compelled me to prepare this catechism, or Christian instruction, in such a brief, plain, and simple version. Dear God, what misery I beheld! The

ordinary person, especially in the villages, knows absolutely nothing about the Christian faith, and unfortunately many pastors are completely unskilled and incompetent teachers.⁷

Church councils in the Middle Ages had regularly urged priests to instruct people in the basic teachings of the church. Priests preached on what were known as the three chief parts: the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. Instructional booklets and tracts were prepared and distributed. Many priests gave basic instruction to those who came to confession. Some read catechetical materials from the pulpit. In spite of all this, only a small percentage of people had any kind of religious knowledge.

In 1528 John Bugenhagen, the pastor of the *Stadtkirche* in Wittenberg, had gone to Brunswick to organize churches and schools. Luther was the supply preacher during Bugenhagen's absence. For some time it had been the custom in the *Stadtkirche* to preach a series of catechetical sermons in May and another in September each year. Luther followed this practice in 1528. After the September sermon series, Luther began to write down his thoughts for publication. Then in November Luther interrupted his writing to take part in the visitation of the Saxon parishes. Stunned by what he saw, Luther preached a third series of catechetical sermons in December. Regarding the Third Commandment he admonished his hearers,

Do not despise the preaching and do not neglect the Word of God. See to it that you speak of it seriously, hear it, sing it, read it, use it, and learn it.⁸

Regarding the First Article of the Apostles' Creed he said,

I believe that God has given to me body and soul, the five senses, clothing, food, shelter, wife, child, cattle, land. It follows from this that I should serve, obey, praise, and thank him.⁹

Referring to Christ's sacrifice for sin in the Second Article he said,

What a price he paid for it, namely, not with gold, silver, or an army of knights, but with his own self, that is, with his own body.¹⁰

In defining Baptism he said,

Baptism is water comprehended and sanctified with God's

commandment and Word, that is, a divine and holy water because of God's commandment.¹¹

It is evident that this final sermon series of 1528 served as material for Luther's catechisms.

Over the years Luther had produced a considerable number of such materials. As early as 1516 he had preached a series of sermons on the Ten Commandments. In 1517, the year of the 95 Theses, he preached a series on the Lord's Prayer. The following year a wall chart entitled "A Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments" was published together with Luther's sermons on that theme. In 1518 his explanation of the Ten Commandments appeared in print. Also in that year Luther presented theses at the meeting of the Augustinian Cloister at Heidelberg in which he stated publicly for the first time his thoughts on the difference between the theology of glory and the theology of the cross. What he had come to understand, what he firmly believed, he wanted everyone to know. In 1519, the year of the debate with John Eck at Leipzig, Luther's sermons on the Lord's Prayer were printed, together with two tracts on the same subject. In 1520 Luther prepared an explanation of the Apostles' Creed, and this was published together with what he had previously written on the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.

It seems religious education was constantly on Luther's mind, even when he had to deal with other issues. 1520 was also the year Luther wrote the famous Reformation treatises: *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, *The Freedom of the Christian*, and *An Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*. In the last of these treatises Luther lists twenty-seven proposals for improving the state of Christendom. Proposal 25 presents Luther's ideas for the reform of the universities. Luther says the universities and the lower schools ought to teach the Holy Scriptures, "beginning with the gospels for the young boys." Schools for girls should be established in each town where they too might daily have a lesson on the gospel. In this connection he says,

Would it not be reasonable for every Christian person on reaching his ninth or tenth year to know the holy gospel in its entirety, since his name and standing as a Christian are based on it?¹²

Luther says people failed to notice the “present pitiful distress of the young people.” Though the world was supposedly Christian, the young people of the day were perishing in misery because they did not know the gospel “in which we should be training and exercising them all the time.” And then Luther says,

I would not advise anyone to send his son to a place where the Holy Scriptures do not come first. Every institution where the Word of God is not taught regularly must fail... The universities ought to give students a thorough training in the Bible... But that is nowhere to be found. I greatly fear that the universities are but wide-open gates leading to hell, as they are not diligent in training and impressing the Holy Scripture on the young students.¹³

The “three chief parts” were again the topics of sermons Luther preached in 1522 and 1523. Thus began Luther’s practice of preaching annual catechetical sermons. In 1523 Luther again published the three chief parts, this time including a booklet of prayers. The catechisms as we know them were not to come about for another six years, but in the meantime Luther continued to write about religious education.

To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools

In January of 1524 Luther wrote a treatise entitled *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*. Luther believed the situation in Germany was reaching crisis proportions. The monasteries were being emptied. The enrollment at the University of Wittenberg had reached a new low. Karlstadt had discouraged higher learning and especially the attainment of degrees. The Anabaptists had belittled education. Something had to be done, and Luther believed the rulers of the cities of Germany were in the best position to do it. In his treatise Luther offers some practical advice regarding Christian education, and in the process he answers the anti-religious arguments that had surfaced in recent years.

During the Middle Ages those who managed to receive an education were instructed in the doctrines of the church by the

monks at the monastic schools.¹⁴ As the number of urban dwellers increased in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a somewhat broader curriculum was required to prepare people for various trades and professions. Schools were established at the cathedrals in the large cities where of course the curriculum still emphasized the doctrines of the church.¹⁵

Chantry schools also came into existence during the Middle Ages. Chantry priests were paid to say prayers and masses for people's souls. Since this often was not fulltime work, chantry priests were also expected to teach the children of the community. Guild schools were similar to chantry schools. Priests, supported by the merchant and craft guilds in their various duties, were also expected to teach the children of guild members. As city governments became stronger, some of these guild schools became burgher schools. Such schools were firmly under the control of the authorities, although the teaching was still done by the priests.

All the types of schools mentioned above were either directly or indirectly under the control of the church authorities and were thus required to teach the doctrines of the Church. When humanism found its way to Germany in the fifteenth century, religious education was eventually downplayed in favor of a liberal form of education modeled after that of the ancient Greeks. The humanists were determined to influence the curricula of the schools dominated by the church, and they were often able to do so. Sometimes the humanists were even able to found new schools completely devoted to secular education.

The Renaissance was also accompanied by a time of exploration and discovery. People soon learned that there were many treasures to be found in far-off lands. Why would one want to study theology? It would be much more lucrative to study trade or industry. A spirit of materialism, accompanied by a decline in religious education, began to characterize society.

Even the Reformation had an effect on the church-dominated schools. The reformers contended that the doctrines of the church were dangerous to a person's salvation. Why would parents want to send their children to schools where such things were taught? Even Luther attacked the monastic and cathedral schools as the "devil's

training centers,” going so far as to say that it would be better for a boy not to attend school than to attend such a school.

Luther often spoke about the priesthood of believers. Some misunderstood that concept to mean it was not necessary to study for the priesthood. Others taught that God speaks directly to people so they can understand the written word without any formal education. Andreas Karlstadt and Thomas Münzer were so opposed to learning that they said it was “of the devil.” When Karlstadt took over in Wittenberg while Luther was at the Wartburg, enrollment at the university declined dramatically. Only the combined efforts of Luther and Bugenhagen were later able to restore the emphasis on education in Wittenberg. The influence of Karlstadt and Münzer was felt even more strongly in Erfurt, where the university enrollment also declined drastically.

Religious education in Germany was not just in decline; it was in danger of being lost entirely. For this reason Luther in 1524 felt constrained to encourage the governmental authorities to establish Christian schools across the land.¹⁶ It was Luther’s observation that education in general was in terrible shape. He said,

We are today experiencing in all the German lands how schools are everywhere being left to go to wrack and ruin. The universities are growing weak, and monasteries are declining.¹⁷

At one time people had entrusted their children to the cloister and foundation schools because they felt that there they would not only learn how to make a living but would also receive a religious education. But parents no longer trusted that church schools would do that. Influenced by the humanism and materialism of the renaissance, some parents had turned from the church schools. Other parents, concerned that their children receive a religious education, wanted something better than the church schools were providing.

Luther believed the devil was behind the demise of education in the 16th century. He believed it was the devil that was inducing people to neglect their children’s welfare, that it was the devil that was using the monasteries and the clergy to corrupt the young and to prevent their proper training. The last thing the devil wanted to see was good Christian schools because it would speedily overthrow his kingdom. Since the gospel had exposed the devil’s plans to use

the church schools to corrupt the youth, he now had to go to the opposite extreme to try to do away with learning entirely. He did not want young people to become mature Christians who spread the gospel and taught it to others. All of this, Luther said, had happened so unobtrusively that no one had noticed it, and the damage had been done before steps could be taken to prevent it.

What about the expense? The Islamic Turks were threatening Europe. It would require the majority of the nation's resources to defend itself. Could anything be more important than national defense? Indeed it could. Luther felt that a hundred times as much should be spent on Christian education as was spent on defending the land because he said "one real Christian is better and can do more good than all the [other] men on earth."¹⁸

Luther felt people were taking this matter far too lightly. Education of the youth, he said, ought to be a vital concern for everyone because the cause of the gospel was at stake and the very welfare of society was being threatened. But again, what about the expense? Luther said that since people were no longer obliged to waste money on indulgences, masses, vigils, etc., they could contribute at least part of the money they had saved toward Christian schools. The devil didn't mind when they wasted money on monasteries and masses because that was to his advantage. Contributing to truly Christian education, on the other hand, threatened his kingdom, and so he would do everything in his power to prevent it.

Another consideration for Luther was the special blessing God had recently poured out on the German people. There were now instructors who could teach a boy more in three years than those who earlier had studied twenty or more years in the universities and monasteries. He said, "Indeed, what have men been learning till now in the universities and monasteries except to become asses, blockheads, and numbskulls?"¹⁹ If the universities were to continue as they had in the past Luther would rather that a boy "just remain dumb" rather than spend time in those "asses' stalls and devil's training centers."

At the time, God had blessed Germany with more of God's Word than it had ever had before. If they let the moment slip by, they would suffer "more dreadful darkness and plague." Luther said,

For you should know that God's word and grace is like a passing shower of rain which does not return where it has once been. It has been with the Jews, but when it's gone it's gone, and now they have nothing. Paul brought it to the Greeks; but again when it's gone it's gone, and now they have the Turk. Rome and the Latins also had it; but when it's gone it's gone, and now they have the pope. And you Germans need not think that you will have it forever, for ingratitude and contempt will not make it stay. Therefore, seize it and hold it fast, whoever can; for lazy hands are bound to have a lean year.²⁰

The most important consideration for Luther was God's command to parents to instruct their children in the truths of his Word. Luther believed this to be the primary reason for older folks' very existence, and that God would hold them accountable if they failed to do it. If they did not educate their children, Luther believed a millstone should be fastened to their necks and they should be drowned in the sea (Matthew 18:7) because they were nothing but destroyers of children.

I think that in the sight of God none among the outward sins so heavily burdens the world and merits such severe punishment as this very sin which we commit against the children by not educating them.²¹

Since nature itself should drive them to do this, Luther believed it a shame that parents had to be urged to educate their children. Luther said there were at least three reasons why parents didn't bother to educate their children: 1) even if some had the ability they lacked the goodness and decency to do it; 2) the great majority were unfit for the task, knowing little about how to bring up children or teach them; and 3) most parents, even if they had the ability and desire to do it, lacked the time and the opportunity.

It was for these reasons that Luther pleaded with the councilmen to devote themselves to the education of the young. The welfare of the whole city was in their keeping, and they would be remiss if they did not seek its improvement by every means at their disposal. City officials might show concern for finances, buildings, means for defense, etc. but Luther said, "A city's best and greatest welfare, safety, and strength consist rather in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable, and well-educated citizens."²²

A city must have educated citizens, Luther said, but we can not carve them out of stone, nor can we expect God to provide them miraculously. We need rather to work at it ourselves and spare no labor or expense in seeking to educate children. Whose fault is it that there are so few capable people in our cities? The city authorities must be held responsible. From where will future government leaders come if we don't educate the present generation? "We might as well make lords out of swine and wolves, and set them to rule over those who refuse to give any thought to how they are ruled by men."²³

Granted, the councilmen might say, we need schools. But what is the sense of teaching Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and the other liberal arts? Isn't it enough simply to teach God's Word in German? In response Luther said that made as much sense as refusing to use any wine, grain, wool, etc. unless it came from Germany. But more importantly, he said, the biblical languages were necessary for gaining a deeper understanding of Holy Scripture.

Although the gospel came and still comes to us through the Holy Spirit alone, we cannot deny that it came through the medium of languages, was spread abroad by that means, and must be preserved by the same means.²⁴

Luther went so far as to call Hebrew and Greek "sacred" languages because of the holy Word of God they communicated. Study of these languages he believed was necessary for the preservation of the gospel.

And let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit [Eph. 6:17] is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; they are the vessel in which this wine is held; they are the larder in which this food is stored; and, as the gospel itself points out [Matt. 14:20], they are the baskets in which are kept these loaves and fishes and fragments... Hence, it is inevitable that unless the languages remain, the gospel must finally perish.²⁵

Luther credited the study of the biblical languages with restoring the truth of the gospel. The errors of the past, even those of St. Augustine, had come about, he believed, because of ignorance of the languages of Scripture. Many of the early church fathers had erred, and seldom did they agree with one another because of their

ignorance of the languages.

Even though a person can know Christ, lead a holy life, and even preach to others on the basis of translations, Luther said, he cannot adequately defend the faith without a thorough knowledge of the languages. It isn't enough simply to be familiar with the commentaries of the church fathers. Because many of them were ignorant of the languages, they often erred in what they said. Knowledge of the languages is necessary for teaching the Bible, and especially for preaching.

Where the preacher is versed in the languages, there is a freshness and vigor in his preaching, Scripture is treated in its entirety, and faith finds itself constantly renewed by a continual variety of words and illustrations.²⁶

Luther said the Waldensians had downplayed the study of languages because they believed they had been given the Spirit directly. Their teaching had consequently become obscure and had been couched in language that was not scriptural.

Luther believed that Christian schools and the study of the biblical languages are essential in the spiritual realm and for the salvation of souls. But he believed good schools were essential for life in this world too. Those who designed their schools only for the spiritual realm gave the impression that having anything to do with the world, including studying secular subjects, was sinful.

Now if (as we have assumed) there were no souls, and there were no need at all of schools and languages for the sake of the Scriptures and of God, this one consideration alone would be sufficient to justify the establishment everywhere of the very best schools for both boys and girls, namely, that in order to maintain its temporal estate outwardly the world must have good and capable men and women, men able to rule well over land and people, women able to manage the household and train children and servants aright.²⁷

Couldn't people teach their children themselves, at least in proper discipline? Wouldn't that be sufficient? Luther says that even if such training could be done to perfection, it would result only in an outward respectability, while underneath the children would be "the same old blockheads" unable to discuss anything intelligently. But if they were instructed in schools by learned and well-trained

teachers they would learn about the whole world. They would gain from history the knowledge and understanding of what to seek and what to avoid in this outward life, and be able to advise and direct others accordingly.²⁸ Personal experience is fine, but it takes too long. The best education is in a formal setting. School doesn't have to be the painful experience it was for Luther and his contemporaries who learned less than nothing in spite of "flogging, trembling, anguish, and misery."²⁹

What about the duties children needed to perform at home? Luther's idea was to have boys attend school for one or two hours a day and spend the rest of the time learning a trade or doing what was expected of them. Girls too could go to school for at least an hour a day and still take care of their duties at home. Exceptional students could be allowed to go to school longer so that they could become teachers, preachers, or other church leaders. In this connection Luther said,

We must certainly have men to administer God's word and sacraments and to be shepherds of souls. But where shall we get them if we let our schools go by the board, and fail to replace them with others that are Christian?³⁰

Luther pleaded with the councilmen to take some positive action before it was too late, not only because of the young people, but also to preserve the spiritual and temporal welfare of Germany. Luther felt one final thing needed serious consideration by those who were in earnest to have schools and languages maintained in Germany.

No effort or expense should be spared to provide good libraries or book repositories, especially in the larger cities which can well afford it. For if the gospel and all the arts are to be preserved, they must be set down and held fast in books and writings.³¹

Luther's advice was not that they heap together all sorts of books indiscriminately and think only in terms of numbers, but that they make a judicious selection.

First of all, there would be the Holy Scriptures, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German, and any other language in which they might be found. Next, the best commentaries, and, if I could find them, the most ancient, in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Then,

books that would be helpful in learning the languages, such as the poets and orators, regardless of whether they were pagan or Christian, Greek or Latin, for it is from such books that one must learn grammar. After that would come books on the liberal arts, and all the other arts.³²

Luther was concerned that unless they worked hard to preserve the truly good books, the time would come when worthless and harmful books “with their useless and senseless rubbish will swarm back and litter every nook and corner.”³³

As was his custom in many of his writings, Luther concluded his address to the councilmen of all the cities in Germany with a prayer commending them to the grace of God.

May he soften and kindle your hearts that they may be deeply concerned for the poor, miserable, and neglected youth, and with the help of God aid and assist them, to the end that there may be a blessed and Christian government in the German lands with respect to both body and soul, with all plenty and abundance, to the glory and honor of God the Father, through our Savior Jesus Christ.³⁴

Deutsche Messe

Luther believed that the worship service ought to be designed to serve the cause of religious instruction.³⁵ In his *Deutsche Messe* of 1526 Luther outlined such a program. He did not wish to make his Order of Divine Service compulsory, although he thought it would be a “fine thing” if all churches conducted worship in the same fashion. Luther was particularly concerned about those who were not yet Christians.

Such orders are needed for those who are still becoming Christians or need to be strengthened, since a Christian does not need baptism, the Word, and the sacrament as a Christian – for all things are his – but as a sinner. They are essential especially for the immature and the young who must be trained and educated in the Scripture and God’s Word daily so that they may become familiar with the Bible, grounded, well versed, and skilled in it, ready to defend their faith and in due time to teach others and to increase the kingdom of Christ.³⁶

It was for such people that Luther believed an order of service with Scripture readings, hymns, and a sermon would be particularly beneficial. If it would help people understand and be edified in worship, Luther would even like to have “all the bells pealing and all the organs playing.”

Luther wanted to preserve the Latin order of service, the *Formula Missae*, because many were familiar with it and it possessed such a fine store of music and song. If possible he would even have worship services in Hebrew and Greek to impress on people the importance of witnessing the gospel to people of other tongues as the Holy Spirit did on the first Pentecost. For this reason too he believed the young people should learn other languages in school.

But it was for the sake of the simple laymen that services needed to be held in German. Luther believed many of them were not yet believers, and a German order of worship would draw them to the faith.

There was a third order of service that Luther intended for those who were ready to embrace Christianity in earnest. This order of service would not involve much singing but would emphasize the sacraments, “the Word and prayer and love.” Worship would be devoted to studying the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer. However, Luther did not feel the time was right for such an order of service because there were few earnest Christians. Until such a time, he would devote his energies to the two previously mentioned orders of service.

For Luther the chief purpose of worship was “to preach and teach the Word of God.” Always he was concerned that people hear and learn the Scriptures. On Sundays, in addition to the reading of the Epistle and Gospel and the singing of Psalms, there were to be three sermons. On Monday and Tuesday mornings there was to be a lesson on either the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, Baptism, or the Lord’s Supper. Wednesday morning was to be devoted to the study of the Gospel of Matthew because, Luther said, Matthew speaks much about love and good works. Saturday afternoon should be devoted to the evangelist John. Thursday and Friday mornings were for the epistles and the rest of the New Testament.

Luther also had suggestions for the worship life of boys in school.

Every week day they were to sing psalms in Latin. That was to be followed by reading a chapter in Latin from the New Testament. The same chapter was then to be read in German in case any laymen were present. A German hymn, prayers, and a blessing were to conclude the service. A similar order was to be followed for Vespers with the chief difference being that the readings were to come from the Old Testament. Again religious education was at the heart of Luther's ideas for the worship service. It was his intention that in the course of a year students would become acquainted with the entire Bible.

Luther believed that every part of the worship service should be educative. In speaking the words of Institution the priest should face the people as no doubt Christ faced the disciples. The Epistle and Gospel should be sung (or spoken) facing the people, but the Collect facing the altar to distinguish between when God is speaking to us (sacramental) and we are speaking to God (sacrificial). The sermon should be an exposition of the Scriptures and not just a homily on a particular topic. After the sermon a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer should be followed by an exhortation to those who wished to come to the Sacrament. The elevation of the host should be retained, not to indicate transubstantiation, but because in the sacrament Christ is recognized and worshipped in faith. The bread should be distributed immediately after the consecration and before the blessing of the cup because Luther felt that was more in keeping with what Jesus had done.

Luther believed that all worship forms and orders should promote faith and lead to the service of love. When they failed to do that they should be discarded in favor of something else.

It is clear that religious education was constantly on Luther's mind during the decade of the 1520s.³⁷ He was convinced that the Holy Spirit worked solely through the Means of Grace. That meant people needed to know what they believed, and it meant that constant education in the Scriptures was essential for growth in faith. In 1523, a year before the *Deutsche Messe*, Luther expanded his writing on the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer by adding material on the Lord's Supper. In 1525 the *Booklet for Laymen and Children* (possibly written by Bugenhagen) included a section on baptism and the Lord's Supper. From this time on it was customary to think of catechetical works as having five chief

parts. In 1528 Melanchthon, in consultation with Luther, wrote up instructions for those who would be visiting the churches of Saxony. In it he outlined a program for religious education.

The Ten Commandments, the Articles of Faith, and the Lord's Prayer are to be steadily preached and expounded on Sunday afternoons. . . . And when the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed have been preached on Sundays in succession, matrimony, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall also be preached diligently. In this interest the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Articles of Faith shall be recited word for word, for the sake of the children and other simple and ignorant folks.³⁸

In the schools, one day a week was to be reserved for religious instruction. In places where there were no schools, a leader of the parish was to conduct religion classes.

The Writing of the Catechisms

With all the materials he had at hand, Luther could begin writing his catechism in the early months of 1529. But Luther had so much material it soon became apparent that the work would be too large for the average person. Therefore he prepared a brief form to be published as wall charts for use with children in the home. The five chief parts were available in this form by March 16. What we know as the *Large Catechism* was completed in late March and was published sometime in April. With this larger work completed, Luther turned again to his charts and had them printed in the form of a book. What we know as the *Small Catechism* was ready for sale by May 16. This first edition of the *Small Catechism* did not include the introduction to the Lord's Prayer and had nothing on confession, but the appendix included a Marriage Booklet. By June 13 another edition intended for use in the worship service was published that included an order of confession, the liturgy with music, and three collects. The 1531 edition included Luther's explanation of the introduction to the Lord's Prayer.

The Small Catechism

In the preface to the *Small Catechism*, Luther implores “all faithful and upright pastors and preachers” to take up their office boldly, to have pity on the people entrusted to them and to bring the catechism to them, especially to the young. If they were able to do nothing else, Luther says they should at least read the catechism to the people word for word.

As they taught the catechism there were three things they should keep in mind: 1) They should take care to avoid any “changes or variations in the text.”³⁹

If someone teaches one way now and another way next year – even for the sake of making improvements – the people become quite easily confused, and all the time and effort will go for naught.⁴⁰

2) Once people have learned the words of the catechism they should also be taught what they mean. This should not be rushed. One part should be studied thoroughly before moving to the next, otherwise people may become so overwhelmed “that they will hardly remember a single thing.”⁴¹ 3) After people have been taught a short catechism, they should be taught a longer catechism. Using such a catechism, pastors and teachers should put the greatest stress on the commandment or part of the catechism that their people needed most. For example, they should stress the Seventh Commandment to artisans, shopkeepers, etc. because all kinds of “dishonesty and thievery” were rampant among them. They should emphasize the Fourth Commandment to children so that they might learn to be “orderly, faithful, obedient, and peaceful.” In all their teaching they should provide many examples from Scripture.

The Large Catechism

The longer preface to the Large Catechism it seems was written by Luther at the Coburg castle in 1530 while Melancthon and others were attending the Diet of Augsburg. In this preface Luther bemoans the fact that many preachers and pastors are negligent in teaching the catechism. Some fail to do it because they are convinced that it is beneath them; others because they are lazy and more concerned

They approach the task as if they were pastors and preachers for their stomachs’ sake and had nothing to do but live off the fat of the land, as they were used to doing under the papacy.⁴²

For his own part, Luther says he can never outgrow his need for the catechism. Even though he is a doctor and a preacher and just as learned as those who pride themselves in being so “high and mighty,” each morning, and whenever else he has time, he does as a child who is learning the catechism and reads and recites word for word the chief parts of the catechism, “the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Psalms, etc.” Luther is convinced that “nothing is so powerfully effective against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts as to occupy one’s self with God’s Word, to speak about it and meditate upon it.”⁴³ Reading, reciting, pondering, and practicing the catechism has the benefit of driving away the devil and evil thoughts, for the devil “cannot bear to hear God’s Word.”

That would be sufficient reason to read the catechism daily, but Luther says there is more. God commands us to meditate on his precepts “while sitting, walking, standing, lying down, and rising.” God knows the danger we are in and “wishes to warn, equip, and protect us” with armor against the flaming arrows of the devils. If God is not ashamed to teach the truths of the catechism daily, and all the saints “know of nothing better or different to learn, although they cannot learn it to perfection,” should we imagine that we know everything after reading or hearing it only once?

In this context Luther says, “This much is certain: those who know the Ten Commandments perfectly know the entire Scriptures.”⁴⁴ What he means is that because the Ten Commandments summarize the will of God, they equip a person “to counsel, help, comfort, judge, and make decisions in both spiritual and temporal matters.” Also, people should regularly read and study the Psalms because they are meditations and “exercises based on the First Commandment.”

This 1530 preface to the Large Catechism is followed by the original brief preface of 1529 based on a sermon Luther preached on May 18, 1528. In this preface Luther says,

The catechism contains what every Christian should know. Anyone who does not know it should not be numbered among

Christians nor admitted to any sacrament... Young people should be thoroughly taught the parts of the catechism and diligently drilled in their practice.⁴⁵

At least once a week the head of every household should examine the children to keep them faithful at studying the catechism. It troubles Luther that there are many people who know nothing of the catechism, and yet they still go to the sacrament and exercise all the rights of Christians. This cannot be allowed to happen, Luther says. The basic truths of the catechism – especially the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer – must constantly be stressed. Children should learn to repeat these most necessary parts word for word and should be in the habit of reciting them daily “when they arise in the morning, when they go to their meals, and when they go to bed at night.” Until they recite, they should not be allowed anything to eat or drink! After these three parts are well known, people should know what to say about baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Regarding baptism, Luther says it is enough to know the words of Matthew 28:19⁴⁶ and Mark 16:16⁴⁷. Regarding the Lord’s Supper people should know the words of institution recorded in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25⁴⁸. These five parts need constantly to be taught and word for word recitation must be insisted on. Eventually young people can also learn psalms or hymns “to supplement and confirm their knowledge.” Luther, however, is not satisfied with recitation by rote. He insists that regularly there should be sermons on the catechism to underscore what young people have learned so that these truths might “penetrate deeply into their minds and remain fixed in their memories.”⁴⁹

Throughout the *Large Catechism* Luther emphasizes the importance of impressing these truths on the hearts and minds of young people and children. The First Commandment has a terrible threat and a comforting promise attached to it. Luther says both the threat and the promise need to be “emphasized and impressed on young people so they take them to heart and remember them.”⁵⁰ Young people need clearly to understand what it means to take God’s name in vain. If they violate this commandment (or any of the commandments) “we must be after them at once with the rod, confront them with the commandment, and continually impress

it upon them, so that they may be brought up not merely with punishment but with reverence and fear of God.”⁵¹

In his comments on the Second Commandment Luther says children should be trained “to beware of lying and especially to avoid calling upon God’s name in support of it.” On the other hand children should be urged and encouraged again and again “to honor God’s name and to keep it constantly upon their lips in all circumstances and experiences.”⁵²

Luther believes that simple, playful methods (such as making the sign of the cross when something frightening is seen or heard) can be used to teach young people to fear and honor God. What is enforced with beatings and blows will serve no good purpose for “children will remain good only as long as the rod is on their backs.”⁵³ Luther says the way the teacher speaks, acts and lives will also be a powerful teaching tool for young people.

In his comments on the Third Commandment, Luther also has the education of young people in mind. For Luther the “real business” of the Sabbath, and holidays in general, should be preaching for the benefit of young people. Part of “remembering the Sabbath day” also involves setting aside several hours a week to teach the catechism to young people so they might learn to live in accordance with God’s Word.

Not surprising is Luther’s emphasis on teaching young people the Fourth Commandment. It troubles Luther that this commandment is “entirely despised and brushed aside, and no one recognizes it as God’s command or as a holy, divine word and teaching.”⁵⁴ This commandment must be impressed on young people, Luther says,

that they revere their parents as God’s representatives, and remember that, however lowly, poor, feeble, and eccentric they may be, they are still their mother and father, given by God. They are not to be deprived of their honor because of their ways or failings.⁵⁵

Luther returns to this thought when discussing Baptism. People wonder how a “handful of water” can help the soul. The real significance of the water, Luther says, “lies in God’s Word or commandment and God’s name.” In the same way people sometimes look at their parents and see nothing attractive about them. They “look no different from Turks and heathen.” Why should I honor

such people? But because of the Fourth Commandment, Luther says,

I see another person, adorned and clothed with the majesty and glory of God. The (4th) commandment, I say, is the golden chain around the neck, yes, the crown on the head, which shows me how and why I should honor this particular flesh and blood.⁵⁶

For God's sake, Luther says, young people should give first place to this Fourth Commandment. If they wish to serve God with truly good works they need to do what is pleasing to their fathers and mothers. Observing this commandment is precious and acceptable in the sight of God. The "plain and simple" words of this commandment which everyone thinks he knows and thus passes over lightly, need to be taken seriously. Those who neglect this commandment incur the wrath of God.

Luther believes God also speaks to parents in this commandment. Too often he sees parents acting as though God gave them children for their pleasure and amusement as if it were no concern of theirs what they learn or how they live. He says,

If we want capable and qualified people for both the civil and the spiritual realms, we really must spare no effort, time, and expense in teaching and educating our children to serve God and the world. We must not think only of amassing money and property for them. God can provide for them and make them rich without our help, as indeed he does daily. But he has given us children and entrusted them to us precisely so that we may raise and govern them according to his will... Therefore let all people know that it is their chief duty – at the risk of losing divine grace – first to bring up their children in the fear and knowledge of God, and, then, if they are so gifted, also have them engage in formal study and learn so that they may be of service wherever they are needed.⁵⁷

Luther was convinced that the Fourth and Sixth Commandments needed especially to be stressed for young people in his day.⁵⁸ In the Sixth Commandment, Luther says, God blesses and protects marriage "as the first of all institutions" so that man and woman together might have children and "nurture and bring them up to the glory of God." Luther was distressed by the "filthy, dissolute, disorderly conduct" that was so rampant in his day, and by the prostitution and other vices that had resulted from contempt of married life. He was

convinced that parents had the duty of instructing their children about decency and respectability, and that they also had the responsibility of supervising their children's behavior, so that they would honor marriage as God's institution, and that when they were grown they might have joy and happiness in married life. In discussing the Sixth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, "and lead us not into temptation," Luther says that even though we all experience temptations to sin, "some have more frequent and severe attacks than others." Whereas adults are tempted by the world, young people are tempted chiefly by the flesh. Unless they are warned and instructed, unless they are taught the will of God, unless they learn to live for their Savior, they will easily succumb, especially because of the many temptations with which they are surrounded.

In his final comments on the Ten Commandments, Luther emphasizes that everything proceeds from the First Commandment. Obeying parents, doing good to others, etc. is to be done "purely out of love to God and in order to please him." It is especially important always to remind young people of this so that they are brought up "not only with blows and compulsion, like cattle, but in the fear and reverence of God."⁵⁹

Luther's constant concern is teaching children the basic truths of the faith. He says that the Apostles' Creed used to be divided into twelve articles, but "to make it most clear and simple for teaching to children" he will sum up the entire Creed in three main articles. When discussing the second article, for the sake of the children he determines to keep things simple and to concentrate on the words "in Jesus Christ, our LORD."

In his final comments on the Sacrament of the Altar, Luther returns to the importance of Christian education. The truths of the faith, he says, need to be instilled in the young so "they will receive them with joy and earnestness, practice them from their youth, and become accustomed to them." These truths cannot be perpetuated

unless we train the people who come after us and succeed us in our office and work, so that they in turn may bring up their children successfully. In this way God's Word and a Christian community will be preserved. Therefore let all heads of a household remember that it is their duty, by God's injunction and command, to teach their children or have them taught the things they ought to know.⁶⁰

Once the catechisms were published, Luther never tired of teaching them and urging their use. In a sermon preached in 1530, he spoke about his own use of the Small Catechism:

Whoever is able to read let him, in the morning, take a psalm or some other chapter in the Bible and study it for a while. For that is what I do. When I rise in the morning, I pray the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and also a psalm with the children. I do so because I wish to remain familiar with it, and not have it overgrown with mildew, so that I know it.⁶¹

And in a sermon of November 27, 1530, Luther warns:

Beware lest you become presumptuous, as though, because you have heard it often, you know enough of the Catechism. For this knowledge ever desires us to be its students. We shall never finish learning it, since it does not consist in speech, but in life. For I also, Dr. Martin, doctor and preacher, am compelled day by day to pray and to recite the words of the Decalog, the Symbol, and the Lord's Prayer as children are wont to do. Hence you need not be ashamed, for much fruit will result.⁶²

The Popularity of Luther's Catechisms

Eventually Luther's catechisms were in great demand and were widely used for religious instruction across Europe. By the middle of the 16th Century, they were considered to be confessions of the church. In Lutheran churches the Small Catechism was to be memorized, and all preaching was to conform to the teachings of the Large Catechism. After Luther's death, when Melanchthon began to alter the Augsburg Confession, the catechisms were quoted as summarizing genuine Lutheran teaching. Some Lutherans even went so far as to speak of the Small Catechism as inspired and as equal to the ecumenical creeds. Be that as it may, Luther's Small Catechism became the mark of genuine Lutheranism and was eventually used also in the conflicts with Calvinism. So popular did Luther's Small Catechism become that it was carried to Bohemia, Denmark, England, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Holland, Sweden, Norway, and Spain. Some pastors even used the catechism for premarital counseling.

One of the *Kirchenordnungen* (church regulations) of 1578 describes how the Small Catechism was to be used in the Sunday

afternoon services. First a portion of the Catechism was to be sung (very likely according to one of Luther's catechism hymns). This was to be followed by the reading of the chief parts. After that, a sermon was to be preached on one of the parts. Two pupils were to recite the catechism with the explanations. All children and young people were then to be catechized. The catechization was to be followed by a prayer and the Lord's Prayer, a hymn of praise, and the Benediction. In 1580 the six parts of the catechism were assigned to the six days of the week. Appropriate psalms and hymns were sung, and the parts of the catechism were recited in both the Matins and Vespers services.

Many expositions of the Small Catechism were written between 1530 and 1600. Sermons based on the Small Catechism were also written and published. These expositions and sermons had a strong influence within and beyond Germany during the 16th century and beyond. It is noteworthy that in England, Thomas Cranmer, together with several of his coworkers, prepared *The Bishop's Book* in 1537 with an explanation of the Apostles' Creed and with other articles, all of which reveal a strong dependence on Luther's Catechisms.

A Sermon on Keeping Children in School

In 1530, when the catechisms could not be printed fast enough to keep up with the demand, Luther preached a sermon on keeping children in school. He presented a copy of the sermon to Lazarus Spengler, a syndic⁶³ of the city of Nürnberg, because he believed that this city with its large population and its trade and commerce was a prime target for the devil to get people to "despise the word of God and the schools" and to "turn the children away from the schools to the service of Mammon." In his introductory comments, Luther said Nürnberg had an excellent Christian school, but for that very reason he was concerned that the devil would go to extra lengths to destroy it. Luther hoped that the citizens of Nürnberg, and especially the preachers, would support the educational system the leaders of the city had established. Luther understood that there might be an

occasional idolater, a servant of Mammon [Matt. 6:24], who will take his son out of school and say, "If my son can read and

do arithmetic, that is enough; we now have books in German, etc.”⁶⁴

Luther was concerned that if that were allowed in Nürnberg, people elsewhere might be tempted to say, “Well, if that is what they do at Nürnberg – and they have fine people there too – why should we do any better?”⁶⁵

Following these introductory thoughts, Luther presents his sermon on keeping children in school. His greeting is addressed to “pastors and preachers who truly love Christ,” implying that such people will certainly be concerned about religious education. Be warned, Luther says, that one of the devil’s greatest wiles is that “he deludes and deceives the common people so that they are not willing to keep their children in school or expose them to instruction.”⁶⁶ The devil wants people to think that all that is necessary in life is making a living and getting rich. He does not want children to learn anything or know anything because then at the Last Judgment he will have a “naked, bare defenseless people with whom he can do as he pleases.”⁶⁷ Therefore, Luther says, we pastors need constantly to “advise, exhort, admonish” and even “nag” with all our powers so that the common people are not deceived by the devil. We need to be careful that we do not “go to sleep” and “allow the devil to become god and lord.” If the religious education of young people is neglected “it will be the fault of our own silence and snoring, and we shall have to render full account for it.”⁶⁸ The matter is in our hands, Luther says, because there are some members of the clergy who would just as soon let “all schools, discipline, and teaching go by the board, or themselves even help to destroy them, simply because they cannot have their own way with them as they once did.”⁶⁹

It concerned Luther that the common people seemed indifferent to the matter of maintaining schools, even withdrawing their children from school and encouraging them to be concerned only about “making a living” and “caring for their bellies.” If that were to continue, Luther wonders where future preachers of the Word would come from. Addressing parents he laments,

If you will not raise your child for this office, and the next man will not, and so on, and no fathers or mothers will give their children to our God for this work, what will become of the spiritual office and estate?⁷⁰

God has not given you children and the ability to support them, Luther says, so that you may train them “just to get ahead in the world.” If your child has the ability and the desire to learn, but you stand in the way, know that “you are guilty of the harm that is done when the spiritual estate disappears and neither God nor God’s word remains in the world.”⁷¹ Your children are more rightfully God’s than yours, and he will have what is rightly his. Even if you were a king you should not think you are so good as to not give your son to train him for the spiritual office, even if it cost you all your wealth. A son invested in God’s work is worth more than “any kingdom or empire.” If God has given you a child with ability and talent, and you train him only to look out for his belly, then “see what a pious hypocrite and unproductive weed you are.” When you stand before God at the Last Judgment “you will not be tainted by little drops of sin, but inundated by whole cloudbursts of it.”

Luther did not mean to insist that every boy should be trained to become a pastor, preacher, or teacher. Sons of lords, for example, would be needed in the future to serve as temporal authorities. But Luther was particularly concerned about the sons of common people who had the talent and ability to serve in the spiritual office and yet were not encouraged to do so. The endowments and revenues of foundations and monasteries were available to them. It would be wrong not to take advantage of such assistance. Even boys of lesser ability should be taught to read and write because not only masters of Scripture were needed but also “ordinary pastors who will teach the gospel and the catechism to the young and ignorant, and baptize and administer the sacrament.”

Luther was very concerned about where pastors and teachers would come from in the future. The universities at Erfurt and Leipzig and elsewhere were practically deserted. If nothing was done immediately, within the next three years Luther said, “There will be such a scarcity of men that we shall have to give three or four cities to one pastor and ten villages to one chaplain, if indeed we can get even that many men.”⁷²

In the second part of his sermon Luther deals with the temporal losses that would result if the temporal authorities did not show more concern for the education of the young. Luther says,

As it is the function and honor of the office of preaching to make sinners saints, dead men live, damned men saved, and the devil's children God's children, so it is the function and honor of worldly government to make men out of wild beasts and to prevent men from becoming wild beasts.⁷³

Luther believed that government in German lands was guided by the imperial law of Rome, and the wisdom and peace this government provided was a gift of God. But such a government could not be maintained, Luther says, unless this law remains. "Now who will maintain it? Not fist and weapons; heads and books must do it." Luther believed boys needed to be thoroughly trained for this work of God too. He says,

You would have to be a gross, ungrateful clod, worthy of being numbered among the beasts, if you should see that your son could become a man to help the emperor preserve his empire, sword, and crown; to help the prince rule his principality; to counsel and help cities and lands; to help protect so many men's bodies, wives, children, property, and honor – and yet would not risk enough on it to let him study and come to such a position.⁷⁴

Luther believed people had a debt to God to maintain the civil estate by keeping their children studying and in school. If they had sons who were able to learn, and they were in a position to keep them at it, but did not do so; if they went their way without even asking what might become of government, law, and peace; then they were actually doing all in their power "to oppose worldly authority, like the Turks, indeed, like the devil himself." Would God serve them free of charge with both preaching and worldly government so they could just calmly turn their children away from him?

Do you not think that God will some day pronounce a benediction over your avarice and concern for the belly such as will destroy you both here and hereafter together with your child and all that you have?⁷⁵

Luther was not above using some lesser motivations to get people to support the cause of education. A man receives pure pleasure from having studied, he said. There has never been a better time than now to study because not only is knowledge "so abundant and cheap,"

but because studying will lead to “great wealth and honor.” It can also lead to positions of responsibility and power because in times of peace it is not soldiers who rule the land, but “it is the pen that does it.”

That thought leads Luther to discuss how a good education also prepares a person for the profession of writing. Many consider the business of writing “a hateful thing,” Luther says, “because they do not know, or do not consider, that it is a divine office and work.” In spite of what people think, writing is not easy work. People think that “real work is to ride in armor and suffer heat, cold, dust, thirst, and other discomforts.” The pen is light. How can wielding that be considered work? But, Luther says, ask a preacher whether writing and speaking is work. Or ask a teacher whether writing, teaching and training children is work. They will tell you that in writing, the head and the tongue must work as never before. The whole body and soul have to work at it. A person might even have to endure hardships in order to become a writer. Luther’s own experience was that he had to go from house to house singing for a morsel of bread. But he would not exchange what he experienced “for all the wealth in the world multiplied many times over,” because otherwise he would never have become a theologian and a writer.

Theologians, Luther says, must remain. If they disappear, then “God’s word also disappears, and nothing but heathen remain, indeed, nothing but devils.”⁷⁶ Luther says that if he had to leave the preaching office there would be no other office he would rather hold than that of teacher “for I know that next to that of preaching, this is the best, greatest, and most useful office there is.”⁷⁷ Training other people’s children has to be “one of the supreme virtues on earth.”

Luther concludes by returning to his theme. God gives all earthly blessings each day free of charge, but besides all this he also gives the gospel, baptism, the sacrament, “and the whole treasure of his Son and his Spirit.” Yet people were such ungrateful wretches that they would not give their sons into training for the preservation of these gifts of God. They had everything by God’s grace, yet they showed not the slightest gratitude. Instead they “let God’s kingdom and the salvation of men’s souls go to ruin.” By their failure to have their sons educated they even helped to destroy the souls of men.

By turning their sons from the office of the ministry, by fastening their purses “shut with iron chains,” they were contributing to its destruction so that “Christ’s blood and agony” would be in vain.

Luther offers a final exhortation to the ruling authorities. If the government can draft people for military service in time of war, how much more can it not compel people to keep their children in school.

Here there is a worse war on, a war with the very devil, who is out to secretly sap the strength of the cities and principalities, emptying them of their able persons until he has bored out the pith and left only an empty shell of useless people whom he can manipulate and toy with as he will.⁷⁸

When it came to religious education, first and foremost for Luther was instruction in the catechism, even when sometimes it became a “burden” for him. In a sermon preached on September 10th of the following year, 1531, Luther said:

It is the custom, and the time of the Catechism sermons is at hand. I admonish you to give these eight days to your Lord and permit your household and children to attend, and you yourself may also come and profit by this instruction. No one knows as much as he ought to know. For I myself am constrained to drill it every day. You know that we did not have it under the Papacy. Buy while the market is at the door; some day you will behold the fruit. We would, indeed, rather escape the burden, but we do it for your sakes.⁷⁹

Lutheran Schools

Luther and the other reformers realized that if the Reformation were to be successful, it would be necessary to train the next generation in the truths of the gospel. Therefore the establishing of Lutheran schools became a high priority. Cities such as Nuernberg, Ulm, Augsburg and Vienna had excellent humanistic schools, and Luther and Melanchthon adopted almost entirely the curricula and the educational methods of these schools. The typical humanistic school was divided into three groups of students: 1) the *Tabulisten* (or beginners) who learned the basics of Latin and the basic doctrines of the Church; 2) the *Donatisten* (named after a medieval Latin textbook) who studied Latin at a higher level, often reading sections from the Vulgate; and 3) the *Alexandristen* (also named after a more

advanced Latin textbook) who studied advanced Latin grammar and syntax. The students at all three levels were taught the liturgy and music for special services throughout the church year. They were also required to learn the Psalm tones and the rules of harmony. The study of Rhetoric included reading the edited works of authors such as Cato, Aesop, Plautus, and Terence. Much time was spent studying the Gospels and Epistles. The chief way in which the Lutheran schools differed from the humanistic schools was that they made innovations and adaptations to fit specific needs. One example was the addition of the study of Greek and Hebrew.

The first Lutheran school was founded in Magdeburg by Nicholas Amsdorf in 1524. The next year Luther and Melanchthon established a school in Eisleben. Bugenhagen's church visitations resulted in the establishment of schools, not only in Germany, but even as far away as Denmark and Norway. Eventually Bugenhagen established some forty schools.

The Wittenberg Latin School, founded in 1533, was under the direct supervision of Luther and Melanchthon. As in the humanistic schools, there were three levels of study, all three levels being in the same classroom with the smaller children in front, the second division in the middle, and the older boys in the rear. At the front of the room was a blackboard on which was posted the week's record of misdemeanors. Those whose names appeared would receive the appropriate number of strokes from the teacher's rod.

The school day began at 5:30 a.m. in summer and 6:30 in winter. An opening prayer was followed by the singing of a hymn. All instruction was in Latin and the curriculum was basically that of the humanistic schools, although even more time was spent on religious instruction. After two hours, the students marched to the Town Church for chapel. In the mid-afternoon they also attended a vesper service at the church. Once a week the students were drilled in the *Small Catechism* in both Latin and German. On Saturday mornings the upper division students were instructed in the Gospel for the Sunday service.

Wittenberg also had a school for girls.

The girls were taught to read and write and were given some instruction in music and mathematics. They memorized short prayers, Bible verses, and Psalms and were regularly instructed in the Catechism.⁸⁰

In addition to schools established for the youth, adult lecture courses were given in many of the larger cities. So, under the Lutheran school system, education was provided for people from all walks of life, male and female, young and old. Although the curriculum was similar to that of the humanistic schools, at the heart of all teaching was the gospel. The impact of this excellent school system was soon felt. The enrollment at the University of Wittenberg doubled, and eventually tripled. Well-educated clergy and laypeople resulted in strong congregations everywhere.

Conclusion

As necessary and urgent as it was to establish and maintain Lutheran schools in the 16th Century, so necessary and urgent is it today. We are always only one generation away from losing the gospel. If we fail to put forth our best efforts to establish and maintain Lutheran educational institutions, if we are not willing to do whatever it takes and to spend whatever is necessary to give our children and young people a Christian education, if we let our children and young people decide for themselves what to believe or how to live, then we can be certain that the devil will quickly take over. A smattering of religious knowledge would seem to be hardly enough these days to keep our children strong in the faith. There are too many temptations, too many dangers, too many pitfalls. Add to that the concerted efforts of anti-Christian social engineers who not only seek to remove all evidence of Christianity from our society, but who strive to portray Christianity as ignorant, repressive, and even offensive.⁸¹ Faced with such opposition and persecution, it is the rare young Christian who can remain steadfast unless he or she is firmly grounded in the faith.

Encouraging young people to prepare for full-time service in the church; providing Christian education at every level for the thorough training of future church workers and laypeople; making the financial support of Lutheran schools a high priority; providing whatever assistance is necessary so parents can provide a Christian education for their children; requiring future preachers of the gospel to be well-versed in the biblical languages; insuring that our Lutheran

schools also provide a solid liberal arts education; providing libraries and whatever resources are necessary so high quality education can take place. Is it too expensive? Does it take too much time? Is it too much work? Is it impractical in today's world? It seems clear that Luther wouldn't think so.

Thorough instruction in the *Small Catechism*; memorization of the six chief parts; memorization of Scripture verses and hymns; intensive Bible study; studying the liturgy and the church year. Is it expecting too much? Luther didn't think so. He expected all this and more of students in the Lutheran schools of his day. Should we expect any less today?

Soli Deo Gloria

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Endnotes

¹ In *The Cube and the Cathedral* (2005) George Weigel argues persuasively that Europe's jettisoning of the God of the Bible and its refusal to acknowledge the role of Christianity in the history of Europe, have resulted in a secularism that is leading to its downfall. He also demonstrates that the United States is rapidly following suit.

² At the Fifth National Free Conference in 2003, Dr. Kurt Marquardt said, "It is not in the Synodical interest to force the seminaries to be, as they now are, basically self-supporting, without Synodical subsidy. Seminaries deprived of the institutional support of their churches may in the end be tempted also to thumb their noses at their churches' doctrine, and to become independent theologically as well as institutionally."

³ A recent report from Luther Preparatory School (WELS) says, "The decreasing level of synodical funding for its ministerial education schools has made it necessary for LPS to move in the direction of establishing a development office." The same situation confronts other ministerial education institutions in the WELS.

⁴ LCMS pastor William P. Terjesen wrote some years ago, "One of the weaknesses of Lutheranism in these closing days of the 20th century is that the teaching, learning, and using of the *Small Catechism* has been de-emphasized since the 1960s. The same modern theories of education that have destroyed our public schools have also taken their toll in the church. Memorization has been very unpopular in the past few decades as we have experimented with 'dynamic, meaningful curricula.' The result? Almost no one under the age of 50 can recite the Catechism from memory, and children, who never have to memorize anything in public school, are nearly incapable of it when they get to confirmation class. And this is tragic, since Luther once said that no one should be admitted to Holy Communion who cannot recite the Catechism satisfactorily."

(<http://www.ourredeemerlcms.org/the%20only%20catechism.pdf>)

⁵ J. T. Mueller in his booklet *In Commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the Publication of Luther's Small Catechism* points out why Luther was the logical man to write the Catechism: 1) he wrote excellent Catechism sermons; 2) he was a faithful Bible student; 3) he knew which Bible truths were fundamental; 4) he was a man of and for the people; 5) he loved children; 6) he was a master of languages; 7) he was not of the world but in close contact with it.

⁶ Information for this section is drawn from Willard Dow Allbeck's *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*.

⁷ Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 347.

⁸ Lehmann, Helmut T., editor. 1959. *Luther's Works: An American Edition, Volume 51*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia: p. 144.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 163.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 165.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 183.

¹² John Dillenberger, *Martin Luther, Selections from his Writings*, Doubleday, New York, NY. 1961, p. 475.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 476.

¹⁴ Information for this section is drawn from Walther Brandt's introductory comments to Luther's treatise.

¹⁵ In Mansfeld the young Luther had attended the Ratsschule (the city school) that stood next door to St. Georgskirche (St. George's Church). In addition to the Trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric), Luther learned prayers for before and after meals, the confession of sins, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Hail Mary, and the liturgy, together with all the festivals and saints' days..

¹⁶ Luther wanted all German state-run schools to have a distinctly Christian character. His views of course were influenced by his medieval idea of the Christian state.

¹⁷ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 40.

¹⁸ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 42.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 43.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 44.

²¹ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 44.

²² *Ibid.* p. 48.

²³ *Ibid.* p. 49.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 50.

²⁵ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 52.

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 57.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 60.

²⁸ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 61.

²⁹ Luther spoke from experience. At the Ratsschule in Mansfeld, as elsewhere at the time, students were flogged for lapsing into German, for failing to decline or conjugate correctly, for using profanity or for general misbehavior. The lowest student in the class at the end of a recitation period had an *asinus* (wooden donkey) hung around his neck. Every time a student became an *asinus*, a record was made on the slate that added to the total of future whippings. Luther claimed to have experienced his share of floggings.

³⁰ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 63.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 65.

³² *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 68.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 69.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 70.

³⁵ No doubt that is why Luther wrote a hymn for each of the six chief parts of the catechism: 1) The Ten Commandments – “That Man a Godly Life Might Live;” 2) The Creed – “We All Believe in One True God;” 3) The Lord’s Prayer – “Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above;” 4) Holy Baptism – “To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord;” 5) The Office of the Keys and Confession – “From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee;” and 6) The Sacrament of the Altar – “O Lord, We Praise Thee.”

³⁶ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 398.

³⁷ Other men were aware of the emphasis Luther was placing on religious education and agreed that there was a great need for it. During this decade about thirty catechisms appeared in print.

³⁸ Bente, F. 1965. *Historical Introduction to the Book of Concord*. Concordia: St. Louis: p. 69.

³⁹ Over the years this writer has had to work with no less than five different versions of the *Small Catechism*!

⁴⁰ Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 348.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 349.

⁴² Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 379.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 381.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 382.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 383.

⁴⁶ *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

⁴⁷ *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*

⁴⁸ *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

⁴⁹ Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 386.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 390.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 394.

⁵² Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 395.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 396.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 401.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 401.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 459.

⁵⁷ Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p.409.

⁵⁸ It is no different today. Ben Shapiro in his recently published book (2005) entitled *Porn Generation*, claims that pornography has become such a part of normal life in 21st-century America that many teens and twenty-somethings have had no more important influence. He claims that “moral relativism reigns on college campuses, oversexed narcissism rules the airwaves, and purity is the new sin.”

⁵⁹ Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis: p. 430.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 476.

⁶¹ Bente, F. 1965. *Historical Introduction to the Book of Concord*. Concordia: St. Louis: p. 81.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 81.

⁶³ One appointed to represent a city or university or corporation in business transactions.

⁶⁴ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1529-1546*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 123.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 124.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 125.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* p. 125.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 126.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* p. 127.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 131.

⁷¹ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 130.

⁷² *Ibid.* p. 142.

⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 145.

⁷⁴ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 149.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* p. 151.

⁷⁶ *Selected Writings of Martin Luther 1523-1526*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967: p. 159.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 161.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p.165.

⁷⁹ Bente, F. 1965. *Historical Introduction to the Book of Concord*. Concordia: St. Louis: p. 69.

⁸⁰ E. G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times*, Concordia Publishing House: St. Louis: p. 681.

⁸¹ Cf. David Limbaugh, *Persecution*, Regnery Publishing, Inc.: Washington, DC: 2003.

Luther, Lutherans, and Liberal Arts Education

Paul Lehninger

The relationship between the Christian church and the secular academy has been by turns fruitful, challenging, and problematic since the earliest years of the Christian church. The question asked by Tertullian (c.160—c.230 A.D.), “What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” has been vexing Christian teachers from Tertullian’s day until the present. At times, the answer has been that of Tertullian; in short, Athens has almost nothing to do with Jerusalem:

when the apostle would restrain us, he expressly names philosophy as that which he would have us be on our guard against. Writing to the Colossians, he says, “See that no one beguile you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and contrary to the wisdom of the Holy Ghost.” He had been at Athens, and had in his interviews (with philosophers) become acquainted with that human wisdom which pretends to know the truth, whilst it only corrupts it, and is itself divided into its own manifold heresies, by the variety of its mutually repugnant sects. What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? what between heretics and Christians? ... Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition! We want no curious disputation after possessing Christ Jesus, no inquisition after enjoying the gospel! With our faith, we desire no further belief. For this is our palmary faith, that there is nothing which we ought to believe besides.¹

Many Christians today, who see the post-Enlightenment university as a bastion of rationalism and scientific method, with no room for the supernatural or the intervention of a God who reveals himself, would agree. On the other hand, some Christians long ago cozied up to the academy and today are so entangled in its embrace that they cannot distinguish between the Christian church and their own razed-and-rebuilt pseudo-Jerusalem.

But these are not the only two options. The Christian church has

not always walled itself off against the intrusion of all extra-biblical learning, nor has it always surrendered to be occupied and ravished by marauding bands of Plotinian Neo-Platonists, Latin Averroists, Marxists, Freudians, and Neo-Darwinians. At times in her history, with the faith revealed by the Triune God in the Scriptures as her first principle, she has sought further understanding through a deep and detailed exploration of the world around her, and as a result has enriched both the Church and the Academy. The contribution made by the Lutheran church to this exploration has been valuable and is worth revisiting.

Martin Luther's appreciation of the liberal arts was not produced in a vacuum. The Greek fathers "spoiled the Egyptians" and borrowed—and redefined—technical terminology from the ancient philosophers in formulating the central doctrines of the Christian faith. Augustine rescued the pagan study of history by recasting it in the mold of the Christian typological scheme of salvation history, and gave new value to classical education by redirecting it to a more noble end: the study and interpretation of Scripture.² In addition, because of the breadth of his influence it is through Augustine that the medieval world inherited the already traditional notion that Christ, as the eternal *Logos* of the Father, is the perfection of the *Logos* of Greek philosophy. Christ is the Word of God, by whom and for whom all things were made, and thus he is the key to unlocking the meaning of the whole created order.³ Furthermore, pursuing the meaning of the created order is worthwhile: Augustine's *credo ut intelligam* became Anselm's *fides quaerens intellectum*, touchstones for the entire endeavor of medieval theology.

The relationship between the visible, created order and the invisible God is developed in detail by Hugh of St. Victor (1096-1141 A.D.). In his *De tribus diebus* he presents the reader with a meditation on created nature that is also an interpretation of Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that have been made..." This text is Hugh's underlying principle for his subsequent meditation on the visible things of creation, through which he arrives at a fully instructed perception of the invisible things of the Creator.⁴

Hugh develops these ideas further in *De sacramentis christianae*

fidei. Despite the title, the book is what is usually considered a *Summa*. After a brief discourse on the Scriptures and revelation, Hugh lingers on the six days of creation. Here he continues in the patristic tradition of lengthy commentaries on the hexaemeron. From the medieval perspective, those things that can be known of God from his creation, the *vestigia Dei*, are all contained as in a nutshell in these six days. Hence the investigation of these *vestigia* is worthwhile, because it leads to a more profound understanding and appreciation of revealed truth; indeed, when properly undertaken and appropriately directed, it always points back to God.

Hugh held that all knowledge is useful. He recommended that his students learn everything, and afterward they would see that nothing was useless. He especially makes this point in his *Didascalicon*, in which he makes his contribution to the didactic literature of the Latin West, which begins with Augustine and continues through Boethius, Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville, Bede, Alcuin, Rhabanus Maurus, etc.⁵ “Philosophy is the art of arts and the discipline of disciplines,” says Hugh, quoting either—or both—Cassiodorus or Isidore, and then continues, “that, namely toward which all arts and disciplines are oriented.”⁶ Lest the Christian reader be confused as to the role of God and his revelation in this, Hugh then divides philosophy into four parts: theoretical (speculative), practical (active, ethical, or moral), mechanical (concerned with the works of human labor), and logical (linguistic). Theoretical philosophy can be divided further into theology, mathematics, and physics; theology retains its place at the apex and is the goal toward which all other learning is directed.⁷ What role, then, is played by what are commonly understood to be the liberal arts? Hugh answers:

It is in the seven liberal arts, however, that the foundation of all learning is to be found. Before all others these ought to be had at hand, because without them the philosophical discipline does not and cannot explain and define anything. These, indeed, so hang together and so depend upon one another in their ideas that if only one of the arts be lacking, all the rest cannot make a man into a philosopher. Therefore, those persons seem to me to be in error who, not appreciating the coherence among the arts, select certain of them for study, and, leaving the rest untouched, think they can become perfect in these alone.⁸

While Hugh masterfully weaves philosophy and the arts and their various divisions into a fabric that includes concepts foreign to today's reader, such as the number of the soul and numerical symbolism in general, nevertheless he makes the strongest case for the worth of all study in all vocations, for the liberal arts as the key that unlocks all human learning, and for theology—in this case, meditation and contemplation of God—as the end and unifying principle of all study. Throughout the *Didascalicon* he takes pains to demonstrate how each discipline he takes under consideration relates to the others and ultimately to theology. In Hugh's scheme, the entire created order is a complex yet unified whole; the pieces fit.

In addition, Hugh may have had a profound, though mostly indirect, effect on Martin Luther. Eileen Sweeney argues that in Hugh, the tension between Bernard's emphasis on faith (Scripture study as *lectio*) and Abelard's emphasis on reason (Scripture study as *disputatio*) is to some extent resolved. According to Sweeney, "Hugh accomplishes this rapprochement between faith and reason, narrative and dialectic, by recognizing, on the one hand, that faith as well as doubt makes inquiry possible and, on the other hand, that dialectical inquiry has an intrinsically narrative structure."⁹ Sweeney proposes that this narrative character of inquiry was retained, though modified, in the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.¹⁰ And, of course, Martin Luther began his theological career by lecturing on the *Sentences*.

Before the middle ages are left behind for Luther, it is worth noting another possible influence on Luther's appreciation of the liberal arts. According to Luther, "*Bonaventura...est inter scholasticos doctores optimus* (Among the scholastic doctors, Bonaventure is the best),"¹¹ perhaps because this mystic and scholastic so skillfully harmonized faith and reason, while always insisting that reason was the handmaid of faith, and not vice versa.¹² Daniel Clendenin supports this view: "Bonaventure's life is a reminder how the scholarly life of the mind can be a sacred calling. In his work he emphasized that the created world is a rational world open to intellectual inquiry by people created in God's image. Reason and knowledge are divine gifts. He reminds us that one of the ways we fulfill the greatest commandment to love God is by loving him 'with all of your mind' (Mark 12:30)."¹³

In *Itinerarium mentis in Deo* he leads the reader on the path to pure contemplation of God. The road to such contemplation will involve reading, speculation, investigation, observation, work, knowledge, understanding, endeavor, and reflection—in other words, skillful, informed use of all the arts. But he reminds the reader:

First, therefore, I invite the reader
to the groans of prayer through Christ crucified,
through whose blood we are cleansed from the filth of vice—
so that he not believe
that reading is sufficient without unction,
speculation without devotion,
investigation without wonder,
observation without joy,
work without piety,
knowledge without love,
understanding without humility,
endeavor without divine grace,
reflection as in a mirror without divinely inspired wisdom.¹⁴

In other words, the use of the arts can achieve its purpose only with the proper motivation and guidance, and must be directed to the proper end.

The continuation of this passage warns the reader that the glory of the beatific vision can be pursued only through a theology of the cross:

To those, therefore, predisposed by divine grace,
the humble and the pious,
the contrite and the devout,
those anointed with the *oil of gladness*,
the lovers of divine wisdom, and
those inflamed with a desire for it,
to those wishing to give themselves
to glorifying, wondering at and even savoring God,
I propose the following considerations,
suggesting that the mirror presented by the external world
is of little or no value
unless the mirror of our soul

has been cleaned and polished.
 Therefore, man of God,
 first exercise yourself in remorse of conscience
 before you raise your eyes
 to the rays of Wisdom reflected in its mirrors,
 lest perhaps from gazing upon these rays
 you fall into a deeper pit of darkness.

The true theologian, then, is one who reaches God through cross, trials, and repentance; here Bonaventure and Luther have much in common. Only with this necessary preparation is the theologian equipped to begin and carry on his journey; only in this way will the theologian recognize that “the universe is a ladder by which we can ascend into God.”¹⁵ In this universe, some created things are vestiges (*vestigia Dei*), others are images; and in order to contemplate God, we must “pass through his vestiges, which are material, temporal, and outside us.”¹⁶ From there we move on to the contemplation of our soul, and then to God himself, but this journey begins with what can be learned from the created order, and so the use of the liberal arts is indispensable.

Martin Luther was the product of a late-medieval nominalist education, which some consider a degeneration of scholasticism. He was also acquainted with, and valued, mystical writings such as the *Theologia Germanica*. He was as brilliant, and as learned, as the humanists of his era, including his correspondent, Erasmus. But more than anything, Luther was grounded in Holy Scripture, thoroughly versed in the Christian tradition, and appreciative of the liberal arts. It could just as well be Hugh or Bonaventure who said, “Whoever is to teach others, especially out of the Holy Scriptures, and rightly to understand this book, must first have observed and learned to know the world.”¹⁷ The ferment of the Reformation had made him almost bubbly with optimism as to the future of the learning enterprise: “We are at the dawn of a new era, for we are beginning to recover the knowledge of the external world that we had lost since the fall of Adam.... We already recognize in the most delicate flower the wonders of divine goodness and the omnipotence of God.”¹⁸ But the key to understanding the external world was knowledge of the liberal arts. Therefore, Luther urges, “You parents cannot prepare a more dependable treasure for your children than an education in

the liberal arts. House and home burn down and disappear, but an education is easy to carry off.”¹⁹

This encouragement was necessary in early post-Reformation Germany. Although various kinds of schools existed, the spirit of materialism, combined with the rapid expansion of trade and commerce during the sixteenth century, made parents more inclined to encourage their children to earn a living and not waste time getting an education. Moreover, the abandonment of the cloisters and monasteries, combined with the confiscation of their property and endowments by the civil authorities, resulted in the collapse of the monastic schools. Emphasis on the spiritual priesthood of all believers led some to conclude that preparation for the public ministry did not require formal education, and many others were afraid of jeopardizing their children’s salvation by sending them to schools where they would be taught the erroneous doctrines and practices of the church of Rome.²⁰ Luther disagreed. In his *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*²¹ and in *A Sermon on Keeping Children in School*²² he first emphasized the value of investing in education for the general populace, and then encouraged parents to make use of the schools that had been established.

Luther’s arguments for the establishment of schools are convincing. First, if the cause is just, then the many obstacles that were being experienced and the objections that were being made against establishing schools must be the work of the devil, and it is always right to fight against the devil.²³ Second, Luther rejoices that Germany has been blessed with an unprecedented wealth of men instructed in languages and all the arts who are ready to instruct the young; therefore, we should not accept the grace of God in vain and neglect the time of salvation (2 Cor. 6:1-2).²⁴ Third, God commands parents to instruct their children (Psalm 78), and even nature itself demonstrates that animals do not neglect their young. Also, even the heathen care for their children, so how much more should Christians maintain and use schools to educate their offspring.²⁵

From these arguments, Luther moves on to an examination of what the curriculum at such schools should include. He begins with a historical example, and praises the ancient Romans for their training young men so they would be “well versed in Latin, Greek,

and all the arts,” a system that produced “intelligent, wise, and competent men, so skilled in every art and rich in experience...as a result their country prospered; they had capable and trained men for every position.”²⁶ He anticipates that his critics will question the practical value of such an education, but turns the criticism on them and shames them for importing all sorts of foreign luxuries, while despising the greater “import” of classical languages and arts, which are profitable both for the understanding of Scripture and the conducting of temporal government. But even apart from their practical value, the study of the languages and arts is worthwhile: “Truly, if there were no other benefit connected with the languages, this should be enough to delight and inspire us, namely, that they are so fine and noble a gift of God, with which he is now so richly visiting and blessing us Germans above all other lands.”²⁷ The study of the liberal arts *is* practical, but they are not studied merely for their practical value.

As to the criticism that highly educated men were using their learning to pervert the interpretation of Scripture, Luther responds that the misuse of a good tool does not disqualify the tool from being used properly. When asked whether the tools of the arts and nature are useful to theology, he replied, “One knife cuts better than another. So good tools—for example, languages and the arts—can contribute to clearer teaching. Just as many, like Erasmus, are equipped with languages and the arts and nevertheless make damaging mistakes, so the same thing happens with weapons, most of which are made for slaughter. A thing must be distinguished from its misuse.”²⁸ He goes on to explain that the difference lies in the use of reason. Reason under the control of the devil perverts the Scriptures, while reason under the control of the Holy Spirit is an instrument that aids in the proper interpretation of Scripture. For the Christian under the influence of the Holy Spirit languages and the arts are blessings that contribute to the building up of the kingdom of God.

Of all the arts Luther repeatedly emphasizes the importance of studying the languages. In a letter to Eoban Hess he writes:

I am persuaded that without knowledge of literature pure theology cannot at all endure, just as heretofore, when letters have inclined and lain prostrate, theology, too, has wretchedly fallen and lain prostrate; nay, I see that there has never been a great revelation of the Word of God unless He has first prepared

the way by the rise and prosperity of languages and letters, as though they were John the Baptists. There is, indeed, nothing that I have less wished to see done against our young people than that they should omit to study poetry and rhetoric. Certainly it is my desire that there shall be as many poets and rhetoricians as possible, because I see that by these studies, as by no other means, people are wonderfully fitted for the grasping of sacred truth and for handling it skillfully and happily.²⁹

The study of the languages (especially Latin, Greek, and Hebrew) is necessary if the Church is not to lose the gospel. He scolds his contemporaries for holding the faith up to ridicule because their adversaries, well trained in the languages, could point out errors the reformers made in their interpretation of Scripture due to ignorance of the languages. Piety and/or training in dialectic were not sufficient. One who claimed to be a teacher of the Word must be able to read it in the original languages in order to interpret it correctly: “Now there must always be such prophets in the Christian church who can dig into Scripture, expound it, and carry on disputations. A saintly life and right doctrine are not enough. Hence, languages are absolutely and altogether necessary in the Christian church. . . .”³⁰ It is significant that in the treatise “On the Adoration of the Sacrament” Luther is unable to restrain himself from adding an encouragement—which appears to have little to do with the subject of the treatise—that preachers and gifted boys be taught the biblical languages so they can avoid misinterpreting the Scriptures.³¹

As important as the languages are, Luther does not neglect the rest of the arts. He values both dialectic and rhetoric, emphasizing that although each plays a specific role, the relationship between the two is complementary, and he cites Titus 1 for support.³² Writing before he began his family, he conjectures that if he had children, he would want them to study “not only languages and history, but also singing and music,³³ together with the whole of mathematics.”³⁴ In true classical liberal arts fashion, he supports this idea with a reference to the ancient Greeks, whose children “grew up to be people of wondrous ability, subsequently fit for everything.”³⁵

Luther gives his opinion as to how long students should study each day, and shows concern that their studies not occupy so much time that they cannot work at home and learn a trade. He has in mind

a basic primary education for the general populace; nevertheless, those who are more skilled should have the opportunity to further their education, or, perhaps, dedicate their whole lives to study. It is at least worth noting that to illustrate this point he gives the examples of three women, SS. Agnes, Agatha, and Lucy.³⁶

For such an education, no expense is to be spared in providing good libraries. These libraries will not only ensure that spiritual and temporal leaders have access to the books they need, but will also serve to preserve the most important books. It is essential that these books not be lost, “together with the arts and languages which we now have by the grace of God.”³⁷ These books would include the Holy Scriptures in the original languages and in translation, commentaries (especially the most ancient), classical poets and orators (for help in learning the languages), and “After that would come books on the liberal arts and all the other arts.” Especially important would be books on history.³⁸

In his *Sermon on Keeping Children in School*, Luther repeats many of the same points he made in his letter *To the Councilmen*. In addition, in this treatise he especially emphasizes the necessity of an educated populace in order that preaching, governing, and administering justice can be carried out in the German lands, “for if the Scriptures and learning disappear, what will remain of the German lands but a disorderly and wild crowd of Tartars or Turks, indeed, a pigsty and mob of wild beasts?”³⁹ It is the duty of parents and pastors—and here Luther the pastor is practicing what he preaches—to encourage children, in this case their sons, to be educated so that the public ministry of the Word and Sacrament and the public ministry of the Word do not suffer from a lack of public ministers trained for these offices.⁴⁰ Luther says to parents, “... you may rejoice and be glad from the heart if you find that you have been chosen by God to devote your means and labor to raising a son who will be a good Christian pastor, preacher, or schoolmaster.”⁴¹ Although not all boys should be trained for the office of the ministry, nevertheless all boys should be taught to read, write, and understand Latin, because even if they learn a trade or craft afterward, at least there would be a reserve of men educated in Latin who could train for the ministry if the need should arise.⁴²

Education in languages and the arts is necessary not only for future pastors and teachers, but also for those who serve in government. If lawful rule is to be maintained in Germany, “not fists and weapons; heads and books must do it. Men must learn and know the law and wisdom of our worldly government... Thus the jurists and scholars in this worldly kingdom are those who preserve this law, and thereby maintain the worldly kingdom.”⁴³ To those who argued that a liberal arts education was of no use for those who pursue a career in business, Luther takes a different tack; whether it is of direct use for businessmen or not, it is necessary for those whose office permits business to prosper, “For if preaching and the law should fail, the businessman will not be a businessman for long.”⁴⁴ And of course, the need in society for educated men trained “in medicine and the other liberal arts” was indisputable, so there must be schools that offer an education in the liberal arts for training them: “Where are the preachers, jurists, and physicians to come from, if grammar and other rhetorical arts are not taught? For such teaching is the spring from which they all must flow.”⁴⁵ In answer to the implicit question of what the ultimate end of all this training is, Luther, using the example of physicians, says, “... he gave skill to men that he might be glorified in his marvelous works!” For Luther, as for Bonaventure, Hugh of St. Victor, and Augustine, the purpose of a liberal arts education is to glorify God through knowledge of his works.

What emphases in Luther, then, contribute to an understanding of what should characterize a Lutheran liberal arts education?⁴⁶ The Lutheran principle of holding truths in tension, sometimes called the Lutheran principle of paradox, certainly applies. Faith and reason are not antithetical; although reason must always be subservient to faith, each plays its proper role, and each is indispensable. Languages and the arts are needed in order to read, understand, interpret, and proclaim the Scriptures, and faith must always direct the proper use of these arts. Since the Christian is *simul iustus et peccator* (another tension), the question must always be asked whether reason is being applied properly to the study of the arts.

The Christian also lives, paradoxically, in two kingdoms. Here the Christian enjoys the best of both worlds. While using the arts for

the benefit of the Church, the Christian does not have to “convert” or “Christianize” them, but can use them selectively and judiciously, even in their “unbaptized” state, recognizing the sacred and the secular “as two realms of a single reality, that is God’s creation.”⁴⁷ Moreover, an education in the liberal arts is of benefit to both kingdoms. A state-supported education can provide valuable training for those who will serve in the Church, and a church-sponsored education produces citizens equipped for service in the community and the nation.

A Lutheran liberal arts education will also take into account Luther’s affirmation of the goodness of God’s creation.⁴⁸ The arts open a door to the entire created universe, which is waiting to be explored. Although the created order has been radically disfigured because of the effects of sin, God’s goodness and beauty still shine through it. When reason, properly directed, undertakes this exploration of the created order, it begins a task that results in glorifying God. Educators and students stand at the threshold of an adventure, and can undertake the educational enterprise with a spirit of optimism.

Luther is critical of those who reject formal education and pursue a trade for purely materialistic reasons.⁴⁹ But it is the motive, not the pursuit of a profession or trade, that he criticizes. Luther’s understanding of the value of every honorable vocation must be central to a truly Lutheran liberal arts education.⁵⁰ Luther certainly honors the preaching office, the pastoral ministry, above all others. But because he recognizes the vital importance of education, the office of teaching runs a very close second. “If I could leave the preaching office and my other duties, or had to do so, there is no other office I would rather have than that of schoolmaster or teacher of boys; for I know that next to that of preaching, this is the best, greatest, and most useful office there is.”⁵¹ Although teacher training is often classified as a professional program and not part of a true liberal arts curriculum, a Lutheran college will certainly set as a priority training teachers for the Church and for society at large.

In addition, students who are training to be teachers will profit greatly from a thorough grounding in the liberal arts; later, this will be of incalculable benefit to their students, also.⁵² The high

value given to all vocations will be reflected in mutual respect among those teaching in various disciplines, in encouraging students to pursue excellence no matter what program they are studying, and in instilling in students an attitude of respect for people in all callings in life. After all, the liberal arts are not the exclusive possession of those who possess a specific kind of education and a particular degree. The created order is open to exploration and discovery by all people in all walks of life, and this exploration is beneficial to them no matter what their vocation(s) may be.

Luther's concern that education be made available to children for their formation as responsible citizens also raises the issue of community. A Lutheran approach to a liberal arts education will not regard education as a commodity or a bargaining chip for self-advancement, but as a means of greater service to one's neighbor. A liberal education too often liberates students from the personal attachments that nurtured them and turns them into learned cosmopolitans, citizens of the world. D. G. Hart expresses this concern: "I am haunted by the potential narrowness of a liberal education, since it tempts us to look at students and ourselves as merely minds without bodies, that is, without reference to the families and communities in which we learned to talk, treat others politely, endure eccentric neighbors, root for football teams, and fall in love."⁵³ Christians are little Christs who see Christ in their neighbor, and use their talents, gifts, achievements, and possessions to serve others and to glorify God. A Lutheran liberal arts education will never neglect the church, the home, and the community for the sake of the career, the research project, and the salary schedule.

If Luther's recommendations are to be taken seriously, a Lutheran liberal arts college must affirm a commitment both to Lutheran identity—and confidence in that identity—and to the value of the liberal arts as first principles. It is well known that many denominationally-affiliated colleges and universities in the United States gradually allowed their relationship to church bodies to erode, presumably in the interest of professionalism, higher scientific standards, and a European model of academic freedom, with the result that they ceased to be Christian in any real sense. As Mark Noll puts it, "... the religion of America's historic Christian

colleges and universities has undergone slow evisceration over the course of the twentieth century because the piety in these institutions was intellectually shallow, their ecclesiology was self-destructively low-church, and their administrators all too often acted with craven short-sightedness.⁵⁴ Roman Catholic and Lutheran colleges and universities were also affected by this crisis of identity.⁵⁵ Nor can commitment to the value of the liberal arts be taken for granted. The study of the traditional liberal arts is considered irrelevant, or even detrimental, to the pursuit of contemporary higher education, and those who choose to study the liberal arts have become a marginalized minority group. In addition, many colleges have taken a utilitarian turn that emphasizes a career-oriented practical course of study.⁵⁶

In the face of these challenges, how can a college committed to both Lutheran identity and a curriculum that emphasizes the liberal arts respond? First, a curriculum that emphasizes the liberal arts is tailor-made to remedy the deficiencies of today's students and equip them with the tools they need to read, reason, and communicate effectively. As most educators have noted, many students today cannot adequately define a term, make proper distinctions, or present an argument in a satisfactory manner. They have difficulty making connections between concepts and between various disciplines. Study of the liberal arts trains students in habits of thinking and communicating that enable them to excel as they explore both the breadth and the depth of various academic disciplines. Herve de la Tour reminds us that in the past the classroom was not considered an assembly line that fitted students with the chunks of information they needed; rather, "The medieval classroom was viewed as a workshop where the students were apprentices learning to craft a work of the mind (e.g. composition in English). These tools, once acquired, enabled one to tackle any subject later on."⁵⁷

The contemporary secular university frequently is historically unprepared, and philosophically unwilling, to carry out this task. While some universities continue to rally around the post-Enlightenment standard of liberal, scientific, objectivist, progressive secularism, which has little use for religion as a component of the curriculum or of the conversation in general, this position began to

be contested during the last third of the twentieth century. Sadly, it has been replaced by a model that, while more open to so-called spirituality, calls into doubt the ability of language to communicate propositional truth at all. For example, deconstructionist theory claims that language reflects much more the human person's perceptions of his or her experience than it does the reality of the world in which the person lives.⁵⁸ The ultimate purpose for which the tools of the liberal arts are employed as part of a Lutheran education is the understanding and effective communication of words—God's Word—but both modernism and post-modernism subvert this goal. Modernism's denial of the supernatural attempts to use scientific methodology to read behind the text and find the "real" truth, while the subjectivity of post-modernism leaves the text open to many interpretations and many truths, dependent on the perspective of the reader. The time is ripe for reformation at the college level.⁵⁹ Disciplined training in the liberal arts equips students to unmask both these errors and interpret texts, especially the Text, responsibly.

This is all the more urgent because "the faith...is embedded in language."⁶⁰ Not only the text of Scripture, but the ecumenical creeds, the Lutheran confessions, and the great chorales of the Lutheran church are written in language that *makes sense* and that communicates ultimate religious truth. Therefore, they call for readers and worshipers who, according to their capacity, are able to understand them. In the contemporary church, the area that perhaps suffers most from post-modern language malaise is that of worship. Take, for example, that all-time (since 1987) favorite praise song, "Shine, Jesus, Shine."⁶¹ Jesus, the Father ("Fill this land with the Father's glory"), and the Spirit ("Blaze, Spirit, blaze!") are mentioned in the refrain—so far, trinitarian theology. But then comes the vexing, "Flow, river, flow." The problem is not that the singer is unable to supply a meaning for the term "river;" e.g. the river of God's grace, the river of God's mercy, or perhaps the Word, the truth, the blood (all are mentioned in various stanzas). The problem is that different singers can supply different meanings, and therefore a hymn, which is used in corporate worship, will mean different things to different members of the body. The body is no longer united in praise. The *uni-verse* is shattered. The pieces don't fit. Moreover, because of the

structure of the music and the lyrics, “the river” becomes a pesky candidate for a fourth member of the Trinity.

Some may argue that what goes on in chapel has little to do with affirming the importance of a Lutheran liberal arts curriculum, but “orthodoxy” can mean both “right doctrine” and “right praise”: *lex orandi lex credendi est* works both ways. As Alan G. Padgett writes, “First-class hymns are also first-class theology. The best liturgy has always been grounded in and expressed the best theology.”⁶² To expose students to illogical, disorganized, stream-of-consciousness chapel addresses that are not christocentric and that fail to distinguish between law and gospel, preceded and followed by vague, me-centered praise songs, all capped off with a rambling *ex corde* prayer and an “original” benediction, undermines whatever laudable efforts are being made in the classroom to encourage students to think and express themselves cogently about their Christian faith and the world they live in.⁶³ Alleged cultural relevance must not be allowed to trump a clear exposition and presentation of the truth. As Robert Louis Wilken writes:

For too long Christianity has relinquished its role as teacher to society. Instead of inspiring the culture, it capitulates to the ethos of the world. The Church must rediscover her self, learn to savor her speech, delight in telling her stories, and confidently pass on what she has received. Only then can she draw people away from the coarse and superficial culture surrounding us into the abundance of life in Christ. “Walk about Zion,” sings the psalmist, “go round about her, number her towers, consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels; that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God for ever and ever.”⁶⁴

Martin Luther certainly suffered from bouts of *Anfechtung*, but overall he radiated a spirit of confidence. Some outside the Lutheran tradition encourage Lutherans to have the same confidence in their intellectual heritage: “The Lutheran tradition possesses some of the most potent theological sources for sustaining the life of the mind that one could imagine. It encourages a dialogue between the Christian faith and the world of ideas, fosters intellectual humility, engenders a healthy suspicion of absolutes, and helps create a conversation in which all of the conversation partners are taken seriously.”⁶⁵ Lutherans need to recapture this spirit of confidence regarding the

worth of their identity and of the Lutheran ethos, and of the critical role they play in the reformation of contemporary academic life.

This spirit must also be reflected in the confidence with which Lutheran education engages the world. The Lutheran ethos is infused with a spirit of freedom, not the ersatz contemporary notion of personal liberation from all external constraint, but a freedom born from the gospel message of forgiveness. Having been freed from sin, we are free to serve God and free—and eager—to investigate every corner of the universe, the drama of human history, the depths of the human mind, emotion, and will, and the revelation of God himself. We can do so with the confidence of Luther and Augustine, that all truth is God's truth. Since the Lutheran spirit is dialectical and open, it is "analogous to the wonder from which all understanding proceeds, and humanly akin to the academic freedom cherished by scholars. It complements the nature of wisdom: the capacity to be open without being indecisive; decisive, but not closed minded. And it encourages the spirit of engagement essential to the church and higher education alike, to come to terms with the legions of cultural spirits."⁶⁶ This gives Lutheran Christian scholars confidence in carrying out their research. When confronted with two theories that appear to be equally valid within the parameters of their discipline, they are free to accept the theory that best harmonizes with the Christian faith—and then they are free to support that theory not based on faith claims, but on argumentation appropriate for their discipline. They can do so because they neither surrender human reason to a static fideism nor abandon the Christian faith to a hegemonic human wisdom, recognizing that "God's truth taxes the human reason highly; but it is not at the expense of human reason. Anyone who has thought so has been a menace in the annals of religion and a neophyte in the laboratories of science."⁶⁷

Most important, a Lutheran Christian approach to a liberal arts education will emphasize that this world makes sense, the pieces fit, a deep meaning underlies all we study, because Christ is the grammar of the universe. All things were made "by him and for him...and in him all things hold together" (Col. 1:16-17). All things are reconciled to God through him (Col. 1:20), so not only are the liberal arts tools we use to understand a world that makes sense, but when we use

these tools, we can expect to find something good. With Christ at the center, we are equipped, and confident, to do theology and all academic work from the inside out (faith seeking reason), rather than from the outside in (reason as the critic of faith). “Wisdom’s highest, noblest treasure, Jesus, lies concealed in Thee... .”⁶⁸ Therefore, the more we make skillful and Spirit-guided use of the tools of the liberal arts to study what Christ made, the more we discover about Christ; and the closer we grow to Christ in faith, the better equipped we will be to understand his creation. This perspective transforms our passage through the fallen world around us into a journey full of potential, an environment alive with reminders (*vestigia*) of the presence of God, a reflection of the full reality that will be heaven. This is an adventure worth setting out on! The unicorn got it right in the last of the *Chronicles of Narnia*: “I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. The reason why we loved the old Narnia is that it sometimes looked a little like this....Come further up, come further in!”⁶⁹

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- ⁵ Jerome Taylor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 3.
- ⁶ *Didascalicon* 2, 1, in Taylor, 61.
- ⁷ *Didascalicon* 2, 1, in Taylor, 62.
- ⁸ *Didascalicon* 3,3, in Taylor, 87.
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- ¹⁰ Sweeney, 33.
- ¹¹ Martin Luther, *Tischreden*, in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [hereafter *WA*] (Weimar: Hermann Boehlau, 1892) Tr 1; 330, 1.
- ¹² Here it is perhaps worth noting that Augustine, Hugh, Peter Lombard, and Bonaventure, i.a., are quoted authoritatively in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, IV, 19-29. See Theodore G. Tappert, ed. and trans., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959), 103-04.
- ¹³ Daniel B. Clendenin, "A Poem of Saint Bonaventure," in Kenneth Tanner and Christopher A. Hall, eds., *Ancient and Postmodern Christianity: Paleo-Orthodoxy in the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 277.
- ¹⁴ Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, trans. Ewert Cousins (New York: Paulist, 1978), 55.
- ¹⁵ *Journey*, 60.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Martin Luther, n.p.
- ¹⁸ Luther, quoted in Lewis W. Spitz, *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, Vol. 2 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971), 583.
- ¹⁹ Luther, W-T 4, 4317.
- ²⁰ Helmut T. Lehmann et al., ed., *Luther's Works* 46 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 210; hereafter *LW*.
- ²¹ *LW* 45, 341-78.
- ²² *LW* 46, 209-58.
- ²³ *LW* 45, 351.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *LW* 45, 353.
- ²⁶ *LW* 45, 356.
- ²⁷ *LW* 45, 358; see also *LW* 46, 243: "I shall say nothing here about the pure

pleasure a man gets from having studied, even though he never holds an office of any kind, how at home by himself he can read all kinds of things, talk and associate with educated people, and travel and do business in foreign lands; for there are perhaps very few people who are moved by this pleasure.”

²⁸ *LW* 54, 71.

²⁹ Martin Luther, “Letter to Eoban Hess,” in Frederick Eby, *Early Protestant Educators* (New York: AMS, 1971), 44.

³⁰ *LW* 45, 363.

³¹ *LW* 36, 304.

³² *WA Tr* 2, 359.

³³ Luther’s ranking of music second only to theology is well known. Since a paper on “Luther and Music” will be presented at the same conference as this paper, Luther’s appreciation for music will not be dealt with here.

³⁴ *LW* 45, 369.

³⁵ *LW* 45, 370.

³⁶ *LW* 45, 371.

³⁷ *LW* 45, 373.

³⁸ *LW* 45, 376.

³⁹ *LW* 46, 217.

⁴⁰ In this sermon, Luther considers it the responsibility of pastors as much as of parents to enable children to be educated and to encourage them to do so.

⁴¹ *LW* 46, 223.

⁴² For a convincing treatment of the importance of languages and the arts in the contemporary curriculum of schools that train pastors, see Carleton Toppe, “The Place of Liberal Arts in the Northwestern College Curriculum, 1985, available at <http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/T/ToppeArts/ToppeArts.htm>.

⁴³ *LW* 46, 239.

⁴⁴ *LW* 46, 251.

⁴⁵ *LW* 46, 252.

⁴⁶ A study of references to the liberal arts in the *Book of Concord* would be a worthwhile topic for another paper. Similarly, a review of the educational reforms of other Reformation-era Lutherans would be beneficial, for example the significance of Melanchthon’s *Evangelische Schulordnungen* (see Eby, 180-87) and Johann Bugenhagen’s *Braunschweigische Schulordnungen* (Eby, 193-206).

⁴⁷ Paul J. Dovre, “The Vocation of a Liberal Arts College Revisited”, part of the web companion guide to *Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study*. <http://www.elca.org/socialstatements/education/involved/dovre1.html>.

⁴⁸ In addition to the references previously cited, see Luther’s commentaries on Genesis and the Psalms.

⁴⁹ *LW* 46, 216.

⁵⁰ See, for example, Gene Edward Veith, *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002), and Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004).

⁵¹ *LW* 46, 253.

⁵² Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 176.

⁵³ D.G. Hart, "Education and Alienation: What John Henry Newman Could Have Learned from Wendell Berry," *Touchstone* 18, no. 8 (2005): 35.

⁵⁴ Mark A. Noll, "The Future of the Religious College: Looking Ahead by Looking Back," paper presented at the Conference on the Future of Religious Colleges, Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard, 2000, 2 (second of two pages numbered 1).

⁵⁵ See, for example, David M. O'Connell, "The Religious College: Dying Light or New Dawning?" paper presented at the Conference on the Future of Religious Colleges, The Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, 2000, 7, and Albert Anderson, "The Church and the Liberal Arts: An Immodest Engagement Proposal," *Dialog* 19 (1980): 111-16.

⁵⁶ Hart, 31.

⁵⁷ Herve de la Tour, "The Seven Liberal Arts," http://www.edocere.org/articles/7_liberal_arts.htm.

⁵⁸ Noll, 7-8. See also the discussion of modernism and post-modernism in my article, "Playing the Discarded Image Card," *Logia* XIII no. 3 (2004): 11-12.

⁵⁹ "... there is no work more worthy of pope or emperor than a thorough reformation of the universities, and there is nothing worse or more worthy of the devil than unreformed universities." Martin Luther, *Table Talk*, quoted in John S. Reist, "The Knife that Cuts Better than Another: Luther and Liberal Arts Education," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 21.02 (2004): 101. See also Angus Menuge, "Promoting Dialog in the Christian Academy," *Logia* XI no. 2 (2002): 19-26, especially "Dialog," 21-22.

⁶⁰ Robert Louis Wilken, "The Church's Way of Speaking," *First Things* no. 155 (2005), 29.

⁶¹ Graham Kendrick, *Make Way Music*, 1987.

⁶² Alan G. Padgett, "Theology as Worship: The Place of Theology in a Postmodern University," in Tanner and Hall, *Ancient and Postmodern Christianity*, 243.

⁶³ One might add the increasing demands to omit a confession of sins from the service, or at least to eschew irksome phrases like "poor miserable sinner." Fr. George Rutler expertly connects this with a loss of awe and wonder: "Wonder becomes worship through humility, and through increased humility worship becomes conviction of disobedience. The reverse is also true: the refusal to confess sin (and this includes the refusal to confess sin as Christ orders it to be done in the Church) leads to a refusal to worship, and the refusal to worship leads to a loss of the sense of wonder. Any theorist who thought that the easing of penitential practices would encourage attendance at the Sacrifice of the Mass was sorely mistaken and should make haste to the closest retirement home for disappointed liturgists. And if any one thought a sense of wonder would be increased by turning worship into self-congratulation, he need only contemplate the glazed eyes staring at the song leader in the sanctuary as he

yodels a limp pop ballad into the microphone. Empty confessionals empty churches, and empty churches empty the soul of holy awe.” George Rutler, *The Seven Wonders of the World* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1999), 111.

⁶⁴ Wilken, 31.

⁶⁵ Richard T. Hughes, quoted in Dovre, 8.

⁶⁶ Anderson, 114.

⁶⁷ Rutler, 41.

⁶⁸ *Aller Weisheit höchste Fülle / in dir ja verborgen liegt*. Johann H. Schröder, trans. Frances E. Cox, “One Thing’s Needful; Lord, This Treasure” in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1941), Hymn 366.

⁶⁹ C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (New York: Collier, 1956), 171.

Luther and Music Education

Prof. Dennis Marzolf

In order to begin a discussion of Luther and music education we must go back in time before the *National Standards on the Arts in Education* (1994), back before we were *A Nation at Risk* (1983), before John Dewey taught us *How We Think* (1933), before Lowell Mason started the American “music education” movement (1838); we must travel back to a time before the founding of the great orchestras and conservatories, back to the time before recording when all music was made by human beings in close contact with other humans, back to the days before the piano or the harpsichord, back to a quieter time, a time of speech and song without amplification, without white noise, a time of heightened aural sensitivity, a time when our spirits would have been touched and shaped by the musical art in a profundity that we can only imagine today.¹

Curricular Music as a Force in Ethical, Intellectual and Moral Development

We know that the ancients recognized the power of music. We know that they granted it a place in the curriculum because of its ability to mold and balance the spirit of the educated man. They understood that music held some sort of influential power yet they could not explain why music had the effect that it had on the human spirit and the development of character. The Christian humanists of the sixteenth century were influenced by the ideals of the classic curricula. Music in the reformation academy guided the moral development of the student. Luther, Melancthon and Calvin embraced the ancient ideals of music education and tempered them with the attitude of the church in the establishment of the new schools. Plato and Aristotle stood side by side with Paul and Ambrose as guiding lights in the music curriculum.

When boys have learned their letters and are ready to understand the written word as formerly the spoken, the teachers set the works of good poets before them on their desks

to read and make them learn them by heart, so that the child may be inspired to imitate them and long to be like them.

The music masters, by analogous methods, instill self-control and deter the young from evildoing. And when they have learned to play the lyre, they teach them the works of good poets of another sort, namely the lyrical, which they accompany on the lyre, familiarizing the minds of the children with the rhythms and melodies. By this means they become more civilized, more balanced, and better adjusted in themselves and so more capable in whatever they say or do, for rhythm and harmonious adjustment are essential to the whole of human life..." (Plato, *Protagoras*)²

Aristotle felt that the study of music should play a role in the curriculum, but he was careful to define its place in the academy somewhere between recreational pleasure and vulgar professionalism.

Since then music is a pleasure, and virtue consists in rejoicing and loving and hating aright, there is clearly nothing which we are so much concerned to acquire and to cultivate as the power of forming right judgments, and of taking delight in good dispositions and noble actions. Rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of courage and temperance, and of all the qualities contrary to these, and of the other qualities of character, which hardly fall short of the actual affections, as we know from our own experience, for in listening to such strains our souls undergo a change... even in mere melodies there is an imitation of character, for the musical modes differ essentially from one another, and those who hear them are differently affected by each. Some of them make men sad and grave, like the so-called Mixolydian, others enfeeble the mind, like the relaxed modes, another, again, produces a moderate and settled temper, which appears to be the peculiar effect of the Dorian; the Phrygian inspires enthusiasm... The same principles apply to rhythms; some have a character of rest, others of motion, and of these latter again, some have a more vulgar, others a nobler movement. Enough has been said to show that music has a power of forming the character, and should therefore be introduced into the education of the young...

And now we have to determine whether children should be themselves taught to sing and play or not. Clearly

there is a considerable difference made in the character by the actual practice of the art. It is difficult, if not impossible for those who do not perform to be good judges of the performance of others. Besides, children should have something to do, and the rattle which people give to their children in order to amuse them and prevent them from breaking anything in the house, was a capital invention, for a young thing cannot be quiet. The rattle is a toy suited to the infant mind, and education is a rattle or toy for children of a larger growth. We conclude then that they should be taught music in such a way as to become not only critics but performers... Yet it is quite possible that certain methods of teaching and learning music do really have a degrading effect. It is evident then that the learning of music ought not to impede the business of riper years, or to degrade the body or render it unfit for civil or military training... The right measure will be attained if students of music stop short of the arts which are practiced in professional contests, and do not seek to acquire those fantastic marvels of execution which are now in fashion in such contests." (*Politica*, Book VIII)³

Judaica was familiar with a cultivated musical tradition. Musicians were trained for the elaborate temple rites, and the psalms were sung according to prescribed melodies. Music became a part of the Christian tradition, by its birth within Judaism and by the assimilation of certain lyric practices (poetry and melody) from the culture of the world surrounding the church. Paul encouraged the use of music, and the early church certainly had musical formulae for the lyric poetry of the psalms, the canticles and the hymnody which blossomed as the liturgy developed. Augustine, like Aristotle, was cautious in his endorsement of the musical art, and his famous comments in the *Confessions* (397?), reveal his suspicion of and respect for an art that was so powerful in its sensory stimulation that it threatened to overshadow the words being sung.

The pleasures of the ear did indeed draw me and hold me more tenaciously, but You have set me free. Yet still when I hear those melodies, in which Your words breathe life, sung with sweet and measured voice, I do, I admit, find a certain satisfaction in them, yet not such as to grip me too close, for I can depart when I will. Yet in that, they are received into me along with the truths which give them life, such melodies seek in my heart a place of no small honor, and I find it hard to know what is their due place. At times indeed, it seems to me, that

I am paying them greater honor than is their due – when, for example, I feel that by those holy words my mind is kindled more religiously and fervently to a flame of piety because I hear them sung rather than if they were not sung, and I observe that all the varying emotions of my spirit have modes proper to them in voice and song, whereby, by some secret affinity, they are made more alive. It is not good that the mind should be enervated by this bodily pleasure. But it often ensnares me, in that the bodily sense does not accompany the reason as following after it in proper order, but having been admitted to aid the reason, strives to run before and take the lead. In this matter I sin unawares, and then grow aware.

Yet there are times when through too great a fear of this temptation, I err in the direction of over-severity, even to the point sometimes of wishing that the melody of all the lovely airs with which David's Psalter is commonly sung should be banished not only from my own ears, but from the Church's as well: and that seems to me a safer course, which I remember often to have heard told of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, who had the reader of the psalm utter it with so little modulation of the voice that he seemed to be saying it rather than singing it. Yet when I remember the tears I shed, moved by the songs of the Church in the early days of my new faith and again when I see that I am moved not by the singing but by the things that are sung (when they are sung with a clear voice and proper modulation) I recognize once more the usefulness of this practice." (Book 10, Chapter XXXIII)⁴

Not everyone in the church shared Augustine's degree of reservation regarding the use of the musical arts in the cultivation of the Christian mind and spirit. In a Homily on the First Psalm, Basil (c. 330-79) expressed the view of those who embraced music because of the emotional benefits it brought to the bond of Christian fellowship:

A psalm is the tranquility of souls, the arbitrator of peace, restraining the disorder and turbulence of thoughts, for it softens the passion of the soul and moderates its unruliness. A psalm forms friendships, unites the divided, mediates between enemies. For who can still consider him an enemy with whom he has sent forth one voice to God? So that the singing of psalms brings love, the greatest of good things, contriving harmony like some bond of union and uniting the people in the symphony of a single choir.

A psalm drives away demons, summons the help of angels, furnishes arms against nightly terrors, and gives respite from daily toil; to little children it is safety, to men in their prime an adornment, to the old a solace, to women their most fitting ornament. It populates the deserts, it brings agreement to the marketplaces. To novices it is a beginning; to those who are advancing, an increase; to those who are concluding, a confirmation. A psalm is the voice of the church. It gladdens feast days, it creates the grief which is in accord with God's will, for a psalm brings a tear even from a heart of stone.⁵

As Christianity became a religion of the state the liturgical rites, and the music that accompanied them, became more "stately". *Scholae cantorum*, or schools of singing to train liturgical leaders in the musical arts were founded after the Edict of Milan in 313, probably by Sylvester I, and were expanded by Pope Gregory to include instruction in singing, playing instruments, and harmony and composition.⁶ This liturgical instruction in music complemented the use of music in the academy where it joined with astronomy, mathematics and geometry to form a quadrivium of disciplines which "perfected" the educated man.

Boethius (ca.480-ca.524) believed that music occupied an unusual position in the quadrivium because it affected morality. This power made the study and explanation of the musical art all the more desirable and necessary.

When we compare that which is coherently and harmoniously joined together in sound, that is, that which gives us pleasure, so we come to recognize that we ourselves are united according to this same principle of similarity. For similarity is pleasing, whereas dissimilarity is unpleasant and contrary.

From this same principle radical changes in one's character also occur. A lascivious mind takes pleasure in the more lascivious modes or is often softened and moved upon hearing them. On the other hand, a more violent mind finds pleasure in the more exciting modes or will become excited when it hears them... A people will find pleasure in a mode resembling its own character, and thus a sensitive people cannot be united by or find pleasure in a severe mode, nor a severe people in a sensitive mode. But, as has been said, similarity causes love and pleasure. Thus Plato held that we should be

extremely cautious in this matter, lest some change in music of good moral character should occur. He also said that there is no greater ruin for the morals of a community than the gradual perversion of a prudent and modest music. For the minds of those hearing the perverted music immediately submit to it, little by little depart from their character, and retain no vestige of justice or honesty...

For there is no greater path whereby instruction comes to the mind than through the ear. Therefore when rhythms and modes enter the mind by this path, there can be no doubt that they affect and remold the mind into their own character... There can be no doubt that the unity of our body and soul seems to be somehow determined by the same proportions that join together and unify the harmonious inflections of music. Hence it happens that sweet melodies even delight infants, whereas a harsh and rough sound will interrupt their pleasure. Indeed this reaction to various types of music is experienced by both sexes, and by people of all ages; for although they may differ in their actions, they are nevertheless united as one in the pleasure of music... and someone who cannot sing particularly well will nevertheless sing to himself, not because it is pleasant for him to hear what he sings but because it is a delight to express certain inward pleasures which originate in the soul, regardless of the manner in which they are expressed... It appears to be beyond doubt that music is so naturally a part of us that we cannot be without it, even if we so wished.

For this reason the power of the mind ought to be directed toward fully understanding by knowledge what is inherent in us through nature. Thus just as erudite scholars are not satisfied by merely seeing colors and forms without investigating their properties, so musicians should not be satisfied by merely finding pleasure in music without knowing by what musical proportions these sounds are put together...⁷⁷

The student was obligated to plumb the mathematical depths of the musical art via the mathematical proportions of musical sound and pitch drawn from the monochord (the monochord also provided proof of the order of the universe through the physics of sound) in order to learn to judge the merit of compositions of music according to a canon of “purely ordered knowledge.” This critical knowledge of music theory enabled the scholar to function as an educated musician on an ethical plane above the poet who composed songs or

the performer who played on instruments.⁸ A proper understanding of music was necessary in order to bring soul and body into an even temperament; this even-tempered nature, a goal of medieval education, was an attribute of a composed individual. Music sat at the right hand of philosophy as her most able servant; in time music would also be seen as the even-tempered (and even-tempering) maidservant seated at the right hand of theology.

The teaching of music was an integral part of the formal curriculum from the days of Boethius to the eve of the Reformation. Music continued to play a practical role in the liturgical life of European Catholicism to the extent that the boys who were educated in the Latin schools would also function as choristers in the liturgical services. This mixture of academic elements and functional instruction made the musical aspects of the curriculum almost indispensable. Rhabanus Maurus the first *Praeceptor Germaniae* (776-856) remarked that “whoever does not master the noble and useful art of music is not fit to hold ecclesiastical office”.⁹

As the church spread she took her music with her. Instruction in a “common” body of song used throughout the church necessitated some sort of teaching that would insure at least a minimum of uniformity.¹⁰ The rise of the *Song School*, in an age before a precise form of musical notation had been devised, provided a curriculum for elementary education which was, in its own way, “universal”. In these schools the boys were taught to read Latin, to sing the plainchant (usually by rote) so that they could perform the music of the service, and to learn to count in order to calculate the seasons and festivals of the church year so that they would sing the correct propers in the liturgy. This curriculum of reading, singing and calculation would be a fundamental element in the Carolingian renaissance in European education.¹¹

Around the year 1030 a forty-year-old music teacher (Guido, Master of Song at the cathedral of Arezzo) published a teaching method that would allow for a common understanding of musical notation and pitch. This practical adaptation of the quadrivial science encouraged a greater use of the standard musical repertoire of the church. This instruction, based on translating pitches derived from the monochord into an alphabetic representation which would

allow for the teaching of pitch and the relationship of intervals with the use of common pitch syllables (solmization) revolutionized the way music was taught. This streamlined approach to music reading and comprehension allowed students to learn a much larger body of literature in much less time. This system remained at the heart of Western music instruction for centuries, and is still in some way the cornerstone for the development of skill in music reading.¹²

The formal academy of the pre-Reformation church fostered the teaching of music in the theoretical sphere (quadrivial) as well as the practical sphere (liturgical). This, of course, is not to say that the schools did not expose the student to secular music. Musical expertise was expected as one of the courtly graces and knightly achievements, and men in these positions were prepared in their education to function as performers and judges of the musical arts.¹³ The guild-like structure of the legendary Meistersänger and their celebrated musical contests illustrate the value placed on musical ability in Germanic culture. The Franco-Flemish school of composition and theoretical discourse had become the “international” musical communication of Europe by 1500, and the ideal of that movement is reflected in the following apology for the musical art, penned by Johannes Tinctoris (1435-1511) for Beatrice of Aragon in the early 1470s. In the *Compendium of Music’s Effects* Tinctoris sets forth twenty attributes of this “cultured and virtuous art”:

to please God
to adorn the praises of God
to enhance the joys of the blessed
to make the Church Militant like the Church Triumphant
to prepare for acceptance of divine blessing
to stir the feelings to devotion
to banish sadness
to soften hardheartedness
to drive away the devil
to induce rapture
to uplift the earthly mind
to check evil desire
to make people glad

to heal the sick
to ease toil
to spur men's spirits to battle
to attract love
to increase the merriment of a feast
to glorify those skilled in it
to bring souls to bliss.¹⁴

To the ancients and to the bright lights of the European Renaissance music was an objective universal power, worthy of study and necessary to the development of the human spirit. Luther grew up in a world which understood music as both subject and master. In fact many fundamental aspects of Luther's musical views had already been articulated in the philosophies that shaped the educational ideals of his day.

Music in Luther's Education

We know nothing of the house music of Luther's youth. Infancy was different in those days.¹⁵ There was no Mother Goose, no Sesame Street, certainly no Wiggles from Australia. It was, understandably, a much more austere world. Yet, given Luther's musical aptitude, one is tempted to assume that there must have been some sort of musical influence in that home. At the very least a lullaby, based on snippets of the melodies from the church, or "para-church" liturgy of pilgrimage and prone, might have calmed the troubled infant. The quintessential rocking song, *Resonet in laudibus*, had been a staple in the nursery repertoire of mothers and nurses for several generations by the time of Luther's infancy. It is no great stretch of imagination to assume that this tune was one of the first heard by Luther, and likely one of the first that he ever sang.

In school even the littlest ones were expected to sing. Functional music came first, quadrivial knowledge would wait for its time and place. *Veni, sancte spiritus; Veni, creator spiritus* (ELH 10)¹⁶; *Christe, qui lux es et dies* (ELH 571) and other Latin hymns were sung each day at the beginning and the end of instruction at the

By the time the fourteen-year-old Luther continued his education at Magdeburg he would have had an understanding of the texts of the liturgy, and he would have been able to participate in the complex cycle of proper texts which were an important part of the sung portions of the service. The cathedral in Magdeburg had a rich liturgical life, and music was doubtless a part of the ritual. In addition a number of teachers associated with the Brethren of the Common Life were present at the cathedral school, adding their own brand of piety and music-making to the city.

In Eisenach, according to Melanchthon, Luther “rounded out his Latin studies, and since he had a penetrating mind and rich gifts of expression, he soon outstripped his companions in eloquence, languages and poetic verse.”¹⁷

Luther likely developed his musicianship and skills in sight-singing and theory at this time. The ability to read music on the page was as important as a reading and writing ability in Latin. At least one hour of the day, usually after the midday meal, was dedicated to singing. This singing exercise consisted of the mastery of sight singing according to notation on the staff, aspects of the modes, the use of canon, and construction of imitative and non-imitative counterpoint, tuning and calibrating of the monochord, and performance of artistic or cultivated choral song in the international figural style of the day. This ambitious music curriculum was retained and developed by the Lutheran Reformers. The important place that music had in the Lutheran schools probably nourished a firm commitment to the musical arts which bore rich fruit in the development of German art music into the twentieth century.

In Magdeburg-Eisenach Luther acquired the skill of an instrumentalist, and it is likely at this time that he began to experiment with composition as well. We know, from his own pen, that he participated as one “of the poor pupils singing before the house”¹⁸ for a treat of money or food. Since the eleventh or twelfth centuries it was customary for students to roam (*currere*) the streets scraping together (*corrado*) bread and other necessities for student life. They were sometimes called *currendarii* because of their musical processions.¹⁹

These roaming choristers were not a ragtag bunch of adolescent run-arounds. They had their own rules and traditions which made them an important link between the academy and the city with their singing for holidays, weddings, funerals, banquets and other occasions. The regulations defining their existence highlight the significance of their role in the development and education of young musicians. An official of the school was charged with keeping track of their academic standing, a record of their attendance and the amount of alms collected, and how the alms were distributed. The *currendarii* represented the second level of musical accomplishment among the students. The first, or lowest, level included general students who received the minimum instruction in music and who participated in the school singing but not on the particular occasions reserved for the *currendarii*. The third and highest level was represented by the *symphoniaci*, a group of *currendarii* distinguished from the rest by more elaborate training and a more demanding musical repertoire.²⁰ Here Luther would have sung motets in Latin, and figural settings of German religious songs and *leisen*. The sixteenth century German chorale, or Lutheran congregational song, preserved many of these melodies so familiar to the *currendarii* and their audiences: *Mitten wir im Leben sind* ELH 527; *Nun bitten wir* ELH 33; *Verleih uns Frieden (Da pacem)* ELH 584; *Gelobet seist du* ELH 136; *Gott der Vater, wohn uns bei* ELH 18; *In dulci jubilo* ELH 135; *Kommt her zu mir* ELH 375; *Quem pastores* ELH 128; *Wir glauben all* ELH 38; *Es wolle uns Gott gnädig sein* ELH 591; *Gott sei gelobet* ELH 327; *Christ ist erstanden* ELH 344; *Dies est laetitia* ELH 131; *In Gottes Namen fahren wir* ELH 490.

One wonders how much of a role this youthful musical *camaraderie* played in making the Eisenach years so precious and happy in Luther's memory.

When Luther encountered the quadrivial study of music at Erfurt he was a capable performer. The change in the male vocal register coincided with the theoretical study of music assigned to the university curriculum. It was common for the male voice change to occur around the age of seventeen or eighteen in the sixteenth century, and this process discouraged singing, for a time. Here at Erfurt Luther would have come to know the attitudes of the ancients

towards the power and use of music through the *Musica Muris*, a fixed part of the discipline based on the musical treatises of Jehan des Murs, a 14th century French mathematician, astronomer, and reformer of the calendar.²¹

Erfurt was a large city, rich in musical observance and liturgical life. The city had a population of at least ten thousand, with one hundred ecclesiastical institutions, including two endowed churches, twenty-two cloisters, twenty-three cloister churches, thirty-six chapels, and the cathedral, which was the site for the pomp and splendor of the university functions.²²

The Erfurt monastic (1505) used music in his exercise of the *opus dei*. In the breviary for the daily office Luther would have memorized the entire psalter, canticles and office hymnody according to the chant formularies and melodies. These would have been performed under the strictest degree of discipline in this Observantine community. Luther, the priest, (1507) led the mass, with its prayers and lessons, aware of the rhetorical and ethical marriage of modality and piety in the delivery of the sacred texts. As monk and as a priest he became acquainted with the varieties in local traditions and practices as he read mass in both the city and the village.²³

The days in Erfurt were filled with academic work, intellectual stimulation, and intense spiritual development. Music was likely an important psychological companion as Luther journeyed to maturity.²⁴

Luther's musical training was not unique for his time and place, but his unique personal relationship with music imprinted the Lutheran academy and the Lutheran liturgy with a distinct flavor and purpose.

Music in the Lutheran Curriculum

The new Lutheran schools grew out of the traditions which had supported the development of the Latin schools in medieval Germany. It did not occur to the Lutherans (or the Calvinists, for that matter)²⁵ to delete musical study from the curriculum. Melancthon and Bugenhagen articulated the role of music in the grammar schools,

and the goals they set forth were held up as a model throughout the Lutheran regions.

The First Group: The first group should consist of those children who are learning to read... These children must likewise be kept at music, and be made to sing with the others, as we shall show, God willing, further on.

The Second Group: The second group consists of children who have learned to read, and are now ready to go into grammar... The first hour after noon every day all the children, large and small, should be practiced in music.

The Third Group: Now, when these children have been well trained in grammar, those among them who have made the greatest proficiency should be taken out, and formed into the third group. The hour after midday they, together with the rest, are to devote to music. (from P. Melancthon, Book of Visitation School Plan, 1528)²⁶

It is considered necessary to establish good schools and to employ honorable, well grounded, scholarly masters and assistants to the honor of the Almighty for the welfare of the youth and the satisfaction of the entire city. Therein the poor, ignorant youth may be properly trained, learn the ten commandments, the creed, the Lord's prayer, the Christian sacraments, with as much of explanation as is suitable for children, also learn to sing the psalms in Latin, and read passages every day from the Latin scriptures. In addition they are to study the humanities from which one learns to understand such matters... Therefore in order to instruct the children in a Christian way sometime during the week, someone must see to it that such a master is secured who is favorable to and understands the gospel of Christ, and that none other are allowed with the children in this city. You shall supply one scholarly assistant for the master, also one chorister (kantor) who shall do a work similar to the other according to the direction of the master, and in addition thereto teach the children to sing... The children shall attend to their choral duties at Vespers and on the holy days in that congregation to which their parents belong.

The master shall be paid a yearly salary of fifty gulden... the kantor thirty gulden.. when some people during the funeral

procession would have the pupils with one of the assistants sing before the coffin German psalms or other sacred songs, not to help the dead but to admonish the living, also the *Te Deum laudamus* or any other song when the bride is led into the church, let the assistants divide the money among themselves. They are not to sing without pay... The two kantors in the two schools shall perform their labors like the other assistants according to the command and will of their respective rectors. Furthermore it is their particular duty to teach all children, large and small, learned and ignorant to sing (as Philip Melanchthon has stated in the “Instructions to the Visitors”) common songs in German and Latin. Therefore he shall select three or four good boys who can hold the song for him with strong voices, but all the other boys in their parish shall accompany them. Some have poor voices which can be well controlled so that they shall sing softly and listen to the others. In this way all youth shall be taught to sing in the schools.

Many scholars must confess that it has helped them to learn and to memorize when they were obliged in youth to sing psalms and similar responses... Therefore we will secure these same benefits to our children, by having them every day, evening and morning, sing and read, which we are pleased to term vespers and matins. And those who have hitherto learned, shall not begrudge our children; they shall not draw up the bridge when capable people would pass over the water. What has helped them will help others also, and shall now through God’s grace help still more, because the singing shall be controlled and regulated...

The schoolmasters shall see to it that it is not performed otherwise. Moreover now greater diligence shall be applied that the children learn constantly the Latin they sing and read. With this method they will be accustomed to go to the Holy Scriptures as to a play... Every work day the cantors with all the children go to the church in the morning at eight, in the afternoon at two, or at such a time that will not interfere with the services. (J. Bugenhagen, School Ordinance from the Church Order for Braunschweig, 1528)²⁷

Melanchthon, Luther and Bugenhagen set music as one of the cornerstones of the Reformation school. Using ideas and materials from the past they created a laboratory where the musical art would

flourish for the benefit of church and culture for generations to come. Sternfeld suggested that “it is the immortal contribution of Luther that he was able to graft the new religious organization founded by him upon the rich musical heritage of the past, thus preserving the unity of Western music.”²⁸

Lutheran scholars involved in the musical hour after lunch would have studied and sung liturgical psalmody and hymnody from the Gregorian chant tradition and polyphonic motets based on those melodies; other Latin motets which had been composed for liturgical or devotional use; evangelical chorales in unison, or polyphonic figural settings (especially the tenorlied settings of Walther and others); polyphonic settings of the catechism, table graces, scripture passages, and Latin motet settings of the stories of the nativity, passion and resurrection²⁹ were added to the repertoire of school song. They may also have learned to sing “modern” chordal settings of the lyrical poetry of a Horace and the epics of a Virgil, which may have been prepared for public quasi-dramatic presentations.³⁰ These chordal settings allowed the topmost voice to assume the leading role in the musical setting. In time this style of composition was applied to the chorale, creating what is known as the cantionale style.³¹

The music time was a time for refreshment and a pleasant change of pace from many of the other academic pursuits. It was also an active use of a time which was otherwise prone to a degree of digestive lethargy.

Now the art of music has been laid before us in lesson form by Martin Agricola. So when you are wearied by the effort of other exertions you have somewhere you can retreat to, like a pleasant refuge. Thus the mind is saved from the fatigue of always following the same tracks, and natural energy is not dissipated by lack of concentration. (When this happens, it is as though the eyes are faced with an excess of one single color - they become unfocussed and their level of discrimination is lowered.)³²

Luther’s most important writings about music appeared as prefaces to the editions that were used in the after-lunch school music program. Luther had a tremendous impact on the development of music in the church and in Western culture, yet he spilled little ink

on the subject. What little he did write about music presented the art in such a positive light that his comments continue to inspire the Lutheran musician.³³ The following is an excerpt from a preface to a collection of chorales and motets composed by Johann Walter, the *Urkantor* of the Lutheran church.

Like Moses in his song we may now boast that Christ is our praise and song and say with St. Paul, I Corinthians 2, that we should know nothing to sing or say, save Jesus Christ, our Savior.

And these songs were arranged in four [most had at least five parts] to give the young (who should at any rate be trained in music and other fine arts) something to wean them away from love ballads and carnal songs and to teach them something of value in their place, thus combining the good with the pleasing, as is proper for youth. Nor am I of the opinion that the gospel should destroy and blight all the arts, as some of the pseudo-religious claim. But I would like to see all the arts, especially music, used in the service of Him who gave and made them. I therefore pray that every pious Christian would be pleased with this (use of music in the service of the gospel) and lend his help if God has given him like or greater gifts. As it is, the world is too lax and indifferent about teaching and training the young for us to abet this trend. (Walther's *Geistliche Gesangbuch*, 1524)³⁴

Georg Rhau (Rhaw) was a publisher in Wittenberg who was also a trained theorist and composer. His musical expertise was important to the Wittenberg cause, and he published volumes of *Magnificat* settings and other compositions necessary to the musical presentation of the Vesper office and Mass. This excerpt is from Luther's preface to the *Symphoniae jucundae*, a collection of part songs and motets especially suitable for use in the schools. The compositions are brief, but they present a broad sampling of the current international musical style, and include works by composers such as Antoine Brumel, Antoine de Fevin, Georg Forster, Heinrich Isaac, Josquin Desprez, Pierre de la Rue, Jean Mouton, Jean Richafort, Ludwig Senfl, Claude de Sermisy, Philippe Verdelot, Adrian Willaert and Johann Walter.³⁵

I would certainly like to praise music with all my heart as the excellent gift of God which it is and to commend

it to everyone. But I am so overwhelmed by the diversity and magnitude of its virtue and benefits that I can find neither beginning nor end or method for my discourse. As much as I want to commend it, my praise is bound to be wanting and inadequate. For who can comprehend it all? And even if you wanted to encompass all of it, you would appear to have grasped nothing at all. First then, looking at music itself, you will find that from the beginning of the world it has been instilled and implanted in all creatures, individually and collectively. For nothing is without sound or harmony. Even the air, which of itself is invisible and imperceptible to all our senses, and which, since it lacks both voice and speech, is the least musical of all things, becomes sonorous, audible, and comprehensible when it is set in motion. Wondrous mysteries are here suggested by the Spirit, but this is not the place to dwell on them. Music is still more wonderful in living things, especially birds, so that David, the most musical of all the kings and minstrel of God, in deepest wonder and spiritual exultation praised the astounding art and ease of the song of birds when he said in Psalm 104 [12], “By them the birds of the heaven have their habitation; they sing among the branches.”

And yet, compared to the human voice, all this hardly deserves the name of music, so abundant and incomprehensible is here the munificence and wisdom of our most gracious Creator. Philosophers have labored to explain the marvelous instrument of the human voice: how can the air projected by a light movement of the tongue and an even lighter movement of the throat produce such an infinite variety and articulation of the voice and of words? And how can the voice, at the direction of the will, sound forth so powerfully and vehemently that it cannot only be heard by everyone over a wide area, but also be understood? Philosophers for all their labor cannot find the explanation; and baffled they end in perplexity; for none of them has yet been able to define or demonstrate the original components of the human voice, its sibilation and (as it were) its alphabet, e.g., in the case of laughter— to say nothing of weeping. They marvel, but they do not understand. But such speculations on the infinite wisdom of God, shown in this single part of his creation, we shall leave to better men with more time on their hands. We have hardly touched on them.

Here it must suffice to discuss the benefit of this great art. But even that transcends the greatest eloquence of the most eloquent, because of the infinite variety of its forms and benefits.

We can mention only one point (which experience confirms), namely, that next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions—to pass over the animals—which as masters govern men or more often overwhelm them. No greater commendation than this can be found—at least not by us. For whether you wish to comfort the sad, to terrify the happy, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate—and who could number all these masters of the human heart, namely, the emotions, inclinations, and affections that impel men to evil or good?—what more effective means than music could you find? The Holy Ghost himself honors her as an instrument for his proper work when in his Holy Scriptures he asserts that through her his gifts were instilled in the prophets, namely, the inclination to all virtues, as can be seen in Elisha [II Kings 3:15]. On the other hand, she serves to cast out Satan, the instigator of all sins, as is shown in Saul, the king of Israel [I Sam. 15:23].

Thus it was not without reason that the fathers and prophets wanted nothing else to be associated as closely with the Word of God as music. Therefore, we have so many hymns and Psalms where message and music join to move the listener's soul, while in other living beings and [sounding] bodies music remains a language without words. After all, the gift of language combined with the gift of song was given only to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming [the Word of God] through music and by providing sweet melodies with words. For even a comparison between different men will show how rich and manifold our glorious Creator proves himself in distributing the gifts of music, how much men differ from each other in voice and manner of speaking so that one amazingly excels the other. No two men can be found with exactly the same voice and manner of speaking, although they often seem to imitate each other, the one as it were being the ape of the other.

But when [musical] learning is added to all this and artistic music which corrects, develops, and refines the natural music, then at last it is possible to taste with wonder (yet not to comprehend) God's absolute and perfect wisdom in his wondrous work of music. Here it is most remarkable that one single voice continues to sing the tenor, while at the same time many other voices play around it, exulting and adorning it in exuberant strains and, as it were, leading it forth in a divine

roundelay, so that those who are the least bit moved know nothing more amazing in this world. But any who remain unaffected are unmusical indeed and deserve to hear a certain filth poet or the music of the pigs.

But the subject is much too great for me briefly to describe all its benefits. And you, my young friend, let this noble, wholesome, and cheerful creation of God be commended to you. By it you may escape shameful desires and bad company. At the same time you may by this creation accustom yourself to recognize and praise the Creator. (Preface to Rhau's *Symphoniae jucundae*, 1538)³⁶

These comments, directed to students of singing in Lutheran schools, are frequently quoted in discussions of Luther and music. They are quoted so frequently in music history texts and expositions on Luther the artist, that they may, in fact, be taken for granted. It is important to remember again the startling uniqueness of Luther's writings on music against the backdrop of the Reformation.

Zwingli, of course, denied music any place in the service of the church. Calvin, despite his acknowledgment of the importance of music in the curriculum, and even though he granted it a limited but important role in the liturgy, banned all instrumental music and choral polyphony from the service.

As to the public prayers, these are of two kinds: some are offered by means of words alone, others with song... And in truth we know by experience that song has great force and vigor to move and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God with a more vehement and fervent zeal. It must always be looked to that song be not light and frivolous, but have weight and majesty, as Saint Augustine says; and there is likewise a great difference between the music one makes to entertain men at table and in their houses, and the psalms which are sung in the church...

Now among the things proper to recreate man and to give him pleasure, music is either the first or one of the principal, and we must think that it is a gift of God for that purpose. For which reason we must be careful not to abuse it... Were there no other consideration than this alone, it might well move us to moderate the use of music to make it serve all that is of good repute and that it should not be the occasion of

our giving free reign to dissoluteness or of making ourselves effeminate with disordered pleasures and that it should not become the instrument of lasciviousness... (from the Epistle to the Reader, *Genevan Psalter* of 1543)³⁷

Even Erasmus, that prince of humanist educators, found no place for music in the educational and liturgical life of the church. His attitude against music was more extreme than Calvin's, and his influence on the musical life of England through his reformation of curriculum inhibited the growth of music for centuries. Erasmus' comments on music highlight the differences between his personality and that of the rugged singer from Wittenberg (although they probably would have been in agreement in their assessment of the monkish "gurgling").

St. Paul says that he would rather speak five words with a reasonable meaning than ten thousand in an unknown tongue. They chant nowadays in Churches in what is an unknown tongue and nothing else, while you will not hear a sermon once in six months telling people to amend their lives. Modern Church music is so constructed that the congregation cannot hear one distinct word. The Choristers themselves do not understand what they are singing, yet according to priests and monks it constitutes the whole of Religion. Will they not listen to St. Paul? In Colleges and monasteries it is still the same: music and nothing but music... Money is raised to buy organs and train boys to squeal and to learn no other thing that is good for them... They have so much of it in England that the monks attend to nothing else. A set of creatures who ought to be lamenting their sins fancy they can please God by gurgling in their throats. Boys are kept in the English Benedictine Colleges solely and simply to sing hymns to the Virgin. If they want music let them sing Psalms like rational beings, and not too many of them.³⁸

It is largely to Luther's credit, then, that musical instruction was retained, and in fact, reinforced in the Germanic schools. Rhau had a ready market for the volumes of music he printed in Wittenberg. In addition to rehearsing and performing from printed scores, the students would have been exposed to a formal study of theory which would help them in their performance. Theoretical texts used in Wittenberg and throughout Lutheranism would have been similar to pre-reformation models. Georg Rhau had written and

published a theoretical *Enchiridion* in 1517. Martin Agricola's *Ein kurtz Deudsche Musica* appeared in 1528, interestingly enough, in the vernacular, for students in the schools of Magdeburg. Other texts included *Musica* (Nicolaus Listenius, 1537), *Rudimenta musices* (Agricola's reworking in Latin, 1539), *Compendiolum musicae pro incipientibus* (Heinrich Faber, 1548) and others.

A brief examination of Agricola's Latin work sheds light on the aspects of musical learning which were a part of the Lutheran system. *Rudimenta musices* was written for the students of Magdeburg who were returning to the city in 1539 following a catastrophic flood and outbreak of the plague which forced an evacuation and closing of the school. As a result of these unfortunate events the music program was in a shambles. Agricola's work was intended to rebuild the program as efficiently as possible.

Now that the virulence of the plague is mercifully quenched and our school is restored to itself, we must expect that classes more or less inexperienced in the art of ours will present themselves to me.

In these circumstances, I have thought it my duty to offer for the boys' lessons only the essential elements of music, which are explained in this book with no less brevity than clarity. For it is of the first importance that introductory lessons such as these should be both easy and short. Their brevity then helps the boys to attain a reliable memory of them, learn them by heart, and progress to the heights of this most noble branch of knowledge more successfully.³⁹

The first chapter deals with "keys" or note names. It introduces the student to the alphabetic letter names, the sol-fa names, the round b (flat sign) and square b (natural sign) as well as the staff and the four clefs. Chapter two focuses on the sol-fa names and their use in sight singing (solmisation), as well as the method by which a singer can travel from one hexachord to the other by means of the syllables re and la. In the third portion of the text students are introduced to the use of different clefs; in one example the soprano must sing through five different clefs in eight measures. The fourth chapter deals with plainsong modes (related to the modern concept of keys) in their dual nature as authentic and plagal, along with the concept of "reciting tone", the dominant pitch in a key or mode,

and its relation to the “final” or tonic of the same key or mode; intervallic relationships, modal “characteristics”, and the “forbidden intervals.” Finally, *Rudimenta musices* devotes a chapter to tuning and calibrating the monochord into three octaves, an important resource to establish and illustrate the exact relationships between pitches.

It is no wonder that the Lutheran Latin schools produced capable musicians who knew the musical art. It is important for us to realize, again, that this study of music was a common part of the curriculum, not an extracurricular activity for those deemed “gifted” in music. What an impact (in theory at least) this education would have on the future pastors, teachers and educated leaders of the Lutheran cities!

The school music curriculum would have made a lasting impression in the world of Protestant thought even if it had stopped with the classroom. But it did not. Luther insisted that the musical-theological curriculum belonged in the church building and in the liturgical structure as well as in the halls of academia. In the Lutheran paradigm the academic pursuit of the musical art was always devotional just as the devotional and liturgical use of music was always academic. Mind and heart were wed in the Lutheran liturgy just as devotion and intellect were united in the Lutheran classroom.

Luther explained his ideal of the “classroom of the liturgy” in the introduction to the German Mass and Order of Service. This instructional view of the liturgy supported the growth of educational programs congruent to the church which would, in turn, supply the church with singers and a steady stream of new musical compositions by which the young were taught.

This is what we do to train the schoolboys in the Bible. Every day of the week they chant a few Psalms in Latin before the lesson (from the Catechism, the Gospels and the Epistles), as has been customary at Matins hitherto. For as we stated above, we want to keep the youth well versed in the Latin Bible. After the Psalms, two or three boys in turn read a chapter from the Latin New Testament, depending on the length. Another boy then reads the same chapter in German to familiarize them with it and for the benefit of any layman who might be present and listening. Thereupon they proceed with an antiphon to the

German lesson mentioned above. After the lesson the whole congregation sings a German hymn, the Lord's Prayer is said silently, and the pastor or chaplain reads a collect and closes with the *Benedicamus Domino* as usual.

Likewise at Vespers they sing a few of the Vesper Psalms in Latin with an antiphon, as heretofore, followed by a hymn if one is available. Again two or three boys in turn then read a chapter from the Latin Old Testament or half a one, depending on length. Another boy reads the same chapter in German. The *Magnificat* follows in Latin with an antiphon or hymn, the Lord's Prayer said silently, and the collects with the *Benedicamus*. This is the daily service throughout the week in cities where there are schools.

This is what I have to say concerning the daily service and instruction in the Word of God, which serves primarily to train the young and challenge the unlearned... Therefore it is best to plan the services for the young and such of the unlearned as may happen to come. (*The German Mass*, 1526)⁴⁰

Luther had a teacher's optimism, and it is interesting to note how he applied it to worship. Even with his understanding of human nature he felt that the human spirit would rise to the occasion when presented with something worth learning. The scholars were busy with their liturgical academics, as the following outline from Wittenberg suggests. While only the best singers sang the more complicated settings, all the students, along with their teachers, were expected to participate in the musical leadership of the service.⁴¹ The following outline presents the academic worship routine as it was observed in Wittenberg.

Daily Matins and Vespers in Wittenberg:

MATINS

Sunday:

1. The Latin Catechism read verse by verse antiphonally by the choir.
2. Two or three Psalms and the Antiphon are sung (Latin).
3. Three Lessons from the New Testament (Latin).

4. The Responsory is sung (Latin).
5. A German Lesson is read.
6. A Chorale is sung with the people, during which the choir enters the nave to listen to the Sermon.
7. The Sermon, based on the Catechism.
8. The German Catechism.
9. The Exhortation to Prayer.
10. The Chorale is sung, during which the choir reenters the chancel.
11. The choir sings either “*Te Deum Laudamus*” or “*Quicumque Vult Salvus*” (Athanasian Creed) with the appropriate antiphon.
12. Versicle, Collects, and *Benedicamus Domino*.

Weekdays (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday):

1. Two or three Psalms and antiphon are sung by choir.
2. Three NT Lessons (Latin).
3. Responsory.
4. One Lesson (German).
5. The “*Benedictus*” and its Antiphon are sung by the choir.
6. The *Kyrie*, Our Father, Versicle, Collect, and *Benedicamus Domino* are sung by the choir, after which the choristers leave the church to begin their study for the day.
7. The pastor then delivers the Sermon to the people.
8. Then follows a brief exhortation to prayer.
9. The pastor and the sexton shall lead the congregation in the singing of a German Psalm or Chorale.

Wednesday:

1. Two or three Psalms and Antiphon (Latin).
2. Three Lessons (Latin).
3. Chorale sung by choir and congregation (German).
4. Sermon, always based on a reading from The Gospel according to St. Matthew.
5. Exhortation to Prayer.
6. The German Litany is sung by the choir and congregation.

7. Collect, Versicle, and *Benedicamus Domino*.

VESPERS

Saturday:

1. Two or three Psalms and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
2. Three boys sing three Lessons from the OT (Latin).
3. The Responsory is sung (Choir, Latin).
4. A choirboy reads a lesson in German.
5. A Latin Hymn is sung.
6. Sermon based on St. John.
7. Exhortation to Prayer.
8. The Latin Litany (Choir) with *Agnus Dei* and *Pater Noster*.
9. Versicle, Collect, *Benedicamus Domino* are sung by the choir.

Sunday:

1. Two or three Psalms and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
2. Three Lessons (Latin).
3. The Responsory.
4. One German Lesson.
5. A Latin Hymn (choir).
6. The German *Te Deum*, sung by choir and congregation.
7. Sermon based on Epistle for the Day, or other text.
8. Exhortation to Prayer.
9. *Magnificat* (German, choir and congregation, sung to “*tonus peregrinus*”) and German Antiphon sung by the choir: “O Christ, our Savior, Son of the Eternal God and Mary, we praise Thee forever. Amen!”
10. The *Nunc Dimittis* is sung by the choir and congregation (German).
11. Versicle, Collect, *Benedicamus*.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday:

1. Two or three Psalms and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
2. A Hymn (Latin, choir).
3. Three Lessons (OT, Latin).

4. The Responsory (Latin, choir).
5. One Lesson (German).
6. *Magnificat* and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
7. *Kyrie, Pater Noster*, Versicle, *Benedicamus Domino*.
8. *Nunc Dimittis* (Choir, Latin).

On Wednesday afternoons Vespers was not sung, since the choristers had sung that day for the regular Wednesday noon Mass. No school sessions were held on Wednesday afternoon.

The Catechism Office:

Four times in the year for two weeks the regular Vesper order was suspended for the teaching of the Catechism. This order was used on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday during those weeks:

1. One Psalm and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
2. Three Lessons (Latin).
3. The Responsory (Choir, Latin).
4. One Lesson (German).
5. The Chorale “These are Thy Holy Ten Commands” sung by the choir and congregation.
6. The Catechism Sermon, or Instruction.
7. The Chorale “Would You, O Man, Live Happily”⁴²
8. *Magnificat* and Antiphon (Choir, Latin).
9. Versicle, Collect, *Benedicamus Domino*.⁴³

The service orders listed above highlight the important role of the choir. The Latin canticles, their antiphons, the Latin hymns, the antiphon to the psalmody, and the responsories were sung both *choralis* (unison chant) and *figuralis* (in artful contrapuntal settings). The Latin Psalms, versicles, *Benedicamus* and *Amens* were sung to simple four-part choral settings. The choir would usually sing verses of the German chorale in *alternatim* settings with the congregation. These settings were also in figured style, although they tended to be more homophonic and less complicated contrapuntally than the canticles, hymns, and responsories. At times members of the choir

would mix in with the congregation to teach and encourage the song of the people.

An outline of an Easter festival liturgy from Wittenberg follows. One notes again the instructional quality of the liturgy, including elements for the youthful scholar as well as the “eager” unlearned ones! In this service we see a concrete example of the ideals of the evangelical church as they would be articulated by Melancthon in a foreword to Rhau’s music for Christmas (*Officia de Nativitate*) in 1545: 1. The existence and functions of church music were determined by the will of God; 2. Music is of divine origin and serves to glorify God and disseminate His Word; 3. God’s Word and its music are of one cloth; 4. Music serves the purpose of teaching a man to know God and to contemplate the facts of Christian faith which surpass all human wisdom. Melancthon believed that the worship of God should be related to all of life and feared that Christian doctrine would disappear if it were not allowed to be sung. The second *Praeceptor Germaniae* would have delighted at the musical proclamation of doctrine presented in this Easter liturgy.⁴⁴ The description of this Paschal mass in Wittenberg was probably recorded by Justus Jonas in 1543 or 1544.

THE EASTER MASS

1. The Canticle of Zacharias (Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel) and its antiphon, in Latin. With choir, cantor, and organ (the organ would not be used as an accompaniment instrument; it functioned as an “alternate singing voice” in the presentation of the chant melody by means of a solo organ verset).
2. The Introit, in a choral setting for cantor and choir, possibly by Walter.
3. The Paschal *Kyrie*, in a setting for organ and choir, by Galliculus.
4. The *Gloria in excelsis*. Choir (contrapuntal setting), organ verses.
5. The salutation and collect sung in Latin and German by the choir and congregation.
6. The Epistle, sung in German.

7. The Easter sequence, macaronic (mixed language) in a setting for organ, choir, and congregation:
Organ: *Victimae paschali*, verset
Congregation: Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands (vs 1)
Choir: Soprano, Alto, Bass: *Agnus redemit oves...* Tenor: *Christ ist erstanden...* etc., until all seven verses of the chorale "*Christ lag in Todesbanden*" and choral "*Christ ist erstanden*" with choral "*Victimae paschali*" is sung; organ versets are played at least three times.
8. The Holy Gospel. Sung by the choir, German, polyphonic setting.
9. The Creed. Intonation (Latin) by pastor; Latin Creed sung by the choir. Afterwards Creed paraphrase sung in German by congregation and choir (*Wir Glauben all...*).
10. The Sermon.
11. Choir and congregation: "*Jesus Christus, Unser Heiland*" "*Jesus Christ Our Blessed Savior,*" alternately by congregation (unison and unaccompanied) and choir (contrapuntal setting), while pastor prepares the bread and wine for the communicants, who proceed to the choir (chancel).
12. The Preface is sung by the pastor and choir.
13. The *Sanctus* is sung by the choir and organ.
14. The Lord's Prayer sung in German by the pastor. The people respond with a sung "Amen."
15. The pastor sings the Words of Institution in German.
16. During the distribution, the choir sings a macaronic setting of the *Agnus Dei*, with strains of the "*Christ ist erstanden.*" The Choir also sings "*Pascha nostrum,*" and Josquin's motet "*Congratulamini mihi, ones, qui diligitis dominum*" (no longer extant).
17. At the end of the distribution, "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God" in German.
18. The pastor prays (sings) the collect of Thanksgiving and the Blessing (Aaronic), and the congregation responds "Amen."⁴⁵

Music was assured a significant presence in the Lutheran curriculum, largely because of its use in the liturgy. The continued presence, and development, of an academic music tradition in Lutheranism was guaranteed as long as the dominant theology allowed the liturgy to function as a didactic element in Christian life.

That the Unlearned be Taught

The curricular revisions suggested by the Reformation spread beyond the confines of the Latin schools. The Lutheran reformers had a commitment to the education of the masses. Luther's attention to catechesis in vernacular schools, schools for girls, and the Christian home reveals an especially idealistic approach to the development of educational goals in the "new order."⁴⁶

The German schoolmasters ... shall be obligated to teach their children at certain times something good from the word of God, the ten commandments, the creed, the Lord's prayer, concerning the two sacraments instituted by Christ, with short explanation and Christian song.

The girls, moreover, shall go to school only one or at most two hours per day... For the girls need to learn only to read, and to hear some exposition of the ten commandments, the creed, and Lord's prayer, and what baptism is and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, and to learn to recite some passages from the New Testament concerning the creed, love and patience, on the cross, and some sacred history or story suitable to girls, in order to exercise their memories, moreover in order to impress the gospel of Christ and in addition to learn Christian song. (J. Bugenhagen, *School Ordinance from the Church Order for Braunschweig*, 1528)⁴⁷

Therefore it is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and to ascertain what they know of it, or are learning and, if they do not know it, to keep them faithfully at it. For I well remember the time, indeed, even now it is a daily occurrence that one finds rude, old persons who knew nothing and still know nothing of these things, and who, nevertheless, go to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and use everything belonging to Christians, notwithstanding that those who come to the Lord's

Supper ought to know more and have a fuller understanding of all Christian doctrine than children and new scholars. ...

Thus, ye would have, in all, five parts of the entire Christian doctrine which should be constantly treated and required [of children] and heard recited word for word. For you must not rely upon it that the young people will learn and retain these things from the sermon alone. When these parts have been well learned, you may, as a supplement and to fortify them lay before them also some psalms or hymns, which have been composed on these parts⁴⁸, and thus lead the young into the Scriptures, and make daily progress therein. (*The Large Catechism*)⁴⁹

Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained among us, and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. (*Augsburg Confession*, Art. 24)⁵⁰

Since ceremonies, however, ought to be observed both to teach men Scripture, and that those admonished by the Word may conceive faith and fear [of God, and obtain comfort] and thus also may pray, we retain the Latin language on account of those who are learning and understand Latin, and we mingle with it German hymns, in order that the people also may have something to learn, and by which faith and fear may be called forth. This custom has always existed in the churches. For although some more frequently, and others more rarely, introduced German hymns, nevertheless the people almost everywhere sang something in their own tongue. Therefore, this is not such a new departure. (*Apology*, Part 29, Art. 24)⁵¹

Music supported the vernacular catechetical curriculum by means of the Lutheran chorale. This musical presentation of doctrine became a common denominator for Lutherans of all classes and educational backgrounds. Luther's promotion of congregational song, and his contribution to that genre, illustrate a fertile use of music as a didactic tool in the service of the gospel. Luther's chorales are filled with sentiments of genuine piety and deep devotion, but they are, primarily, artistic products fashioned to be tools that proclaim, preach and teach. They were aids to teaching the doctrine, not music education, in a strict sense.

However, Luther's use of music was not limited to a musical style that was immediately within the grasp of his singers. It was certainly not foreign, in the sense that music from a diverse culture contains elements that may be unfamiliar, but it was challenging, and it forced the singer to develop musical skills that were related to the musical concepts Luther had learned as a part of his cultivated educational curriculum. Those who sang the chorales as a means to learn the doctrine also acquired the mastery of fundamental musical skills.

Luther probably didn't have an academic musical-aesthetic goal in mind as he shaped that first generation of chorales, but he did, perhaps unwittingly, force the musical hand of Lutheran fathers, teachers and pastors with the musical standards of his congregational hymns. In order to teach the clear but challenging truths of scripture the Lutheran Church used learnable BUT challenging music. Sometimes those things that are at first difficult to learn may endure in the memory longer than that which seems to be immediately accessible.

Certain of the chorale melodies were extant (see the discussion of the *curendarii* above); and Luther adapted the texts of familiar religious songs in his development of the chorale. Other chorales were drawn from the chant repertoire: We Sing Thy Praise, O God ELH 45; Savior of the Nations, Come ELH 90; Grant Peace, We Pray, In Mercy, Lord ELH 584; From East to West ELH 267; Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands ELH 343; Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest ELH 10; Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord ELH 2 ; Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old ELH 40.

Still others bear the imprint of the compositional style of the early sixteenth century. Some of these tunes are original to Luther; from the sprightly Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice, ELH 378, to those which exploit the colors and spirit of the ancient modalities: In Peace and Joy I Now Depart ELH 48; From Depths of Woe ELH 452; O Lord, Look Down From Heaven, Behold ELH 440. Luther exercised a quadrivial eye and ear when he set the doctrines of the church to music.

The chorales are "folk music" in that they were meant to be sung by the people in home, school and liturgy. Luther exhibits an idealistic optimism in his chorale composition. He held the children

to high standards, and he expected that the parents and others in authority would support the pursuit of those standards. The children would sing the chorales in church, in part to teach them to others in the congregation. In most cases this was left up to the boys, but even in some of those places with schools for the girls they, too, were drafted into the *alternatim* practice which would assist the congregation in their learning and liturgical work.⁵²

Cyriacus Spangenberg illustrates the point to which the culture of the chorale was imbedded in the life and learning of the people. In the *Ehespiegel* of 1561 he admonishes householders to ask prospective hired hands not only “whether they can cook, sew, scrub, but also how well they know the main articles of Christian doctrine and if they can sing the words and melodies of our common Christian hymns.”⁵³

Yet the music of the chorales was not immediately accessible to the people of Luther’s day any more than they are to the “folk” of the twenty-first century. Any romantic notions of the success of Luther’s musical program have been swept away by the recent scholarship of Joseph Herl and others. His research, based on the reports of the visitation “squads” rather than the ideals of the *Kirchenordnungen*, are revealing.

Even before the bad news from the visitors made its way back to Wittenberg Luther had these words of “encouragement” for his listeners:

The gospel suffers great contempt. “The more wicked the Christian, the closer to Rome:” so it is happening to us here. When we initiated the German mass, everyone wanted it; now it is all the same to you whether it is in German or Latin. You say “I have bought five yoke of oxen.” The songs have been composed and are sung (by the boys) for your sake so that you can sing them here and at home, but you sit here like blocks of wood. Therefore I beg you, teach these songs to your children and sing them yourselves at the same time, as Paul teaches. From this you see who is a Christian and what is to be expected of him. (Sermon for First Sunday in Advent, 1526)⁵⁴

Things had not improved much by January 24, 1529:

I see your idleness, how you fail to learn those sacred songs sung every day and how for nearly two years now you have had no interest whatsoever in those enduring songs of the schoolboys,

but rather pay much more attention to popular ditties. Would that you fathers might strive to train those under your care! For such songs are a sort of Bible for the uncultivated, and even for the learned. See how the pious are set on fire through these songs! Observe the efficacy and power of *Ein Kindelein so löblich!* That child has preserved the church: Had not this Child to us been born, we all had been in sin forlorn (ELH 131:2); likewise with *Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist* (ELH 33). And so we took care that a large number of the best spiritual songs might be composed for your use and edification. Therefore work hard that you might learn and cultivate them with greater diligence than you have up until now.⁵⁵

The idea that Luther used pub songs that everyone knew and changed the words for church and catechesis has no factual basis. Luther's understanding of music (along with Plato and Aristotle, and all the rest) would not have allowed for such a peculiar wedding. Likewise the infamous quote "Why should the devil have all the good tunes?" is not to be found in any extant writing or table quote from Luther.

The fact that Luther didn't use easy "ditties" for the chorale melodies is not lost to any student of music history. The melodic material of the chorale was distilled from the theoretical and philosophical foundations presented in the academic study of music in sixteenth century Germany. Despite the fact that the people had to work to learn them, and were sometimes less than enthusiastic in their work, the chorales found a place in the catechesis and liturgy of the Lutheran church, school and home.

The chorale melodies were able to inspire, and more importantly, bear the scrutiny of later generations of musicians' musicians. The chorales of Luther live on in the great chorale preludes and chorale cantatas of J.S. Bach and others. And music, in the Lutheran curriculum, continues to serve the primary purpose for which it was constructed, namely instruction in the gospel.

Then go to your work with joy, singing a hymn, like one on the Ten Commandments, or what your devotion may suggest.⁵⁶

Endnotes

¹ Harold F. Abeles, *Foundations of Music Education*, Second Edition (Belmont, CA: Thomson Schirmer, 1995) p. 3 ff.

² Michael L. Mark, ed. *Music Education: Source Readings from Ancient Greece to Today*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2002) p. 6.

³ Mark, p.15, 16.

⁴ Mark, pp. 23-24.

⁵Rebecca Wagner Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2001) p.38-39. Luther's attitude towards music in worship was kindred to Basil's. This acceptance of, in fact, celebration of the joys and powers of music went beyond suspicion and undisciplined indifferentism.

⁶Abeles, p. 33.

⁷ Mark, pp. 25-27

⁸ *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1980. vol. 2, p. 844-845

⁹ Sternfeld, "Music in the Schools of the Reformation," *Musica Disciplina*, Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1948) Vol.2, p.105. Maurus, quoted in Rainbow, p.19: "He who is a stranger to it [music] is not able to fulfill the duties of an ecclesiastical office in a suitable manner. A proper delivery in reading [chanting] and a lovely rendering of the psalms in the church are regulated by a knowledge of this science. Yet it is not only good reading and beautiful psalmody that we owe to music; through it alone do we become capable of celebrating in the most solemn manner every divine service. Music penetrates all the activities of our life... Even heaven and earth, as everything that happens here throughout the arrangement of the Most High, is nothing but music, as Pythagorus testifies... To him who does not know even a little music, many things remain hidden." Also, Luther, *Table Talk*, tr. by David Hazlitt, (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society) DCCXCIV: "I always loved music; whoso has skill in this art, is of a good temperament, fitted for all things. We must teach music in schools; a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard

him; neither should we ordain young men as preachers, unless they have been well exercised in music.”

¹⁰ G. M. Bruce, *Luther as an Educator* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1928) p. 26. Bruce, a professor of New Testament literature, exegesis, symbolics and ethics quotes a proclamation from Charlemagne to Abbott Baugulf, 789: “And let schools be established in which boys may learn to read. Correct carefully the psalms, the signs in writing, the songs, the calendar, the grammar in each monastery or bishopric and the Catholic books; because often some desire to pray to God properly, but they pray badly because of the incorrect books.”

¹¹ Bernarr Rainbow, *Music in Educational Thought and Practice* (Aberystwyth: Boethius Press, 1989) p.19.

¹² Rainbow, p.26 ff.

¹³ Rainbow, p.42.

¹⁴ Oettinger, p.40-41.

¹⁵ Carmen Luke, *Pedagogy, Printing and Protestantism: The Discourse on Childhood*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) p.91-95.

¹⁶ ELH; *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, (St. Louis, Morningstar Music, 1996)

¹⁷ E.G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times*, (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950) p. 125.

¹⁸ *Luther's Works: American Edition*, Vol.46, p. 251.

¹⁹ Sternfeld, p. 112-113; Joseph Herl, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) p.45. In 1772, while compiling information for his *General History of Music* (1776-89), the Englishman Dr. Charles Burney encountered the *Currend-Schüler* in Lutheran Germany. They were still a commonality at that time, and Burney remarked that they received their training from the local *kantor*, an official found in every Lutheran parish. (Rainbow, p. 122)

²⁰ Sternfeld, p. 112-113

²¹ New Grove, 1980, vol. 6, p. 227.

²² Victor H. Mattfeld, *Georg Rhaw's Publications for Vespers* (Brooklyn: Institute of Medieval Music, 1966) pp. 42,43. Herl, p. 40.

²³ Mattfeld, p. 43.

²⁴ Rainbow, p. 50. A lover of music himself, [Luther] acknowledged its power to still restless minds: “I doubt not that there are many seeds of virtue in a mind touched by music, and I consider those not affected by it as stocks and stones. We know that music is hateful and intolerable to devils. I really believe, nor am I ashamed to assert, that next to theology there is no art equal to music... My love for it abounds; it has often refreshed me and freed me from great troubles.”

²⁵ Frederick Eby, *Early Protestant Educators* (New York: AMS Press, 1931) p. 231ff.

²⁶ Eby, p. 180 ff.

²⁷ Eby, p. 193 ff.

²⁸ Sternfeld, p.104-105.

²⁹ Hans Albrecht, Walter Buszin, and others, Georg Rhau: *Musikdrücke aus den Jahren 1538 bis 1545* (Kassel: Bärenreiter; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955-).

³⁰ Sternfeld, p. 106.

³¹ In 1586 Lucas Osiander published *Fifty Spiritual Songs and Hymns*. This music book, or *Cantional*, included chordal hymn harmonizations with the melody in the soprano. Placing the melody in this voice allowed for the harmony of the supporting voices to take on a different character in which the chords would “function” in a procession to a clear cadence. These settings were used by amateur choirs in German schools, and by the secondary (less ambitious) choirs in the Latin schools. These settings also led to the practice of instrumental accompaniment of hymnody in the Lutheran tradition. See an example at ELH 247.

³² Martin Agricola, *Rudiments of Music* (Rudimenta Musicae, 1539), translated by John Trowell (Aberystwyth: Boethius Press, 1991) p. 22.

³³ Joyce L. Irwin, *Neither Voice Nor Heart Alone* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, American University Studies; 1993), p. 2.

³⁴ *Luther's Works*, American Edition, Vol. 53, p. 316.

³⁵ Rhau *Musikdrücke III*.

³⁶ LW 53:p.321 ff.

³⁷ Rainbow, p.52-53. The Calvinist schools also maintained an hour

for musical study; students would acquire the skills needed to sing polyphonic choral music, and psalm melodies were given figural treatment. But this music could never be sung in the service, for its beauty might distract from the message.

³⁸Rainbow, p. 49.

³⁹Agricola, p. 16.

⁴⁰LW 53:69, 89.

⁴¹Herl, p. 43 ff.

⁴²*Mensch, willst du leben seliglich*, 1524. tr. Richard Massie, alt.

1. Would you, O man, live happily, And dwell with
God eternally?

The ten commandments keep, and do What God
Himself tells you to. Have mercy, Lord!

2. I am the Lord and God! Take heed That other gods
won't you mislead;

Your heart shall trust alone in me, My kingdom's heir
you will be. Have mercy, Lord!

3. Honor my name in word and deed, And call on me
in time of need:

Hallow the Sabbath, that I may Work in your heart on
that day. Have mercy, Lord!

4. Obedient always, next to me, To father and to other
be;

Kill no one: ev'ry anger dread; Keep sacred your
marriage-bed. Have mercy, Lord!

5. Steal not, nor do your neighbor wrong By bearing
witness with false tongue;

Crave not your neighbor's spouse; nor let A jealous
greed bliss upset. Have mercy, Lord!

⁴³ Adolf Boës, "Die Reformatische Gottesdienste in der Wittenberg Pfarrkirche von 1523 an," *Jahrbuch für Hymnologie und Liturgik*, Vol. 4 (Kassel, 1958-59) pp. 1-40.

⁴⁴ Rhau *Musicdrücke VII*, p.XX.

⁴⁵ Adolf Boës “Die Reformatische Gottesdienst in der Wittenberger Pfarrkirche von 1523 an,” *Part II Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* Vol. 6 (Kassel:1961) pp. 49-61.

⁴⁶ Luke, p.122 ff.

⁴⁷ Eby, p.193 ff.

⁴⁸ The catechetical hymnody was an important part of the Lutheran curriculum. These versatile hymns found a home in the Latin worship forms of academia, as well as in the vernacular liturgy of the German schools, the home, and the Divine Service.(Herl, p.64) The Law: These Are the Holy Ten Commands, ELH 490; Would You, O Man, Live Happily (trans. above); The Creed: We All Believe in One True God, ELH 38; Salvation Unto Us Is Come, ELH 227; Prayer: Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above, ELH 383; Baptism: To Jordan Came Our Lord, ELH 247; By Adam’s Fall Is All Forlorn, ELH 430; Holy Communion: Jesus Christ Our Blessed Savior, ELH 316-317; and O Lord We Praise Thee, ELH 327. The tradition of catechetical hymnody was embraced by the Lutheran poets, and many examples of this sort of specific catechism hymnody abound. Fear and Love Thy God and Lord, ELH 510, a treasure from the Danish church, reviews the entire catechism in five easily memorized verses.

⁴⁹ Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church Translated by F. Bente and W.H.T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921). <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-boc.html>

⁵⁰ Bente, Dau.

⁵¹ Bente, Dau.

⁵² Herl, p. 113, 164.

⁵³ G. Strauss, *Luther’s House of Learning*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) p.127.

⁵⁴ Herl, p.14.

⁵⁵ Herl, p.15.

⁵⁶ Martin Luther, “Morning Prayer from the Small Catechism” *Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord*, (St. Louis: CPH, 2005) p.370. See ELH 490 These Are the Holy Ten Commands.

Reaction to Lectures on Luther and Education

by Mark J. Lenz

Luther, Lutherans, and Liberal Arts Education

Dr. Lehninger says that many Christians today want nothing to do with the academy because they see it as a bastion of rationalism and the scientific method. Other Christians, he says, are completely entangled in the academy's embrace. But he claims there is a third option. With the God of Scriptures as their first principle, many Christians have sought further understanding of the world around them that has enriched both the church and the academy.

In discussing the contribution of the Lutheran church to this exploration, Dr. Lehninger relates how Hugh of St. Victor and Bonaventure influenced Martin Luther to appreciate the value of the liberal arts. Hugh of St. Victor in the 12th Century made a strong case for the liberal arts as the key that unlocks all human learning, but also for theology as the unifying principle of all study. One is reminded of Gregor Resch's Margarita *Philosophica noua* that depicts the curriculum at a typical university in the Middle Ages as a tower with the various subject areas at different levels, but with theology at the top. Bonaventure harmonized faith and reason while insisting that reason was the handmaid of faith. It was perhaps Bonaventure who influenced Luther to conclude that since we cannot know the *deus absconditus*, we must stay with the *deus revelatus*. At the heart of Luther's theology is the firm belief that God has revealed himself alone in Christ and the cross, or as Luther would put it, through *Anfechtung*. Dr. Lehninger says that, influenced by people like Hugh and Bonaventure, Luther concluded that whoever wishes to teach the Bible must first observe and learn to know the world. To those who might claim that highly educated people will necessarily end up perverting the interpretation of Scripture, Luther would respond that it all depends on how one uses learning and reason. Without question the magisterial use of reason perverts the Scriptures while the ministerial use of reason aids in its proper

Together with Luther, Dr. Lehninger insists that if the church is not to lose the gospel, it must continue to emphasize the study of languages, especially the biblical languages. One might add that these languages must not be studied in a vacuum. As important as is grammar, so important is the historical/cultural context, lest the Scriptures be turned into a waxed nose and be made to say whatever the interpreter would like them to say.

In speaking about the importance of the liberal arts, Dr. Lehninger points out that Luther stressed the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* and the necessity of good libraries. It would seem that these things are no less important today.

Dr. Lehninger states that because the Christian lives in two kingdoms that are both God's creation, he does not have to "Christianize" the arts but can use them "selectively and judiciously." How preferable this is to the attitude that seeks to eliminate from the curriculum anything that does not appear to be Christian.

In conclusion Dr. Lehninger states that a Christian will view a liberal arts education as a means to glorify God and serve his neighbor because a curriculum that emphasizes the liberal arts equips students with tools they need to read, reason and communicate effectively and ultimately to understand and communicate God's Word. There could be no better reason for stressing the liberal arts than this.

Luther and Music Education

By referring to a number of ancient sources, Professor Marzolf demonstrates that music has long been recognized to affect ethical, intellectual and moral development. Basil's observation that music forms friendships and "mediates between enemies" can be seen in the worshiping congregation to this very day. Boethius' comments regarding the affects music has on morality suggest that greater concern needs to be expressed, not only about the lyrics of certain types of contemporary music, but about the very music itself. Maurus' (and Luther's) belief that one who has not mastered the art of music is not fit to serve in the ministry, perhaps needs to be more carefully considered by those involved in ministerial education today.

When one realizes the skills in sight-singing and music theory that students in Luther's day possessed, one is led to conclude that we today have lost something vitally important. The ambitious music curriculum of the schools of the 16th Century, preserved in the Lutheran schools of the time, perhaps needs to be reexamined.

Professor Marzolf points out that against the background of the lack of emphasis on music in the writings of Zwingli, Calvin, and Erasmus, Georg Rhau's thoughts on music (echoed by Luther) stand in stark contrast. Rhau believed that next to the Word of God, music deserved the highest praise, and that believers should praise God at all times with word and music. It would seem that those who someday will join the heavenly choirs of saints and angels would do well to accustom themselves to singing God's praises in the here and now.

Professor Marzolf demonstrates that because of their strong emphasis on music, Lutheran schools over the years produced capable musicians who knew well the musical art. It is therefore not surprising that Johann Sebastian Bach, the man who many believe was the greatest musician of all time, was trained in such schools.

Professor Marzolf refers to a foreword that Melanchthon wrote to Rhau's music for Christmas. Melanchthon said that God created music for his glory and the spread of his Word, that "God's Word and its music are of one cloth," that music teaches a person to know God and contemplate the mysteries of the faith, that music in worship "should be related to all of life," and that if Christian doctrine were not sung it would soon disappear.

Can anyone question the importance of music in worship? Perhaps Melanchthon's thoughts might serve as a valuable guide for anyone seeking to contemporize the music of worship.

In an age when "what I feel" often becomes more important than "what Christ has done," it is refreshing to be reminded that Luther intended music to serve as a didactic tool for the gospel. Since his chorales are always intended to proclaim, preach and teach, they are never in danger of losing their relevance.

Professor Marzolf concludes that music in the Lutheran curriculum continues to serve the purpose for which it was intended, namely instruction in the gospel. Praise God that it may always be so.

Reaction to Lectures on Luther and Education

By Paul Lehninger

Luther and Religious Education

As Prof. Lenz reminded us in his paper, Martin Luther said that the education of the youth ought to be a vital concern for everyone because the cause of the gospel was at stake. Yet the group of Lutherans gathered for these lectures appears to agree that Lutheran education is not what it once was. Although Lutheran education is not at a crisis level, and it can even be argued that in some areas improvements have been made, there is cause to ask whether it might not be time for another “Saxon” visitation. To what extent are concessions being made to contemporary culture and to the educational bureaucracy merely to keep desks filled? Why are many of our schools closing, and why is support of synodical pastor- and teacher-training schools flagging? Are our schools diligently training students to recognize and confess biblical truth, or are they merely familiar with spiritual-sounding “stuff” about the Bible? Our pastors and teachers are skilled, but are they skilled in properly distinguishing law and gospel? Our pastors are trained to be competent, but is their “core competency” that of being public ministers of Word and Sacrament? In many denominations today, the emphasis in training clergy is on giving them the skills they need to pack people in; to what extent have we capitulated to this trend?

Some of the challenges we face today are similar to those Luther and the reformers faced. Parents then discouraged their children from training for the spiritual office because it would not lead to a successful career, wealth, and fame; many parents today are well aware that financial security and prestige will play no role in their children’s careers if they enter the pastoral or teaching offices. Luther reminded his readers that even when the schools were excellent, as at Bad Nuernberg, the devil would always be at their back to destroy their work; the devil is no less active today. The reminder that we are always one generation away from losing

the gospel is chilling, but necessary. The suggestions offered by Luther for remedying this situation, although not exhaustive, are still pertinent today. I will highlight a few of those mentioned by Prof. Lenz in his paper.

First, pastors and teachers must receive clear, strong, orthodox theological training in order to be prepared to give adequate instruction to their students. Luther reminds us that theologians must remain; if they disappear, God's Word also disappears, and only heathen and devils remain. Providing financial resources for Lutheran colleges and seminaries, therefore, is not a luxury, but a necessity. For those colleges and seminaries to keep focused on their primary mission is essential, not debatable.

Second, educators must remember that for an education to be truly Lutheran, it must reflect both the evangelical (grounded on God's Word) and the catholic (consensus regarding the interpretation of God's Word) principles. Therefore, the Lutheran confessions, especially the Small Catechism, play a central role in Lutheran education. Luther himself said that he never outgrew his need for the catechism. Luther, ever devil-conscious, claimed that use of the catechism drove away the devil. This is an amazing claim. It amounts to saying that the catechism can be used in the same way God's Word is used, and this is because the catechism is a summary of God's Word, and in all its parts is squarely based on God's Word. Lutheran education will always return to the touchstone of the catechism, and Lutherans should never think they have to apologize for knowing and quoting the catechism—and, of course, they will always be ready to explain why they value it so highly.

One means of teaching the catechism that appears to have fallen on hard times, judging from anecdotal evidence, is the catechetical sermon. If Luther never outgrew his need for the catechism, neither do the adult members of the congregation gathered for worship.

Nevertheless, most catechetical instruction will occur in the classroom, and here the importance of memorization was stressed. Memorizing not only enables one to access Scripture and the catechism's teachings based on Scripture more readily, it also causes learners to assimilate more thoroughly the truths they are

learning. In most schools today, rote learning by memorization is scoffed at, but this caricature of memorization as mere parroting of a text is an unfair criticism of catechetical instruction, which always explains and applies the text that has been memorized. Of course, for memorization to be possible, there must be standard texts, and Luther cautions, “take care to avoid any changes or variations in the text.” Occasional—but infrequent—tweaking of the text may be necessary, but excisions of original text material are questionable at best; for example, omitting Luther’s reference to making the sign of the holy cross before morning and evening prayer, and dropping the brief order of confession and absolution.

Finally, Prof. Lenz reminds us that in Lutheran education, students are taught the truths of Scripture through the liturgy and music. The statement that worship ought to be designed to serve the cause of religious instruction is made in the context of the *Deutsche Messe*. This order of service served the cause of religious instruction because it was in the vernacular, but it was neither pedantic, nor prosaic and banal. It was for the most part a modification of the mass, the rite of the Western church. As a result, the worship of the church was not tinkered with arbitrarily to serve pragmatic goals such as education, nor was the educational enterprise straight-jacketed by a rigorous and petrified order of worship.

Luther and Music Education

This brings us to Prof. Marzolf’s paper. In the climate of the worship wars being waged in almost every church body today, much of the disagreement focuses on music. His reminder that music in the Lutheran curriculum must continue to serve its primary purpose, that of instruction in the gospel, cannot be overemphasized.

Luther faced iconoclastic challenges to the use of music in worship; for example, Zwingli’s rejection of all use of music except the psalms. The challenge today is different. The church today faces the challenge of all doctrinal content being eviscerated from the music of the church. “Melancthon believed that the worship of God should be related to all of life and feared that Christian doctrine would disappear if it were not allowed to be sung.” The orders for Matins and Vespers in Wittenberg clearly demonstrate that

strong texts, set to singable and appropriate tunes, are an unbeatable method of instruction in the church—while still first and foremost being worship. A good example of this was the catechetical hymn used in yesterday’s Matins service. This stands in stark contrast to the revivalist tactic of using music to manipulate emotions, which is so common in contemporary American Protestantism.

If the primary purpose of music in the Lutheran curriculum is to instruct students in the gospel, then those who are primarily responsible for that instruction, the pastor and teachers, must receive musical training. The complaint, “but I’m not a musician” is not acceptable. Music is an intrinsic part of being human. All people can benefit from instruction in music, and can be formed and trained by this instruction.

This training is not only beneficial to the church, but also to society in general. Boethius said, “. . . there is no greater ruin for the morals of a community than the gradual perversion of a prudent and modest music. For the minds of those hearing the perverted music immediately submit to it, little by little depart from their character, and retain no vestige of justice or honesty.” Of course, there is enormous room for controversy as to what is regarded as “prudent and modest” versus “perverted” music. Nevertheless, support for musical instruction can only benefit both the church and society.

The reference to Augustine’s conflicted emotions regarding the appropriateness of music in worship is worth noting. Augustine wrestled with the fact that music affected him physically, not purely spiritually. Although he finally resolved this conflict and approved of the use of music, his inner dialogue reflects the flesh (sinful nature) vs. spirit (regenerate nature) dichotomy of Scripture being confused with body vs. mind. This is foreign to the Eastern Orthodox tradition, as represented by St. Basil, who is referred to elsewhere in the lectures. According to Eastern Orthodoxy, because mankind is now united with Christ in a very real sense since he took on human nature (*theosis*), in the redeemed the human voice is the most excellent instrument and *must* sing God’s praises in worship. As an interesting side note, many Orthodox theologians went on to conclude that because the voices of the redeemed are the ideal instrument for praising God, there is no need of other instruments.

As a result, in many Orthodox churches the music of the liturgy is sung without instrumental accompaniment.

Finally, education in music is indispensable in the classical liberal arts curriculum. This curriculum emphasizes the formation of the character of the ideal citizen based on harmony, balance, and proportion. Therefore, music, as part of the quadrivium, obviously makes a fundamental contribution both to society and to the church.

Reaction to Lectures on Luther and Education

by Dennis Marzolf

This presentation of Luther's chief writings on education and the development of his educational thought reminds us that every generation faces a challenge to educate for the next generation. Education is an organic process that is redeveloped with the passing of the generations, yet there are certain aspects that remain constant. We face many of the same challenges addressed by the educators of the 16th century. Even with the unbelievable flood of knowledge available from our related technological revolutions (their printing press, our information superhighway) the educational process remains an intimate person to person exchange.

A Purpose for Pedagogy

The educational institutions of the late middle ages were far from perfect; yet the chantry schools, the schools for the "burgherkids," trivial schools, Latin schools and universities were all held together by the network of the church. The network was broken by the Reformation, and it is interesting to watch Luther and others scrambling for support for the educational endeavor.

You can't have schools unless someone is paying for the schools. Luther was stumped. Again and again the "new order" allowed for the Christian individual and community to step up to the plate and participate in the spiritual and intellectual nurture of the young in an unprecedented manner. But the Germans were obstinate. They were hesitant to support education, choosing to find security for the next generation in economic development and military security.

"People fear the Turks, wars, and floods, for in such matters they can see what is injurious or beneficial; but what the devil has in mind no one sees or fears. Yet where we would give a florin to defend ourselves against the Turks, we should give an hundred florins to protect us against ignorance, even if only one boy could be taught to be a truly Christian man; for the good such a man can accomplish is

beyond all computation.” (*To the Mayors and Aldermen*, tr. Painter, p. 173)

It is hard to imagine how frustrating this was for Luther and others who knew firsthand the importance of a classical and Christian education. Yet one can understand why parents might desire a more “practical” education for children who were destined to learn a respectable trade, or to learn the family business. Luther wisely directed those parents to consider the long-range implications of their educational choices: where will those small businesses be in a generation or two without the stabilizing presence of church and a moral judiciary? And what of the bountiful eternal blessings which will come, to the third and fourth generations, from students who devote themselves to theology!

Luther’s words resonate in the hearts of all who are involved in the generation to generation work of education. Parents, and students, do well to consider the eternal ramification of their educational choices. What the devil has in mind no one sees or fears.

The Teaching Liturgy

It is noteworthy that one of Luther’s foundational writings on education is also one of his most important liturgical writings. The link between worship and catechesis was not lost to Luther. The vernacular Bible and catechism, the vernacular liturgy, and, most significantly, vernacular song were tools for teaching. Next to the catechism the chorale, or hymn, was the most powerful educational tool of the Lutheran Reformation. The chorales “became such a formidable means of disseminating doctrine that the Jesuits later said of Luther’s songs that they ‘destroyed more souls than his writings and speeches’.” (Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, p.287)

The genius of the chorale was its adaptability. It was at home in the Latin and the German school. It was at home by the cradle or in the choir. It was at home in the Latin liturgy, or in the purely vernacular service. The doctrinal content of the chorale represented a zenith of pedagogical piety. Where it was embraced, it was highly effective.

The song mass was designed for use especially in those places

where there was no academy that could provide students who could sing the Latin choral service. Yet, if we were to travel back in time, we would be surprised, I think, to see the mixture of elements from FM and DM existing side by side in the same parochial tradition. The modern hymnbook, including hymns and orders of service, did not exist in those days. There were no “page 15” or “page 143” or “Supplement” congregations. While some cities and regions tended to favor one model (FM/DM) over the other, the chorales became the common song of the church, and they functioned as a meaningful force in education and, as a happy accident, liturgical renewal.

Through the chorale the people were connected to the liturgy in an unprecedented manner. The chorale ordinary of the mass was learned, and memorized, and became a part of the spiritual language of the people. The chorales also provided confessional “eyeglasses” to the historic prose texts of ordinary and proper. A growing corpus of hymns for the proper, tied explicitly to the gospel themes, gave the people an experience of the church year that was impossible to achieve with the prose texts of the historic proper, which were usually performed by the choir, or read by the pastor.

The real-life chorale connection between liturgy, education and private devotion was unique to Lutheran Christianity. This connection remains an illusive goal for many who have tried to make the liturgy “real” using the tools of the modern liturgical movement, yet it was at the heart of the liturgical renewing for generations of Lutherans from the 1520s to the mid-eighteenth century. Luther’s chorales were treasured, even enshrined, in many musical settings. Yet the development of the chorale was not inhibited by the canon of Luther’s production. Hundreds and thousands of hymns were created to support the structure of the liturgy, the teachings of the church year, and ongoing catechesis.

A quick trip to the Danish kingdom in the late 1680s gives a glimpse of the enduring viability of the chorale within a Lutheran tradition that was intent on teaching in, with and under the liturgical structure. The church ritual of 1685 prescribes at least nine hymns during the mass for the congregation, including hymns for the ordinary, the season, and the day in the church year. The important hymnal edited by Thomas Kingo in 1699 was arranged very

specifically according to the Sundays and Festivals of the church year (not just the general topics of the season). So the Lutheran hymnal had the same purpose and general design as the choral graduale of the Middle Ages. The chorales continued to display a strong didactic sense. The poetic language was clear and concrete. Teaching and praying in song and verse generated a pious orthodoxy which preserved the truth in the villages and cultural backwaters even while the universities fell under the spell of the piquant breezes of pietism, rationalism and romanticism. Consider the following examples, which compare the concrete teaching language of the chorale with the better devotional poetry of the 19th century hymn.

With the confessional revival of the 19th century, aspects of “old” Lutheran worship and educational programs were rediscovered and given back to the churches which had lost them. The restored prose mass (Loehe, the Common Service) appealed to a spirit of the times which was related to the Oxford, Cambridge-Camden revivals and similar movements within the Roman Catholic church. For many Lutherans the DM and its chorale basis was viewed with a degree of embarrassment, Luther “not at his best.” Especially in English-speaking Lutheranism there was a courtship with the FM forms found in many of the Kirchenordnungen which excluded the chorale tradition in favor of the choral mass. This was exacerbated by the fact that few of the European chorales were found in suitable English versions (it is, after all, easier to translate prose than rhyming poetry). It is clear that the leaders of the English Lutheran liturgical movement of the 19th century were likely more enamored of the translations of the “ancient hymns” from the days prior to the Reformation which were being produced by poets within the Anglican movement.

Hymnody played a role in Lutheran liturgical renewal during the first half of the 20th century, but the serious liturgical scholars were not interested in cultivating a hymnody like the chorale, which was didactic or catechetical. Hymnody should be devotional and assist in establishing an aesthetic and spiritual mood for the real liturgy. Here the link with Luther the educator was broken for the Lutheran church at worship: “The common hymnal... must contain only good hymns providing, as a companion to the liturgy, for the

full round of the Christian Year and the Christian Life; the hymns should be devotional rather than didactic or homiletical, and their direction Godward, not manward... each hymn, being an act of worship, should be exalted in language, noble in thought and reverent in feeling.” (Introduction to the Common Hymnal, from the Service Book and Hymnal, 1958, p.286)

This hymnal consciously reduced the number of Lutheran hymns by Lutheran poets which might have enriched the hymnal project from the various Lutheran traditions which participated in the compilation of the SBH prior to 1958. Many chorales and chorale-type hymns already translated into English were lost to American Lutheranism with the production of this hymnal. “Nearly two thirds of the hymns are of English and American authorship.” (p.286)

This is not surprising, given Luther Reed’s attitude regarding Luther’s efforts in the DM:

The introduction of rhymed paraphrases of the Creed, Sanctus, Te Deum, etc., [in the DM tradition] was a regrettable feature, all too frequently adopted, which deprived congregations of the full and historic texts and gave them a poor type of hymn as a substitute.

It was unfortunate that certain districts fastened upon their churches by legal enactment the type of service outlined in the *Deutsche Messe*.” (Luther D. Reed, *Lutheran Liturgy*, Rev. Ed., 1959, p. 79)

The chorale in specific and hymnody in general did not fare much better in the writing of Arthur Carl Piepkorn. His attitudes, expressed in a 1965 document, *The Conduct of the Service* (<http://www.lexorandi.org/piepkorn.html>), is especially surprising, given his position as a representative of the synod which had, historically, championed the use of the “old” rhythmic chorale. But Piepkorn was not Walther, after all, and by 1965 the liturgical movement had so infected much of American Lutheranism that it was considered a cardinal transgression to speak of liturgy as a place where doctrine was taught. The excerpts are drawn from a discussion of the liturgy which proceeds point by point, from rubric to rubric.

shall be sung. The Commission on Worship, Liturgies, and Hymnology now authorizes omission of the Opening Hymn. At confirmations, Installations and similar occasions, Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest is traditional.

51... There is no authority for substituting Hymn No. 6 for the Kyrie.

52... The Gloria in Excelsis shall be used on all Feast and Festival Days, at other times a versified form of the Gloria in Excelsis (TLH 237, 238) or another hymn of praise may be used... At celebrations of Holy Communion, there is no authority for substituting either a metrical version of the Gloria in Excelsis or another hymn of praise for the Gloria in Excelsis.

58... Traditionally a Sequence Hymn was sung after the Gradual psalmody. Technically a Sequence Hymn is one that has been written specifically for this point in the service. The Sequence Hymn is always seasonal; conceivably another, equally seasonal hymn, even though it were not written as a Sequence Hymn, might be substituted. There is some virtue in reserving Sequence Hymns for special occasions.

60. The Lutheran Liturgy (pp. 420-421) provides: "A hymn of Invocation to the Holy Ghost may be sung to replace the Gradual. The classic Gradual Hymn of the Lutheran Church is We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost." The reason for this rubric is obscure. Historically, there is no evidence that a Hymn of Invocation of the Holy Ghost was ever actually in wide use as a substitute for the Gradual. Similarly, there is no evidence that *Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist* was ever actually in wide use as a "gradual hymn" in the Lutheran Church. Pastors and Congregations are well advised not to avail themselves of the provision of this rubric.

63... The use of a metrical version of one of the Creeds, though allowed, is undesirable.

64. Then may a hymn be sung. Originally the sixteenth century rites of the Church of the Augsburg Confession made no provision for a hymn at this point in addition to the Creed, either in prose or metrical form. The rubric of the Hymnal... which prescribes such a hymn at this point, has been superseded by a permissive rubric...

70. Then may a hymn be sung. It is better not to avail oneself of this authorization. The continuity of the Service from the offertory through to the completion of the Communion is stressed by proceeding at once to the Salutation. The Order of Holy Communion, 1959, p.12, makes no provision for a hymn at this point.

77. During the Distribution the congregation may sing one or more hymns. The singing of hymns during the Distribution of the Holy Communion is frequently distracting to the communicants. It would be better, in general, if the choir were to sing the proper Communion...

81. Then may a Post-Communion hymn be sung. The service is needlessly lengthened by availing oneself of this option; it is better to omit this hymn.

Piepkorn does not mention the use of a closing hymn. One can only assume a negative attitude towards the teaching hymnody of the Church of the Augsburg Confession from the pen of this important personality; it is telling that the only hymnody that he mentions in a remotely acceptable light is “traditional” hymnody which pre-dates the Reformation. At the same time and in the same document Piepkorn celebrates the fact that the LCMS has moved forward with the approval of a Eucharistic Prayer (at least for use in the Spanish speaking congregations). The Conduct of the Service, along with the traditions passed on through Luther Reed (think of how many seminarists used his book as the book for their liturgical study!!!), help us to understand why there has been and is, significant and long standing confusion in American Lutheranism regarding the place and practice of “liturgy” in the life and witness of the church. Those who seek to reclaim a didactic liturgy for the Church of the Augsburg Confession are bound to face some of the same challenges which Luther faced in 1526. There are poets in our circles who know the chorale tradition, and who use it as a model for the creation of new poetry. This is an optimistic movement among people who still believe that the “unlearned and the young may be taught,” and it is a real liturgical renewal that should be encouraged. The first step is to reclaim the chorale by learning the classic texts and melodies. They will certainly prime a pump of creativity today, just as they have in the past.

Book Review: Joshua

by Cory D. Hahnke

Adolph L. Harstad, *Joshua* (part of the Concordia Commentary series), St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

Order from Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore at 1-800-944-1722. \$42.99

In my chain-reference Bible, with its information-packed margins, the book of Joshua covers thirty-four pages. If I were to describe Professor Adolph Harstad's commentary of over nine hundred pages on those thirty-four pages of Joshua, "thorough" and "exhaustive" come to mind.

The commentary is filled with information for the Bible scholar on the book of Joshua. Hebrew notes and word usage explanations are quite ample. The commentary and translation notes sections include how certain words are used in other scriptural as well as extra-biblical texts. In some ways, Professor Harstad's commentary is just as much about the Pentateuch and the book of Psalms as it is about Joshua, because these books are cross-referenced quite extensively, including comparisons to particular words and themes in Joshua.

If a pastor is leading a study of Joshua in Bible class, preparing a paper or sermon on a text from Joshua, or even trying to refresh his memory of the Hebrew language, I highly recommend this book. Yet these reasons for reading this commentary do not compare to the most important aspect of any biblical commentary: "Does it portray Christ and does it do so properly?" The commentary's Editor's Preface states:

First in importance is the conviction that the content of the Scriptural testimony is Jesus Christ. The Lord himself enunciated this when he said, "The Scriptures ... testify to me" (Jn 5:39), words that have been incorporated into the logo of this series. The message of the Scriptures is the Good News of God's work to reconcile the world to himself through the life,

death, resurrection, ascension, and everlasting session of Jesus Christ at the right hand of God the Father. Under the guidance of the same Spirit who inspired the writing of the Scriptures, these commentaries seek to find in every passage of every canonical book “that which promotes Christ” (as Luther’s hermeneutic is often described.) They are Christ-centered, Christological commentaries (p. xv).

As I read through Harstad’s commentary, such a focus on Christ was very evident. I was looking for the typology of my Savior and I found it, including in some unexpected places. The major themes on which the commentary focuses are the continuity of the Bible, the ministry, and the Word of the Lord.

The death of Moses was a great loss for the children of Israel. After all, which of the other prophets was able to say, “The Lord will raise up from among your brethren a prophet like me...listen to Him” (Dt 18:15)? Moses had made a comparison between himself and the Christ. No other prophet spoke face-to-face with God and had his face shine like the sun as a result. Yet the Lord did not make a distinction when Joshua becomes His leader of the people. “As Moses, so Joshua” is the theme. It does not matter which one of the men tells the people what the Lord declares. The words are still God’s Words. The continuity of Scripture is intact.

Harstad brings out several sub-themes in this context. One relates to Joshua’s own name. His name means “salvation,” just as the name given to the Messiah by the angel (Mt 1:21). In fact, there is more typology in the book of Joshua than that in the books of Moses. Joshua is about God’s people entering the Promised Land, versus Moses’ writings which depict the people wandering and waiting. Joshua leads God’s people over the Jordan River, whereas Moses was unable to enter the Promised Land. This is beautiful typology of the Christian faith and of our hope in Christ and the world to come. Such typology even lays the groundwork for the distinction between the Law given by Moses and the grace and truth that comes from Jesus Christ (Jn 1:17), the One who would share Joshua’s name.

Another sub-theme Harstad emphasizes is the continuity of the public ministry. Each person in the ministry works until he is called home, and the Lord appoints another. This theme is seen in Joshua’s life from the time he replaces Moses until he urges and

pleads with the people to remain faithful to the Lord (Josh 24). It was the Lord that they followed into the Promised Land, not Joshua. Even though there was not an immediate (referring to time) successor to Joshua, the Lord would not leave His people. He would raise up for Himself the next leader in Israel, who would speak His Word.

Professor Harstad's commentary regarding this theme resonated with me personally. As I have seen beloved professors and pastors retire or go home to be with the Lord, I have mourned their loss to the church. I remember the invaluable lessons that they taught and wished they would be able to continue that work. Yet I have seen how I also am stepping into a role for which God used them to prepare me. A few years ago, I buried a beloved friend and pastor. A year or so before that, I had buried his mother. That pastor's father was the pastor who visited my grandfather at the age of eleven and told him of his mother's death. All of us were there to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people in need at a time of great loss. The Lord will also raise up a pastor to preach at my funeral, to share the love of Jesus with the family and friends that I precede to eternal glory. Not one of us matters as much as the Lord who speaks through us, who calls out to His sheep.

Along similar lines is the bittersweet death of Moses. The people would miss their leader, but for them to enter into the Promised Land, Moses had to die. This is a reminder to all of us that the time of death of a Christian is a bittersweet one. In order for him/her to enter into glory, he/she had to die, even though it is a time of loss and personal hurt for us.

Harstad points out that there is also tremendous typology here to Christ. The inheritance was associated with death. This points us forward to the sacrifice that Jesus would have to make in order to procure for us the Promised Land of heaven. The last will and testament of a loved one leaves us in possession of their belongings. So Jesus reveals His last will and testament in His Word, namely that heaven itself is ours through faith in Him. We are the adopted sons and daughters of God and heirs of eternal life.

Another major theme in the book of Joshua is the continuity of the Word of God for His people. We tend to separate the books

of Moses (Pentateuch) into a separate category, as do higher critics and the Jews. Harstad emphasizes that the simple phrases at the beginning and throughout the book of Joshua should remind us of the continuity of Scripture.

The Lord was giving His people what He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was fulfilling in the book of Joshua what He had promised and begun in and by Abraham. He was giving the people the Promised Land. He was fulfilling His promise to them and was continuing the process of bringing about His greater promise. As God spoke to Joshua, the “you” he used was not just a message to Joshua: it was to the children of Israel and to all who were Abraham’s children by faith. The message of the Messiah is the same yesterday, today, and forever (He 13:8).

Joshua’s speech to the people at the end of his book is very fitting. At the beginning of his ministry God told Joshua to be in the Word day and night, not to depart from it to the right or the left (Josh 1:7-8). At the end of his ministry, is it any wonder that Joshua tells the people to be strong and courageous in the Lord? This too reflects the continuity of the faith especially as it pertains to the Messiah: that He is found in His Word, and there is to be no deviation from it.

In addition to pointing out some striking typology and showing how the Christian faith is demonstrated in the promises and faithfulness of the Lord, Harstad includes some special features in his commentary. Notes on early Hebrew manuscripts are included, as well as a chart of comparable early languages, all similar to the Hebrew family of texts. Maps depicting the allotment to and movement of God’s people, a glossary of linguistic terms for those of us that forget them from time to time, and a series of banners detailing Christian symbols and themes and how they are related to each other are also included. All in all, this is a very exhaustive and thorough commentary on the book of Joshua. In my opinion, Professor Harstad has done a great service to the church by making sure we see Christ in the book of Joshua and throughout all of Scripture.